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BUCKINGHAM CHRISTMAS

Students of Buckingham Elementary School dressed for the occasion in Berlin's Christmas parade on Dec. 5. The chilly night was warmed by the presence of 80 entries of all types in the annual march.

Skate park proponents seek money

Grants could be available, but big bucks would help

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Dec. 19, 2024) A local nonprofit organization is looking for potential funding sources to help pay for the construction of a skate park in Berlin.

We Heart Berlin, which is dedicated to promoting the creation of sustainable and healthy activities for town residents, continues to prioritize the building of a skate park for the enjoyment of kids and adults.

In 2022, the Los Angeles-based skate park design company Spohn Ranch was hired to create a concept plan and scope out potential locations for the recreational space.

In 2023, the Berlin Town Council voted to designate Heron Park as the construction spot.

According to We Heart Berlin founder Tony Weeg, the initiative is expected to see a 14,000- to 16,000-square-foot skate park adjacent to the space planned for Berlin's new public works facility.

A bowl, quarter pipes, and a pump track, which helps skaters learn to transition without losing momentum, are just a few elements likely to be created for the area.

Weeg said that We Heart Berlin was awaiting final design plans from Spohn Ranch last summer and that the group was to avoid fundraising until an official outline had been created. The document was officially submitted to the nonprofit in August.

"We love the plans," Weeg said. "We couldn't be happier. It's pretty rad...It gives us so much transition, a

'The biggest thing is money. We need people who can step up to the plate and make this happen.'

— Tony Weeg

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168-unit apartment complex to join Giant store off Rt. 50

Multifamily development to be constructed on westerly portion of Coastal Square

By **Brian Shane**
Staff Writer

(Dec. 19, 2024) Plans for the Coastal Square complex off routes 50 and 589 anchored by a Giant supermarket now will include a 168-unit apartment complex.

"I think it's going to be welcomed by the community. A lot of people are looking forward to the Giant. Moreover, the residential component of this project is badly needed in Worcester County. So, overall, I think the project will have a very positive impact on the community," said Mark Cropper, an attorney representing Coastal Square.

Housing will include seven buildings, three stories each, containing eight units per floor. Early renderings show one-, two-, and three-bedroom units. Units will be available for one-year leases. Construction would tentatively break ground late next year, and the build will take about 14 months, according to Bill Krapf with developer LC Construction.

Krapf also said his company will manage the units, and that the company already has about 7,800 apartment rentals under management in Maryland, Delaware, and Florida. Two local projects the company built and manage include The Reserve at Parsons Lake in Salisbury, and Ponds Edge in Delmar.

A site plan was reviewed Dec. 11 by the Worcester County Technical Review Committee in Snow Hill at the county's government center. Krapf and representatives from builder Becker Morgan Group reviewed minor issues raised by the committee about lighting, landscaping, and signage. The builder will address those concerns and resubmit plans back to zoning officials.

The developer decided to pursue multifamily housing, Krapf added, as part of the overall project in response to an opening in that market – an overall lack of rental housing in the greater Ocean City-Berlin area. At the same time, plans for the Giant supermarket are still moving forward and the builder will break ground in the

first quarter of 2025, he said.

An earlier site plan for Coastal Square, reviewed last fall by Worcester County officials, had the Giant planned for the east side of the 49-acre property, with nothing at the time proposed for the west side. Now, the apartments will be going on the west side, according to Cropper.

The project will also include seven additional parcels bordering Route 50 for future tenants, and will be anchored by a roundabout that itself will be an extension of Route 589 onto the property.

This is the third major commercial development along the Route 50 corridor. So far it's been home to a Walmart and Home Depot built by The Cordish Companies, and the Ocean Landings shopping center which includes an Aldi, Michaels, and Pet Smart, among other retailers. Another empty site immediately north of the Walmart, known as the Fisher farm, is also a parcel open for commercial development, Cropper said.

For vehicular traffic, Coastal Square would be connected to Ocean Landings by an extension of Samuel Bowen Boulevard, which now dead-ends on the westerly edge of that complex near the McDonald's.

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Officers thank Hardwire for life-saving armor

Police from across country visit Pocomoke company for 'Hardwire Saves' event

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Dec. 19, 2024) Philadelphia Police Sgt. Erik Bullock was called into a middle-of-the-night barricade situation on April 30, 2023. It dragged on for 20 hours before police decided to make entry into the building. When officers breached the door, the suspect was right there with a shotgun – and struck Bul-

lock at point-blank range in his abdomen and shoulder.

"I didn't realize I got hit here" – Bullock runs a hand along his midsection – "until I got down and took my vest off. If it wasn't for you guys, I wouldn't be here. That blast was definitely fatal. I was sore for a couple days but that's about it. My family thanks you so much."

Bullock was one of five police officers whose lives were saved by bulletproof vests manufactured by Pocomoke City-based Hardwire LLC. The men and their families got to share their stories

of survival and thank Hardwire employees in person Dec. 10 at company headquarters for a special event called "Hardwire Saves."

"These guys are still sitting up, going out every day. I can't say enough about what you do to make that happen," said Sgt. Ed Hinchey, the event's emcee and former police officer from Pittsburgh who also was saved from gunfire by his ballistic armor. He now works for Safariland, an armor distributor represented at the event.

"Every step on the line, every person that runs a forklift with material, may be bringing in the next piece of equipment that's going to bring these guys home to their families – and makes the difference between a celebration like this, or a name being engraved on the wall in Judiciary Square at the police memorial site," Hinchey added.

The soft armor worn by the officers whose lives were saved has been in development for a decade. Hardwire CEO and founder George Tunis said this product is now the de facto standard for Special Forces, the Army and the Marines. "Essentially, the exact same fear is on these officers that were speaking today," he said.

An engineer by trade working with composites, Tunis in 2000 founded Hardwire in his garage. He grew the company by securing government con-

tracts with the military. Now an industry leader, Hardwire is now headquartered in a 130,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in downtown Pocomoke City.

The ballistic armor manufactured in Pocomoke is made from some of the world's strongest fibers. When those textiles are layered and then pressed by machines exerting tons of pressure, it becomes a composite material that can stop slow or stop bullets moving at supersonic speed.

Some bulletproof material made by Hardwire can be as thin as a clipboard – in fact, they do sell bulletproof clipboards, which can also double as a handheld whiteboard.

The company saw early success making landmine-resistant armor for soldiers in combat before pivoting to ballistic armor, for both police officers and their vehicles. Tunis said his company is now involved in manufacturing ultra-strong molded steel as well.

"What's amazing is we've moved not just to police armor, but the entire DOJ, the FBI, the DEA, the U. S. Marshals, everything they wear except their underwear and their helmets, we make," he said.

Other officers recognized included Anthony Huizar from Sparks, Nevada, who was shot in the chest during a traf-

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Officers recount survival stories

Continued from Page 4
fic stop in late March by a suspect. Deputy Aaron Reynolds from Broadwater County, Montana, survived a head-on highway collision in January because his armor took the brunt of the impact.

Officer Matthew Haney with the Phoenix Police took a .45 caliber round to his abdomen on Sept. 3, and his Hardwire armor slowed it to the point where the bullet ended up lodged in between his lower rib, inches from his lungs. His partner, Officer Zane Coolidge, shot in the neck, did not survive the alleyway gunfight.

“Out of all that, it was an outpatient surgery to get the bullet out. I left with a big fat bruise, a hole in my heart, but I was able to go home. Then I got the news that we had baby number two on the way,” recalled an emotional Haney.



Senator Mary Beth Carozza presented five surviving police officers with state commendations during a Dec. 10 ceremony at the Pocomoke City headquarters of armor manufacture Hardwire LLC..

BRIAN SHANE/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Jeremy McKenna was just nine days out of the academy on June 30, 2023. As a sheriff's deputy in Clackamas

County, Oregon, he and a partner were deep in the woods tracking down burglary suspects at a homeless encampment. One man, shirtless, puts his hands up – but then he reached around back and pulled out a pistol.

“As soon as he put his hand down, I knew it was on. I didn't have the time to react,” McKenna recalled.

By the time was able to return fire, the first shot shattered his hip. The second hit him squarely in the chest. His ballistic vest stopped that almost-lethal impact, right over his heart.

“I would have been dead. Like, I wouldn't be here today. I wouldn't be

having Christmas with my daughter, my wife. I wouldn't get to see my family if it wasn't for you guys,” McKenna said.

Each of the front-line officers at the ceremony was honored with a General Assembly citation by State Sen. Mary Beth Carozza (R-38C).

“These are my constituents that produced the armor that saved your lives,” she told them, recognizing each by name. “But I'm also here because of what you did, how you responded in those situations. We want to recognize that your heroic efforts. Your bravery saved countless lives in that incident, and day in and day out.”

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Train display open weekends at OP fire hall

This holiday season, Ocean Pines residents are invited to an interactive showcase

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Dec. 12, 2024) The Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department is spreading holiday cheer with its third annual train display, which is viewable to the public throughout the festive season.

The showcase officially opened on Saturday, Nov. 23, and will continue to welcome visitors at the North Station, located on 249 Ocean Parkway, on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through Jan. 5. The exhibit is open from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Fridays, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturdays and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Sundays.

OPVFD President Joe Enste said that for the past three years, he, his father, Don Enste, and lifelong family friend Mark Libertini have been the "masterminds behind the display." The group has combined their personal train collections to make the exhibit. This year, the department's vice president, David Van Gasbeck, has gotten in on the project and is featuring trains from his collection.

The train display is an interactive initiative. For the second year in a row, attendees can participate in a scavenger hunt within the showcase. A challenge sheet can be picked up upon arrival at the North Station. Enste said that the activity was added last year to encourage visitors to look for the finer details of the presentation and keep children engaged.

"The exhibit features not only trains but also intricate scenes with buildings, farms, and figurines that are easy to miss at a quick glance," the fire department's president said.

Completed forms can be dropped in a labeled box. In January, the department will select one winner from the paper slips with the correct answers to receive a prize.

The display is funded via a budget

allocated by the department's board of directors. Enste added that sponsorships were secured to offset costs, including Serpone's Pizzeria as the presenting sponsor, "gaining exposure on flyers and inclusions in the scavenger hunt." Cindy Poremski of Berkshire Hathaway also signed on as a featured sponsor. Additional partnerships include A Bagel And, Dandy Don's Bike Rentals, Deeley Insurance Group, McGee Fence, My Backyard, Preston Automotive Group, and PopCe's Homemade Ice Cream.

"These sponsors are highlighted within the scavenger hunt, providing them visibility and community engagement opportunities," Enste noted. "Each person that completes the scavenger hunt will have had to write down each of the sponsors'

names at least once, creating exposure to an estimated 2,000 attendees."

To create the display, tables with a height comfortable for children and adults alike were designed. Budgeting, sourcing materials at the best prices, and configuring the optimal functional layout were included in the planning, which Enste said is "nearly year-round, as we're always looking to expand our collection."

Constructing the exhibit begins by mapping out train layouts based on the available track and each train's capabilities. According to Enste, some trains need longer tracks with gradual turns, while others perform best on tighter turns.

Scenes are planned for each area, "matching train styles to the corre-

sponding environment," the president said. "Industrial zones typically feature cargo trains, while passenger trains are placed in more urban settings."

A new feature of the display this year comes from Enste's seven-year-old son. Through the Touch-a-Train area, children can build their own train tracks with Magna-Tiles and explore a plethora of train-themed toys.

"It's been an exciting addition that encourages creativity and hands-on play," the firefighter said.

Enste said that the idea for the train display originated in December 2022 during the department's vehicle raffle drawing and open house.

"Since it was the holiday season, we thought a small, one-day train ex-

See HOLIDAY Page 8

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Holiday showcase hosted in OP

Continued from Page 7
hibit would be a wonderful addition,” he said. “The inspiration came from my childhood memories of visiting firehouses in the Baltimore area with my father to see their holiday train displays.”

The tradition has since expanded to what is now an over-month-long festivity.

Entrance into the presentation is free. However, donations to the department are welcome and can be made in person at the showcase via check or cash. Contributions can also be made through the fire group’s website at OPVFD.com.

The department is facing a challenge for next year’s exhibit. The North Station, the demonstration site, will store equipment from the South Station as the facility undergoes rebuilding, meaning the space

typically allocated for the trains will be unavailable. The OPVFD has asked that residents reach out with any suggestions to remedy the complication.

“Your support and creativity can help keep this cherished tradition alive,” Enste said.

The neighborhood fire department believes the train display allows residents to familiarize themselves with the first responders and creates community engagement.

“Whether volunteer or career, every member takes pride in our station, equipment, and service,” Enste said. “By visiting the display, we hope residents feel more comfortable reaching out if they ever need assistance.”

Ocean Pines residents can visit opvfd.com/train_display for more information about the festive event.



K-9 Ardie is pictured with his handler, Deputy Sheriff First Class Kenji Hara. SUBMITTED PHOTO/ BAYSIDE GAZETTE

New K-9 Ardie welcomed to the county’s Sheriff’s Office

(Dec. 19, 2024) The Worcester County Sheriff’s Office announced this week the newest addition to its law enforcement team — an explosives detection K-9 named Ardie.

Ardie is a 1.5-year-old German Shepherd, from Hungary, specially trained to alert on explosive devices.

After careful consideration, Sheriff Matthew Crisafulli has selected Deputy Sheriff First Class Kenji Hara as Ardie’s handler. Hara, currently assigned to Patrol Division, will work

with and integrate Ardie into his job responsibilities, including the scanning of schools, public buildings, and numerous event venues in Worcester County and surrounding areas.

Hara and Ardie recently completed a six-week explosive canine handler’s course in Anderson, South Carolina.

“Ardie is a remarkable dog, and we are confident that he will be a vital tool in our efforts to keep our community safe,” said Crisafulli.

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Coalition continues work on area bike, pedestrian safety

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Dec. 19, 2024) The Worcester County Bicycle and Pedestrian Coalition continues its efforts to make Worcester County a more walkable community.

The group has secured measures to maintain the welfare of bikers and walkers, like crosswalks and signage in Ocean Pines. It will continue to prioritize projects that help protect all who access the area's roads and highways, not those just in vehicles. As such, the organization, led by Patti Stevens, looks to push forward further safety initiatives heading into 2025.

The Worcester County Bicycle and Pedestrian Coalition helped gain support for the Worcester County Greenway and Trails Master Plan, a project aimed at connecting local destinations and scenic landscapes via trails and bikeways. The group assisted in grant application processes and provided input at meetings to strengthen the initiative. Stevens said that the master plan is expected to be presented to the Worcester County Commissioners during an upcoming January meeting.

The Greenway and Trails Master

Plan hopes to propel Worcester County as a leader in "active transportation with healthy, equitable, and sustainable greenways," the official document reads. The outline defines greenways as "corridors through natural areas connecting people walking, biking, or using other non-motorized ways to travel and reach destinations." The goal is that these paths will serve people who take regular casual strolls, non-car commuters, runners, cyclists, and hikers.

"The nature of Worcester County is that many people come here to visit for both recreation and economic opportunity," Stevens said. "We have a lot of people who live here full-time or part-time to enjoy the ocean, and there are many recreational opportunities at the state and national parks as well as the lovely small towns. Providing access to people to those places will have both an economic and health and safety impact."

Stevens added that there is a "tremendous" amount of bike and foot travel in the summer, particularly by seasonal workers, and as that season continues to lengthen, taking steps to improve pedestrian safety is imperative.

"We see in Worcester County, sim-



"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

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Group worked on Berlin grant

ilar to the rest of the state, that the death and serious injury due to collisions of those who walk and bike on our roads is rising,” she said. “It is critical to begin to work on creating safer ways for people to get around as development continues along Route 50, in West Ocean City, in Berlin, and in Snow Hill, and to create alternative routes for people to get to and from those places safely.”

Stevens added that pedestrian efforts must be prioritized at the intersection of Route 50 and Route 589 in light of the proposed Giant shopping center and a 168-unit apartment complex. According to Stevens, that intersection is one of the most dangerous on the Eastern Shore as bikers, individuals on scooters, and walkers travel to reach the existing shopping. As development continues, it will only worsen without proper precautions.

“To do that kind of development, bike and pedestrian planning for that intersection should be required to improve that area,” Stevens said.

The coalition has also worked to improve walkability in Berlin. Stevens noted that the pedestrian advocacy group worked with the town on a grant submission for the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program, created through the Infla-

tion Reduction Act in an amount of \$1.2 million for the design and planning stage of the Bridging the Highway that Divides Berlin: Reconnecting Neighborhoods Split by US 113 project. The initiative aims to improve the town’s walkability by constructing connectivity elements like a bike and pedestrian bridge over Route 113.

The Worcester County Bike and Pedestrian organization also garnered letters of support from the area’s participating coalition members and nonprofits like Lower Shore Land Trust and Beach to Bay Heritage Area for the Berlin project. Stevens said her group will continue to be involved in the initiative as it progresses.

Additionally, Stevens added that Worcester County Public Works Director Dallas Baker, a coalition member, has taken the lead in securing grant funding, conducting a feasibility study, and planning a shared-use path from Route 50 to Assateague along Route 611.

Stevens said that the feasibility study, which the coalition consulted on, has been completed, and the preliminary planning and design stage is next.

“The trail will greatly improve access for people who want to go to one

See COALITION Page 15



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SUBMITTED IMAGE/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

A rendering of the proposed skate park in Berlin shows a bowl, quarter pipes, a pump track and other design elements.

Skate park's big need: money

Continued from Page 1
peanut-shaped bowl. It's beautiful, and it fits in the space pretty well."

The design also includes amphitheater steps, a hiped bank, a grind ledge, an A-frame bank, a slappy curb, and a landscape area.

Now, the organization is searching for grants and other monetary avenues over the next few years to secure the finances necessary to get the project off the ground.

The group expects the initiative to cost approximately \$975,000 for the actual concrete park, or a total of \$1.2 million for everything, including additional lighting and other accessories.

One such avenue could be grants recommended to Weeg by Jake Day, secretary of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

The Strategic Demolition Grant, for instance, could be used by the town and

the nonprofit for pre-development costs, including site preparation.

The skate park could see several hundred thousand dollars from the program if awarded. According to Weeg, Day added that the Town of Berlin received \$500,000 from the Strategic Demolition Grant through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) FY2022 State Revitalization Program for the deconstruction of the former Tyson Plant on the Heron Park property, where the skate park will be situated.

"We have awarded \$500,000 for Heron Park already, so it makes sense for us to continue to invest," Day said in an August email to Weeg.

Day recommended the Community Legacy Grant for construction costs, of which he said the project would "definitely be eligible for the actual build-out of the park."

The project may also qualify for the Seed Community Development Anchor Institution Fund in the several hundred-thousand-dollar range.

However, the DHCD secretary maintains that it requires a college or hospital to apply, which he suggested could be Atlantic General Hospital.

"It won't cost [AGH] anything, especially if We Heart Berlin volunteers would do some of the work to assist with the application process," Day said.

The town's Annual Program Open Space Development Plan also included the skate park project, which Town Administrator Mary Bohlen said "prioritizes upcoming and future planned projects for the town's parks, with the intent to apply [for grant funding]."

According to Bohlen, the information necessary for an application on behalf of the skate park was not prepared in time for this year. However, she added that "provided the appropriate information is ready for a grant application, the town would intend to make an application to the Community Parks and Playgrounds program (under Program Open Space) for fiscal year 2026."

The funds would come through the Maryland Department of Natural Resources from their Open Space and Community Parks and Playgrounds Program.

The first two items on the town's Annual Program Open Space Development Plan were the construction of permanent restrooms at Stephen Decatur Park and a replacement playground unit at Henry Park.

These projects were funded through "various sources" and are about to proceed. Bohlen said that will "move the skate park up the list."

The town may submit a skate park application to the Community Parks and Playgrounds Program for FY26, due in late summer this year. Awardees will be notified in spring 2026. However, Bohlen maintained that Berlin intends to apply, but nothing is "set in stone." The appropriate information will need to be compiled before the project can be

See PARK Page 20

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SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE
The angel tree, located at the Ocean Pines Administration Building, is pictured above.

Angel Tree effort to help two local families in need

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Dec. 19, 2024) An initiative spearheaded by the Ocean Pines Association has reduced holiday shopping for two local families in need this season.

In collaboration with the Berlin Crisis Center, OPA has identified two families needing financial assistance this holiday season to feature in the community's annual Angel Tree program. Residents can head to the Ocean Pines Administration Building lobby, where ornaments with requested items from the families, including toys and clothing for the children, ages spanning toddler to teenager, have been placed on a festive tree. The gifts are to be returned wrapped by Friday, Dec. 20.

According to OPA Director of Business Administration Linda Martin, the Berlin Crisis Center receives several families each year for consideration for the charitable program. These submissions are then prioritized based on the special needs of the family.

"The crisis center is contacted for families that are in need," Martin said. "Along with the Angel Tree recipients, other families are identified for food donations, which the Administration Building sponsors for a holiday dinner....These two families, along with three other families, will also be receiving the Christmas dinner bags that OPA will be preparing."

Community members have until tomorrow to give back to the families in need. The complete list of requested items is located on the Angel Tree in the Administration Building lobby. The program is part of OPA's effort to lend a hand to its citizens this Christmas.

"It feels good to give back to the community, especially during the holiday season," Martin said.



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Opinion

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

Skate park banking on local generosity

It's difficult to say how Tony Weeg's appeal for contributions toward the cost of building Berlin's skate park will go, although this area's generous nature suggests that donations will be made.

How much the total might be and how long it will take to get to a number of some significance is impossible to predict, especially during the holiday season when disposable income will be disposed of with less than the usual self-restraint.

Once the holidays are over, and the annual post-Christmas reconciliation of household budgets has taken place, people, businesses and organizations will have a better idea of what they can do.

To be sure, the coastal communities can do and have done plenty, as was evidenced this week by a report from the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore on the results of this year's edition of "Giving Tuesday."

According to the foundation, the 10th annual "Shore Gives More Giving Tuesday" and the 145 area nonprofits that benefit from it took in more than \$1 million during the 24-hour online drive.

That's more than great. In fact, that's three times what the fundraiser collected last year. Also bear in mind that the first year of this event back in 2015 collected just \$4,285, showing that fundraising sometimes requires a building process.

That's likely the path the skate park campaign will take, starting off slowly and then gaining momentum as time passes

Again, it's far too early to forecast how the skate park plan will be received by potential donors. Also to be determined is how people view their own prospects in the year ahead, as they are called on to support various endeavors.

The only certainty at this time is that the one thing this area does have in abundance is people who are willing to give — and give generously — when they believe in the cause.

Pickleball tourney benefits Diakonia

Worcester County Recreation Center to host clinic in January

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Dec. 19, 2024) Local pickleball group PKLN's introductory tournament was a success as the organization looks to expand its influence in 2025.

PKLN, a pickleball-focused athletic organization headed by Salisbury School gym teacher Mike O'Malley, held its first annual holiday tournament to benefit Diakonia on Sunday, Dec. 15 at Factory Sports in Frankford, Del. The contest was \$45 to enter. After paying operating costs and other expenses, the event will have raised a little over \$500 to present to the charity.

According to O'Malley, the tournament was a doubles contest separated into three categories: 12 teams registered for the mixed division, five teams for the men, and four for the women. The event was conducted round-robin style, in which the teams played each other to a score of 11. The groups were seeded into a winners or consolation bracket based on the results of the initial matches. The top four seeds played in the semifinals to a score of 15. Every team was guaranteed five to six games, and even in the consolation bracket, the partners played for the chance to win a backpack provided by pickleball brand JOOLA.

"There was still something to play for, even if you got knocked out," O'Malley said.

Participants were also given ornaments, and pickleball companies JOOLA and Bread and Butter provided paddles to be raffled off. Additionally, PKLN merchandise like hats and sweatshirts were up for grabs.

"Everyone walked away with a handful of stuff," O'Malley said.

The tournament was labeled as a holiday event. As such, the PKLN leader said



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Participants in the recent PKLN tournament are pictured competing at the Factory Sports complex in Frankford, Del.

that participants dressed as elves and Santa to spread Christmas cheer as they expanded their paddle-wielding prowess. Coaches were onsite, ensuring the event was smooth and that players did not get "too uncomfortable out there," O'Malley noted.

O'Malley added that PKLN's first competition series attracted primarily beginners, which is a niche the organization intends to focus on this coming year.

"Everyone came in with an open mind," the pickleball enthusiast said. "While they were not sure what they were getting into, they knew that everyone had to start somewhere, and they showed up, got through the day, and got their first tournament under their belt."

The group, dedicated to appealing to novices, has hosted free community pickleball clinics, or "smashes," throughout the region this year, in places like Berlin, Georgetown, and Snow Hill to introduce beginners to the sport via open play and coaching. The events are held monthly in a different location each time.

The next clinic is planned

for Saturday, Jan. 25, at 5 pm at the Worcester County Recreation Center in Snow Hill. O'Malley hopes that once they secure a large enough following, PKLN will post polls on social media so the group's followers can choose where the smashes are located. These training experiences may be kicked up to twice a month as the weather heats up in the spring and summer.

PKLN is also gearing up for its next tournament. While the official date has not been set, O'Malley said that Eastern Shore pickleball fans can expect another competition series around Valentine's Day or St. Patrick's Day. The organization head noted that they intend to eliminate the men's and women's divisions and focus solely on mixed doubles on their second go-round. They hope to host two to three tournaments each year going forward.

As dates and other information on the upcoming events are nailed down, they will be shared on PKLN's Instagram and Facebook pages.

O'Malley said that the See PKLN Page 15

BAYSIDE GAZETTE

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PKLN events continue to grow

Continued from Page 14

group will expand its outreach into nearby schools this coming year. As a gym teacher at the Salisbury School, he is working with the facility's athletic director to launch a high school pickleball team. According to the PKLN founder, the Salisbury School is redoing its gymnasium floor over winter break and will add pickleball court lines. Worcester Prep also intends to create a pickleball club. O'Malley said that his group plans to work with other schools looking to start pickleball programs and teams.

"We can talk with [schools] for free, let everyone know what is involved and what can help get kids interested in the sport," he said. "We want to lend a hand to everyone in the area who wants to get pickleball going at their schools. Pickleball has proven to be a game changer for everyone."

"You don't have to be a great athlete," O'Malley continued. "You can

still get out there and have fun. [Pickleball] is opening the doors for everybody to hang out. It's common ground for everybody ... I want people to know that we are your people if they want to get involved in pickleball in 2025. Suppose you're a person scared who wants to try it out or a school that wants to get a team or club going. Everybody should get on board because the sport has tremendous value."

While the proceeds from the first tournament benefited Diakonia, O'Malley maintained that the athletic organization is open to partnering with other local charities and non-profits for future events.

Information on PKLN, its competition series, and free clinics can be found online at pklnpickleball.com or on the group's Instagram and Facebook pages.



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Coalition reports local progress

Continued from Page 11

of the highest demand visitor locations, Assateague, as well as for the residents that live along 611 that want to get into West Ocean City and Ocean City on bike or foot," the coalition representative said.

The coalition has advanced many projects to make Worcester County safer. Earlier this year, a crosswalk from the South Gate Pond to the Racetrack Road and Manklin Creek intersection was completed in Ocean Pines.

The State Highway Administration, a branch of the Maryland Department of Transportation, and the local organization partnered with the Ocean Pines Association on the project, ensuring the connection was placed at a heavily trafficked spot. As half the community's residents live on the south side and may wish to access Food Lion or the other surrounding shops by foot or bike, a safety precaution must be constructed to advance the neighborhood's walkability.

"We observe many people walking and biking that path," Stevens said in February. "Both employees and residents. Some people who work at Food Lion, Plaza Tapatia, and Dunkin Donuts need to get across. There needs to be safe access. Currently, there are a lot of illegal and dangerous crossings. That's something we're trying to combat."

The group plans on continuing this safety work into 2025.

"We have seen tremendous progress in identifying opportunities, securing grant funding, and beginning progress toward creating more walkable and bikeable communities," Stevens said.

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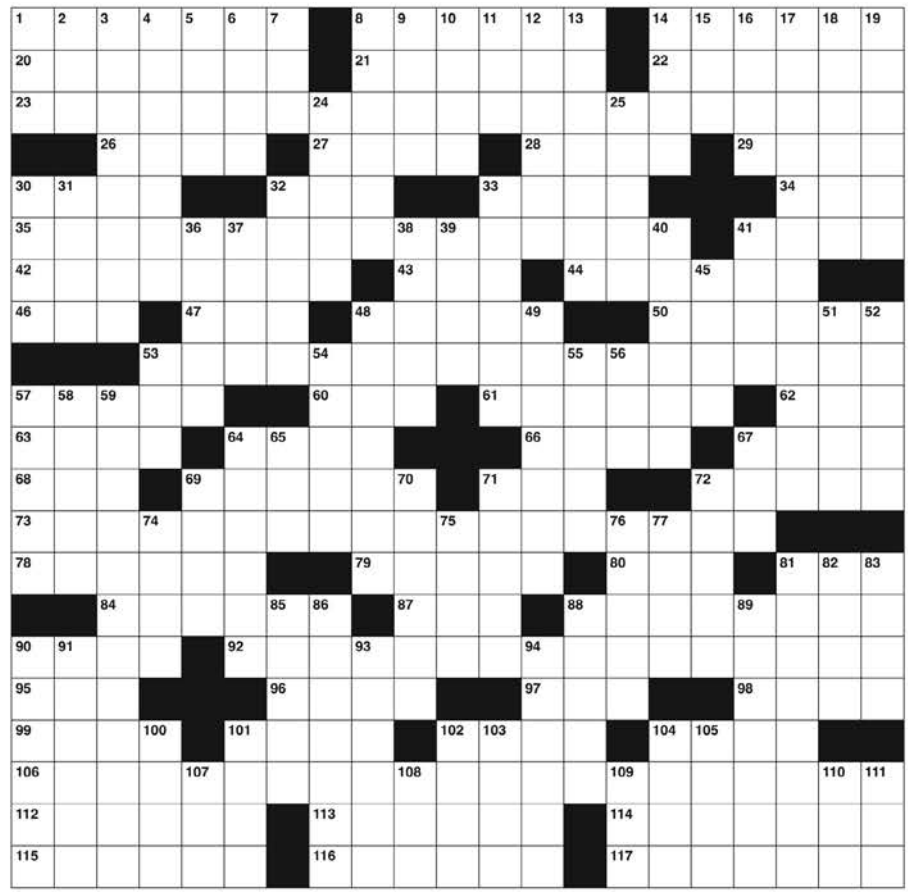



Puzzles

JUST FOR FUN
BY JOHN KUGELMAN / EDITED BY JOEL FAGLIANO

John Kugelmann, of Gainesville, Va., is a software engineer and musician. Besides making puzzles, John likes to spend his time off rock climbing and attending weekly trivia competitions with his father, sister and niece. Despite what you might think, he laments that "being good at crosswords means jack squat on trivia night." Still, he's holding out hope: "One of these weeks they'll have a Yoko Ono-Brian Eno round and we'll show them all!"

- ACROSS**
- 1 Candy that resembles a tube of lipstick
 - 8 Italian title for Puccini's "Butterfly"
 - 14 Over the line
 - 20 "Nothing weird about that"
 - 21 Figure of speech?
 - 22 Tarot card group
 - 23 "What a beautiful tackle box!" "Nice casting!" and such?
 - 26 Youngest-ever World Cup winner
 - 27 Desire
 - 28 Hold 'em declaration
 - 29 "I'll handle that"
 - 30 Actor Steve of "The White Lotus"
 - 32 Month, in Monterrey
 - 33 Snail-paced
 - 34 Group formed from the 2023 W.W.E.-U.F.C. merger
 - 35 Lasso?
 - 41 Daytime TV staple
 - 42 Firebirds and Fieros
 - 43 ___ de toilette
 - 44 Canonized king of Norway
 - 46 Dump
 - 47 Utmost degree
 - 48 Fleece
 - 50 Ryan with 12 Olympic swimming medals
 - 53 Leaning forward and holding the reins?
- DOWN**
- 1 ___-Man
 - 2 Troop grp.
 - 3 One of over 100 for Haydn
 - 4 "Fingers crossed that you're wrong"
 - 5 Sway
 - 6 Pooch in the funnies
 - 7 When doubled, something seen atop a pyramid?
 - 8 Philosophical believer in essential unity
 - 9 Kennedy Center focus
 - 10 Skedaddle
 - 11 Anti-trafficking org.
 - 12 Toddler's term for a farm animal
 - 13 Spice planet in the "Dune" universe
 - 14 Shadow
 - 15 Certain Boolean operators
 - 57 Certain erogenous zone, familiarly
 - 60 Ambulance destinations, for short
 - 61 Focus of a House committee
 - 62 Liable (to)
 - 63 Dutch astronomer for whom an ice cloud is named
 - 64 Singer Del Rey
 - 66 Country between Ghana and Benin
 - 67 Family ___
 - 68 A in French class?
 - 69 Commenced
 - 71 Branded item at a bank, maybe
 - 72 Instrument heard on the Rolling Stones' "Paint It Black"
 - 73 Accidentally using salt instead of sugar, say?
 - 78 Fills in for
 - 79 Great Lakes people
 - 80 Cuisine with sticky rice
 - 81 Mascot of the Baltimore Ravens
 - 84 One-up, militarily
 - 87 ___ vez (once, in Spanish)
 - 88 Toy-centered theme park
 - 90 Tusked Warcraft race
 - 92 Marathon fee or campaign donation?
 - 95 Agcy. that determined fluoride prevents tooth decay
 - 96 Cousins of magpies
 - 97 Cause of a big bang
 - 98 It's bigger than a butte
 - 99 Saxophonist Getz
 - 101 Cowpoke's compadre
 - 102 Slacked, say
 - 104 Wharton major, in brief
 - 106 Not being allowed to lick the spatula clean?
 - 112 Bested a birdie
 - 113 Salt, say
 - 114 Join in
 - 115 Completes, as a circuit
 - 116 ___ Biggums, memorable character on "Chappelle's Show"
 - 117 "The other thing is ..."
- ACROSS**
- 16 Number of eyes for a tarantula
 - 17 Squeamish
 - 18 Sorenstam of golf
 - 19 Convertible, casually
 - 24 Still-life vessels
 - 25 Larry ____, founder of Hustler magazine
 - 30 Hits with a ray gun
 - 31 Over and over
 - 32 Chewy Japanese dessert
 - 33 Fluffy footstool
 - 36 Merlot alternative
 - 37 Top section of the food pyramid
 - 38 ___ journey (story framework)
 - 39 Common sound from a white noise machine
 - 40 Totally lose it
 - 41 Can
 - 45 Dreaded hairstyle
 - 48 Animal that fights by "necking"
 - 49 Sways
 - 51 Far from laid-back
 - 52 Fruity-smelling compound
 - 53 "___, meet kettle"
 - 54 Bocelli, e.g.
 - 55 Waterway through Lake Geneva
 - 56 Little celebration
 - 57 Cheese that's often smoked
 - 58 Like some waves
 - 59 Wand-waving words
 - 64 "Woo-hoo, that's awesome!"
 - 65 Suffix with block or stock
 - 67 Love all, say



- 69 Exam for aspiring attys.
- 70 Discussion sites
- 71 Song of praise
- 72 Bloodhound's trail
- 74 Laptop brand
- 75 Acronymic epithet for one who's not conservative enough
- 76 Chin feature
- 77 "Aladdin" character who hates crackers
- 81 PG-13 word
- 82 Burden
- 83 Mrs. Krabappel's first name on "The Simpsons"
- 85 Fix, as a printer
- 86 "Advance to the Railroad" (Monopoly directive)
- 88 Carter who played Wonder Woman
- 89 "Raging Bull" boxer Jake
- 90 How freelancers work
- 91 Confirmation, e.g.
- 93 Capital of New South Wales
- 94 Everlasting, poetically
- 100 Lofgren of the E Street Band
- 101 Many think-tank hires, in brief
- 102 "Assuming that's true ..."
- 103 Word before jelly or Pie
- 104 Gusto
- 105 Morsel for Miss Muffet
- 107 "What did I tell you!"
- 108 Salt
- 109 Résumé fig.
- 110 Gives the nod
- 111 Agent Smith's nemesis

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HARD - 7

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.

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

Answers to last week's puzzles

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

B	U	S	S	D	I	P	S	I	L	A	S	M	I	S	C	H	A		
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Obituary

RONALD ALVIN ERLWEIN Ocean Pines

Ronald Alvin Erlwein, age 92, of Ocean Pines, passed away on Friday, December 6, 2024, at the Berlin Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.



Ronald Erlwein

Ron was born on July 20, 1932, in Seattle, Washington. He was the son of the late Dewey Marion Erlwein, Sr. and Alwina Hedwig (Schreib) Erlwein.

After Ron graduated from high school, he enlisted in the Air Force and became an aircraft mechanic and flight engineer. He was in the Air Force during the Korean War and the Vietnam War. Ron retired from the Air Force in 1972 after 22 years of service.

Ron became a member of the American Legion Post 259 in Clinton, MD in 1974, and was a member for 50 years. He was an Honorary Life Member and very involved in the American Legion. He served four times as the Commander of Post 259. Ron also attended the yearly American Legion Conference in Ocean City, MD.

Ron was an avid golfer and enjoyed playing golf with family and

friends. He also played golf in many tournaments.

Ron is survived by Vania, his wife of 31 years; son Brian, granddaughter Brijitte, grandson Ronald III, great-grandchildren Amanda, Anikka, Devin, and Mason, and other relatives and friends.

In addition to his parents, Ron was preceded in death by his first wife Phyllis, son Ronald Jr., daughter Debra, sister Marion, and brothers Ted, Warren, Dewey Jr., and Bruce.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Ron's name to The American Lung Association, PO Box 756, Osceola, WI 54020.

A funeral service was held on Sunday, Dec. 15, 2024, at 2 p.m., at The Burbage Funeral Home in Berlin. The viewing was held from 1-2 p.m. prior to the service. Burial will take place at Cheltenham Veterans Cemetery in Cheltenham on Jan. 2, 2025, at 11:15 a.m. Letters of condolence can be sent to the family via www.burbagefuneralhome.com. Arrangements are in the care of The Burbage Funeral Home.

OBITUARY NOTICES
Obituary Notices cost \$50 per week for Print and Online Publications.
E-mail: editor@baysidegazette.com

Christmas

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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-3pm	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-3pm	12346 Old Bridge Rd, West OC	2BR/1BA	Single Family	starting at \$179,900	Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community
Saturday 11am-1pm	11964 W. War Dancer Lane #105, Berlin	3BR/3.5BA	Townhome	\$485,000	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-1pm	5401 Coastal Highway Unit 204, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$444,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday Noon-2pm	73 King Richard Road, Berlin	4BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$749,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 1:30-3:30pm	202 S. Heron Dr. Unit 204C, Heron Harbour, OC	3BR/2BA	Condo	\$539,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 1-3pm	261 Charleston Road, Ocean Pines	4BR/4.5BA	Single Family	\$849,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 1-3pm	73 King Richard Road, Berlin	4BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$749,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty

Happy Holidays!



Snapshots

HOLIDAY TREE DECORATING

Maryland First Lady Dawn Moore continued the tradition of inviting the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland to decorate holiday trees and wreaths for the Rotunda of the State House again this year. Three Worcester County Garden Club members recently traveled to Annapolis and placed a holiday tree decorated with ornaments members made during a prior workshop to highlight its theme, "Planting Peace Through Gardening." After viewing the tree with the First Lady, each member attending received an ornament from the Moore family as well as a certificate of appreciation to the club from the Office of the Governor. Pictured, from left, are Moore and WCGC members Karen Trigger, Pat Arata and Susan Fletcher.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

ANNIVERSARY GALA

On Nov. 21, the Republican Women of Worcester County held their 40th Anniversary Gala at the Ocean Pines Yacht Club. After a champagne toast and a fabulous dinner, several past RWWC Presidents, current President Jean Delcher and one charter member was recognized. Seated, from left, are Beverly Bigler, LouEtta McClafin, Ellen Bunting (charter member) and Joan Gentile; and standing, from left, State Delegate Charles Otto, Beth Rodier, Pat Schrawder, Jean Delcher, Congressman Andy Harris, Linda Busick, Sandy Zitzer, State Delegate Wayne Hartman and State Senator Mary Beth Carozza.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

DAR WORKSHOP

Members of the General Levin Winder Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution paired up at a workshop and made fleece lap blankets for veterans. Following its recent meeting, members delivered the blankets to Coastal Hospice at the Stansell House for its "We Honor Veterans" program. A "Dear Military Veteran Thank You" tag was attached with a ribbon to a corner of each lap blanket. The DAR is a women's service organization dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history, and securing America's future through better education.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

CHIEF SPEAKS

Ocean Pines Police Chief Tim Robinson was the guest speaker at a recent meeting of the Philanthropic Educational Organization's Chapter AK in Ocean Pines. He spoke on scams and fraud in our area and how to avoid them. Shown are Nancy Waters, P.E.O. member, and Robinson.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

BERLIN LIONS CLUB DONATION

The Berlin Lions Club recently made a donation of \$500 to Boy Scout Troop 225 and hosted the troop for a Thanksgiving-style dinner. Pictured are Club President Joe Andrews and Boy Scout moderator Bob P and members of the troop.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

GUEST SPEAKER

The Kiwanis Club of Greater Ocean Pines-Ocean City heard from Home Care Consultant Crystal Heiser of Home Instead recently. Heiser is pictured with Kiwanis Club President Tom Southwell after her presentation. Home Instead provides personal service like bathing and dressing, mobility meal preparation and housekeeping and provide transportation for doctor appointments, prescription pickup, grocery shopping and more.

Calendar

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

Thurs., Dec. 19

CPAP MASK FITTING

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

STORY TIME 'THIS LITTLE PUP'

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and rhymes. For ages 0-5 years. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

STORY TIME: CHRISTMAS

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and rhymes. For ages 0-5 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

COLLAGE ORNAMENTS

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 2 p.m. Decorate wooden ornaments with modern art postcards. Registration required: 410-957-0878. www.worcesterlibrary.org

MAGIC THE GATHERING

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 3:30 p.m. Experienced and novice players welcome. BYOC recommended. For ages 12-18 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

COOKIE DECORATING

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 4 p.m. Teens come decorate delicious cookies worthy of your social media posts. Gluten-free option available. For ages 12-18 years. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

QUIT SMOKING & VAPING CLASSES

Gudelsky Family Medical Center, 10614 Racetrack Road, Ocean Pines, 5-6 p.m. Participants receive one-on-one support, group support, weekly prizes and quit resources. Register: 410-632-1100, Ext. 1102, www.worcesterhealth.org.

Fri., Dec. 20

FREE CARRIAGE RIDES

Historic Downtown Berlin, 124 N. Main St., 11 a.m.-3 p.m. www.berlinmainstreet.com

FANDOM FRIDAY: MYTHS AND RETELLINGS

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Drop in anytime for crafts, quizzes and discussions about the

monthly topic. For ages 6-18 years. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

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 your own tile set. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

HOLIDAYS AROUND THE WORLD

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 1 p.m. Create crafts from all around the world and learn how people celebrate in each country. For ages 6-11 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BOOK OF THE MONTH CLUB: 'WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN' BY HOLLY MILLER

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 2 p.m. Copies of the book are available at the Berlin Library circulation desk. 410-641-0650, 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., Dec. 21

A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS LIVE ON STAGE

Ocean City Performing Arts Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, 2 p.m. Two showings: 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. Encompassing each of the favorite scenes from the original television show and more. Costs: \$35, \$50, \$55 and \$59. Tickets: <https://www.acharliebrownchristmaslive.com>.

WINTER WONDERLAND

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 5:30-9 p.m. Paint the 2025 Ward World Championship Youth Bufflehead Silhouette, make crafts, enjoy story time, and check out the model train display. Free admission. <https://wardfdn.org/learn-explore/>, 410-339-0668

MEET SANTA

Kringle Kottage on Artisan's Green, 124 N. Main St., Berlin, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. www.berlinmainstreet.com

FREE CARRIAGE RIDES

Historic Downtown Berlin, 124 N. Main St., 11 a.m.-3 p.m. www.berlinmainstreet.com

WALK WITH A DOC

Southgate Pond, Race Track Road, Ocean Pines, 9-10 a.m. Join AGH regis-

tered dietitian Katie Dorsch for a brief presentation on how to eat healthy. Walk around the pond afterwards. The first 10 participants to arrive will receive \$10 WalMart gift cards. 410-641-9268

FAMILY LIBRARY DAY: DECEMBER HOLIDAYS ACROSS CULTURES

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 10 a.m. Crafts, games and activities to explore December celebrations from around the world. For families. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

CRAFTY SATURDAY: WINTER HOLIDAYS

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m. From reindeer to gingerbread men, come ready to craft. For ages 0-11 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BILINGUAL STORY TIME

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Crafts, songs and stories in both English and Spanish. For ages 0-5 years. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

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., Dec. 22

MEET SANTA

Kringle Kottage on Artisan's Green, 124 N. Main St., Berlin. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. www.berlinmainstreet.com

FREE CARRIAGE RIDES

Historic Downtown Berlin, 124 N. Main St., 11 a.m.-3 p.m. www.berlinmainstreet.com

BERLIN FLEA MARKET

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

SEWING FOR A CAUSE

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

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

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

Mon., Dec. 23

STORY TIME: SNOWMEN

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30

a.m. Crafts, songs and stories. For ages 0-5 years. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

MAGIC MONDAY

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 5 p.m. Magic the Gathering meet-up, fourth Monday of each 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

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

ONGOING EVENTS

SEND LETTERS TO SANTA

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, Nov. 25 through Dec. 20. Children of all ages are welcome to drop off their written letters to Santa at the red mailbox. Make sure that letters have child's name and address so Santa can respond.

DECEMBER INSPIRATION CHALLENGE

Snow Hill library, 307 N. Washington St. Art, photography or poetry competition for all ages. Pieces will be displayed in the library for viewing and voting by age bracket. The theme is "Envy." Due by Dec. 20. 410-632-3495

OCEAN PINES VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT RAFFLE

Win a 2024 F-150 4X4 Supercrew 5.0L V8. Tickets cost \$100. All registration, sale, etc. expenses covered by O.P.V.F.D. Drawing will take place on Dec. 21. For more information: www.opvfd.com/f-150.

LIVING NATIVITY

Bluebird Farms, 11207 Racetrack Road, Berlin, Saturdays and Sundays until

Continued on Page 20

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Park could break ground in '26

Continued from Page 12
put up for funding.

Weeg expects the skate park to break ground in 2026 or 2027, unless "local all-stars" step up and enable construction to begin sooner.

Meanwhile, Weeg said fundraising will likely occur in more traditional, slower avenues.

"[Funding] is either going to be coming through [grants and donations], or we're going to be doing it with bake sales, and that is going to take a long, long time, and the kids looking at us saying 'we want a skate park' are going to be adults, raising money with us later down the road," Weeg said.

"The kids have been waiting long enough, and I'm hoping we can get some

people interested in this and involved soon," he said.

We Heart Berlin will also offer naming rights for the elements and park pieces for any sizable contribution. Additionally, Weeg hopes to sell bricks at \$100 each for a pathway that could be engraved to help raise money and get people involved in the project's creation.

Weeg said the push for a skate park in Berlin has been ongoing for over a decade. He hopes the town's kids will have the recreational space sooner rather than later.

"The biggest thing is money," he said. "We need people who can step up to the plate and make this happen. We have done everything we can to get there; we just need the help."

Calendar

Continued from Page 19

Christmas, noon to 6 p.m. Complimentary hot chocolate, music, petting and photo op with mini cow, donkey, goat and sheep. Donations benefiting Coastal Hospice, Diakonia, Local Troop #621 B.S.A. and Saltwater Mini Farm.

LIGHT UP THE PINES

Ocean Pines residents may sign up throughout the holiday season to have their homes added to the online map. Submit name, address and phone num-

ber via email to info@oceanpines.org or call 410-641-7717, Ext. 3014. Visit oceanpines.org for a map of participating homes.

WINTER TRAIN GARDEN

Ocean City library, 10003 Coastal Highway, December through Jan. 4. Visitors of all ages will delight in interacting with buttons that activate accessories and sounds. A scavenger hunt for young patrons will also be available. 410-524-1818



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