



SUBMITTED PHOTOS/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Along with their co-workers, CJ Rounds and Tony Howard of the Ocean Pines Public Works Department have been busy this winter dealing with several plow-worthy storms.

When it snows, grueling shifts battling drifts

Ocean Pines Public Works crews intense labors begin before storms even arrive

By Josh Davis
Contributing Writer

(Feb. 20, 2025) When the first snowflakes fall in Ocean Pines, most residents cozy up indoors, watching the world turn white from the comfort of their homes.

But for the Ocean Pines Public Works team, snowfall marks the start of long, grueling shifts battling the elements to keep roads safe and passable.

“It all depends on the storm,” Tony Howard, a veteran member of the Public Works crew, said. “This last one (before this week) was about 12 hours, but sometimes we’re out for 24 hours straight or longer.”

Howard, alongside fellow crew member CJ Rounds, is no stranger to these intense shifts. Their work begins long before the first flake touches the ground.

“The day before a storm, we start loading up equip-



ment, checking everything to make sure it’s running,” Rounds said. “We fill the spreaders and pretreat the roads as much as we can.”

This winter alone, Public Works crews have tackled four snowstorms, often working overnight shifts.

Two of those required plowing 80 miles of road, plus clearing parking lots for essential facilities, including the police department, administration offices, community center, fire stations, the Sports Core Pool, and the Yacht and Golf Club. Two others requiring only salting.

To improve road treatment, Ocean Pines is exploring the use of a brine mix – a liquid solution that prevents snow and ice from bonding to pavement.

“You’ve probably seen the white stripes on the

See PINES page 10

Former officer for town dies on way to fire

Retired cop J.D. Lawson was with hometown dept.

By Steve Green
Executive Editor

(Feb. 20, 2025) A retired Berlin police officer died Monday night responding to a structure fire in West Virginia. J.D. Lawson was 54.

After his retirement from the Berlin Police Department in 2023 as a lieutenant, Lawson returned to his hometown of War, W.Va. During his time with Berlin, Lawson was also an active member with the Ocean City Volunteer Fire Company for nearly 20 years.



J.D. Lawson

According to a press release from the West Virginia State Fire Marshal, Lawson, 54, died responding to a structure fire in McDowell County, W.Va.

Around 7:25 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 17, McDowell County 911 received a report of a structure fire in the 12000 block of Marshall Highway in Jolo, W.Va. The War Volunteer Fire Department responded along with the Bradshaw Volunteer Fire Department and Raysal Volunteer Fire Department.

On to the way to fight the fire, Lawson, a deputy chief with the War Volunteer Fire Department, became ill, according to the press release. The fire apparatus driver immediately turned the truck around and started driving in the direction of Welch Community Hospital. The team met up with an EMS unit and transferred Lawson to that unit.

The ambulance continued to Welch Community Hospital with Lawson, who became unconscious, and CPR efforts were initiated by the

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Sewer main break leads to harvest restrictions

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 20, 2025) Shellfish harvesting restrictions remain in effect until March 1 in Manklin Creek following a sewer main malfunction.

The 10-inch sewer main break near the corner of Ocean Parkway and Cathell Road in Ocean Pines caused approximately 1,200 gallons of sewage to spill into an adjacent marsh that drains into Manklin Creek.

According to a press release issued by Worcester County Public Information Officer Kim Moses, Worcester County Public Works identified and repaired the break on Feb. 7. Before the situation was handled, the fracture allowed around 1,200 gallons of sewage to find its way into a nearby marsh, one that drains into Manklin Creek.

The Maryland Department of the Environment issued an emergency closure of the waterway on Feb. 8. The restrictions will be lifted on March 1.

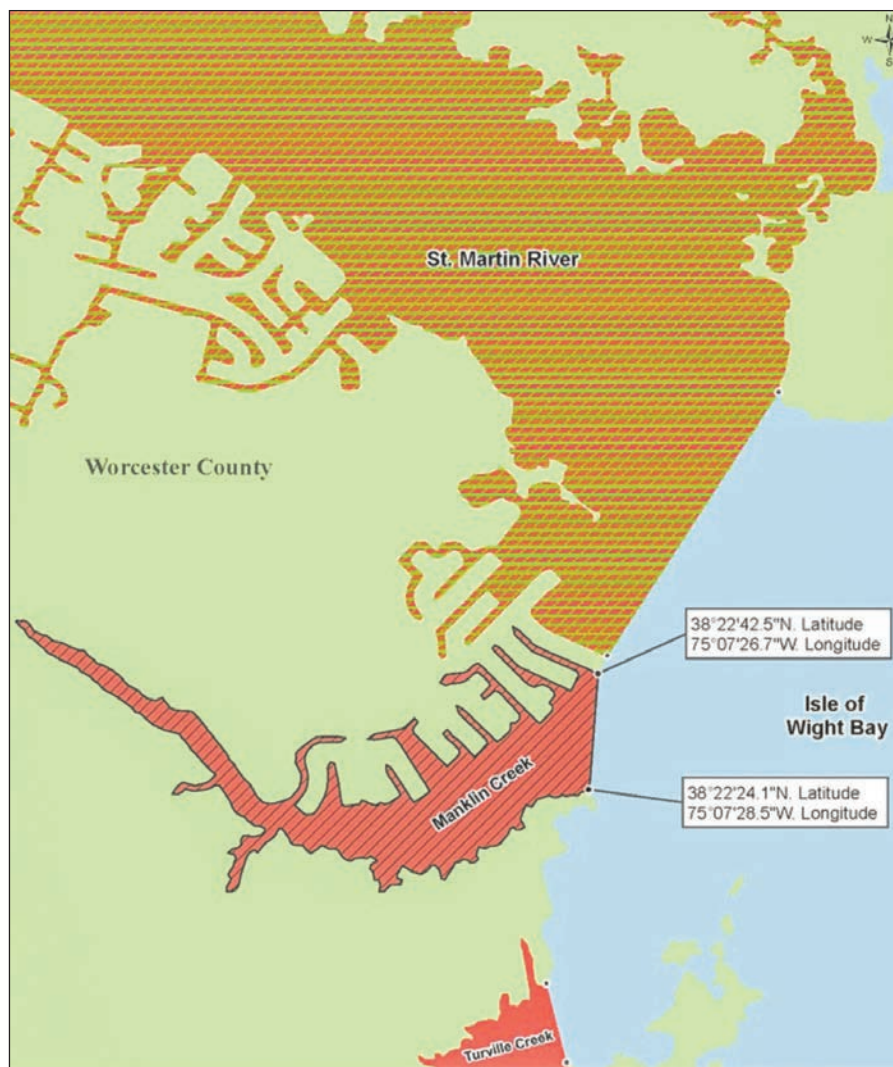
“The county immediately notified the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), which issued a public notice temporarily restricting shellfish harvesting in Manklin Creek,” Public Works Director Dallas Baker said in the press release.

While there are no oyster bed leases in Manklin Creek, the press release urged in its Feb. 12 issuance that anyone who may have oyster floats or cages in the body of water should not consume any shellfish from the creek for the next 21 days.

Worcester County Environmental Programs Director Bob Mitchell said in the announcement that the weeks-long closing will give the waterway time to return to normal, safe conditions.

“Closure restrictions are based on providing 14 days to dilute out any bacteria and 21 days to strain out potential viruses, such as Norovirus,” he said.

The shellfish harvesting restrictions will be lifted on Saturday, March 1.



Ocean Pines Association to host spring events, NYC trip

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 20, 2025) While winter continues to rage, the Ocean Pines Association Recreation and Parks Department is gearing up to offer spring-themed events for residents.

On Saturday, March 22, from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Ocean Pines Community Center, the recreational group will offer its Spring Carrot Wreath Workshop. The crafty affair yields a price of \$15 a person.

“Heat up your glue gun and welcome spring to your home with this cute and easy-to-make spring carrot wreath,” the event announcement reads. “At this workshop, participants will be provided with all of the materials to complete this easy craft.”

Those interested in attending the spring-themed activity can visit www.oceanpines.org or call 410-641-7052 for registration or general information.

Bus trips will also return as the weather warms up. On Saturday, May 10, the OPA Recreation and Parks Department is presenting their New York in the Spring trip for \$85 a person to cover transportation. The occasion is part of the recreation team’s effort to bring in additional revenue and offer homeowners more services and fun activities.

“We have a lot of different programs that we are adding this year,” Debbie Donahue, the recreation and parks director, said at the community’s budget town hall earlier this month. “We have gone back to bus trips again. That was kind of taken aside since [the pandemic].”

Residents can call 410-641-7052 to reserve their seats. The bus will depart from the Ocean Pines Community Center at 5:30 a.m. and will include a fast food breakfast stop. Attendees will have from around 10 a.m. until 6:30 p.m. to explore the city on their own.

“Shop, see a show, sightsee, the choice is yours,” the event flyer says.

Earlier in the season, on Saturday, April 26, OPA rec and parks is hosting its Big Truck Day with tow trucks, fire trucks, dump trucks, food trucks, tractor trailers, and more. The announcement maintains that all trucks will include all safety features.

The event will occur from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial Park. More information can be obtained by calling 410-641-7052.

Later this month, on Wednesday, Feb. 26 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., the group is hosting another Paint and Sip night with the subject matter of winter birds. The class is for those 18 and older and is \$27 per person. Wine and crackers are included in the price. The craft will be held at the Ocean Pines Community Center.

Attendees will follow instructor Joan Guerriero “as she teaches participants step by step how to create their very own beautiful work of art,” the Facebook announcement reads. Pre-registration is required. Those interested in participating can call 410-641-7052 to sign up.

New sessions for the Zumba Toning classes have also been added. The workout classes will be offered Tuesdays from 8:45 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at See RECREATION Page 4



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Berlin semifinalist for national recognition

By **Tara Fischer**
Staff Writer

(Feb. 20, 2025) Due to its commitment to diversity, community engagement, and historic preservation, Berlin Main Street has been selected as a semifinalist for the 2025 Great American Main Street Award and will be recognized at the Main Street Now Conference in Philadelphia on April 7.

Berlin was named a semifinalist for the honor through its status as an accredited Main Street America Program. Main Street America leads a movement dedicated to “reenergizing and strengthening older and historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts through place-based economic development and community preservation,” according to its website.

The organization supports communities throughout the United States via

its Main Street Approach. This method prioritizes economic vitality, design, promotion, and organization to strengthen a commercial district and its economy.

Work within the economic vitality area includes financial tools to assist new and existing businesses. The design aims to enhance the physical aspects of a commercial district that set it apart. Promotion looks to showcase a downtown’s unique characteristics, and the organization involves creating partnerships and community engagement.

“Our highly collaborative team works across a broad range of disciplines, including economic development, historic preservation, urban planning, finance, and public affairs,” the Main Street America website says. “We have a proven track record in

helping a diverse range of communities through direct technical assistance, advocacy support, research tools, professional development programs, thought leadership, and capacity-building programs.”

Main Street leaders are also given access to grants, educational services, and resource opportunities through Main Street America’s partnerships with corporations and government entities to support local economies.

Main Street America sponsors the Great American Main Street Award, which is reserved for municipalities registered in the program that demonstrate innovative community transformation, engagement, and the creation of arts and culture scenes.

The finalist announcement by Main Street America said that Berlin was selected as an award semifinalist because of the town’s welcoming and thriving spirit, particularly for its support of underrepresented business owners and fostering a neighborhood of inclusion and equity.

“Berlin Main Street’s accomplishments include increasing business opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses, championing preservation and adaptive reuse projects, and nurturing a volunteer base and board of directors that reflects the community’s diversity—from age and heritage to perspectives and interests,” the Main Street America press release reads.

According to the national organization, Berlin Main Street embraces diversity in many approaches. These methods include celebrating Black-owned businesses year-round, hosting a flag-raising event to observe LGBTQ+ Pride Month in June, and paving the path for youth engagement as volunteers and committee liaisons. Berlin’s creation of a “thriving designated arts and entertainment district” and the town’s nearly two dozen annual events

solidified its spot as one of the eight Great American Main Street Award semifinalists.

Of the over 200 Main Street Programs throughout the United States, only 112 have been acknowledged as “GAMSA-winning communities” since the award’s establishment in 1995. This year’s selection of finalists has lived up to the program’s standards, creating thriving communities and advancing the areas’ quality of life.

“Collectively, the 2025 GAMSA semifinalists have generated over \$695 million in local reinvestment, helped open 975 net new businesses, facilitated the creation of 7,190 net new jobs, catalyzed the rehabilitation of 1,568 historic buildings, and leveraged 333,050 volunteer hours,” the announcement noted.

Each year, eligible communities submit their applications to be considered for the award. The jury, comprised of Main Street professionals and leaders in the fields of community and economic development and historic preservation, chooses the winners and semifinalists, keeping in mind the “strength of the Main Street program in spurring community transformation, commitment to historic preservation, innovative programming, implementation of cross-sector partnerships, community outreach and stakeholder engagement, and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion,” the program’s official website states.

This year’s list of semifinalists, in addition to Berlin, includes Denison Main Street in Denison, Texas; Easton Main Street Initiative in Easton, Pennsylvania; Main Street Farmington in Farmington, Oakland County, Michigan; Jefferson Matters in Jefferson, Iowa; Raton MainStreet/Arts & Culture District in Raton, New Mexico; Vicksburg Main Street Program in Vicksburg, Mississippi; and Downtown Wytheville Inc. in Wytheville, Virginia.

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Recreation programs planned

Continued from Page 3

the Ocean Pines Community Center from Feb. 25 to April 1 and April 8 to May 13. Ocean Pines residents can pay \$40 for six classes. The cost is \$45 for nonresidents. Drop-ins are also welcome for \$10 each class.

Instructor Joyce Landsman teaches the Zumba sessions. Participants can register by calling 410-641-7052.

At the budget town hall earlier this month, Donahue said the recreation and parks team wants to add new programs this year to create revenue for the department. The director referenced last year’s Vienna Boys Choir show around Christmas at the Ocean City Convention Center hosted by OPA’s recreation group and said that she hopes they can work with the OC facility again for future events.

Donahue mentioned they are looking to host programs at the Yacht Club this spring and summer. She also said that her team added some new yoga and other fitness-related classes and intends to incorporate more during this next year.

“We are working on different changes and structure changes to some of our classes and programs,” the director said. “We brought in some new yoga classes and Pilates, things of that nature. We do have plans to bring in more of those classes and with some new instructors. We hope to increase class revenue with some of those things.”

More information on OPA’s Recreation and Parks Department and upcoming programs can be found on the community’s website.



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Ocean Pines preparing second annual expo

Amenities, businesses and clubs to sell themselves at a season kickoff this spring

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 20, 2025) The Ocean Pines Season Kickoff is gearing up for its second year. Community residents will have the opportunity to explore all the neighborhood has to offer, including amenities, small businesses, clubs, and organizations.

This year, the Ocean Pines expo will be held at Veterans Memorial Park on Saturday, May 17 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Attendees can ask amenity representatives membership questions, find volunteer, social, and club opportunities, and discover small, local businesses.

Linda Yurche, the Ocean Pines Association's Communications Committee leader, and Gary Miller, the chair of the Aquatics Advisory Committee, are co-captains of the event.

Last year's kickoff yielded a sizable turnout. Yurche is hopeful that Ocean Pines residents will continue to foster that sense of community and enjoy the expo just as much this time around.

"Seeing neighbors connect with one another is the thing that really gives me the most satisfaction at the end of the day," she said.

Food vendors will also be onsite for participants to grab lunch as they browse the booths. Kona Ice was present at the expo last year and has signed on to bring its shaved ice to the kickoff once again. Yurche said they are working on getting other

trucks, like Hooper's Crab House and That Kitchen, which offered refreshments in 2024, to return.

The event was located at White Horse Park in its inaugural year, but as exhibitor space sold out and the event drew in approximately 1,000 attendees, the kickoff will now be held at the Veterans Memorial Park to provide more room. This deviation will allow organizers to expand how they promote neighborhood connection.

One such way is utilizing the remembrance park's new gazebo, which was finished in November. According to Yurche, she and her preparation team will add seating inside the structure for those who might need to find a moment in the shade and then assemble the food options around the building.

"The new pavilion at the Veterans Memorial Park will become sort of like a picnic area," the kickoff co-chair said. "We'll have tables in and out of the pavilion, so if you need shade, you have a spot to sit. And we're going to surround that space with food trucks and food vendors ... So, we're hoping people will come, walk around, buy lunch from a food vendor, and hang out with friends and neighbors. We're expanding the way we sit and enjoy and connect with each other."

When May 17 was confirmed as the event date, organizers sent out an email to last year's exhibitors, and a quarter had responded within 24 hours, confirming their 2025 participation. Yurche said they currently have 20 groups signed up, like Delmarva Cat Connection and Delmarva Chorus, which is "way ahead of where we were at this point last year."

Organizations that wish to set up a booth have until May 5 to register. Space is free for nonprofits that bring their own table or \$20 if they request a table from Ocean Pines. Vendor space for businesses is around \$75.

"One of the great things last year was all these small businesses came out, and if you make it too expensive, it doesn't work for them," Yurche said. "We tried to make it affordable for small businesses."

Businesses and organizations can also come on as a sponsor for \$500 to \$2,500, with benefits including signage, social media promotion, and advertising.

TidalHealth has signed on as the kickoff's platinum sponsor, a move that was spearheaded by Miller, Yurche said.

"[TidalHealth] had said they were interested, and then [Miller] is such an ace at rounding up sponsors," the

Communications Committee leader noted. "He is a go-out-and-talk-to-everybody guy. He just kept in touch with people, and he worked with TidalHealth to make this happen, so we're excited."

The initial idea behind the expo was to promote the community's amenities ahead of the summer season. As last year's planning took off, this was expanded to include clubs, volunteer opportunities, and the businesses surrounding the neighborhood.

Yurche maintained that fostering connection among residents and the various opportunities available to them is the kickoff's main goal.

"Last year was the first time we did this, and at the time, we thought we should have an event to kick off the season to remind people the amenities are open," she said. "We were also really thinking that coming out of the pandemic, a lot of clubs and organizations were quieter. People had moved [into the neighborhood] and didn't even know there was a chess club or a flower club. So, part of the thinking last year was, 'let's remind people of all the great things there are to do in Ocean Pines and all the ways you can get involved.'"

Business and organization representatives and individuals looking to volunteer at the event can email opseasonkickoff@gmail.com for registration and more information.

"We would love some new volunteers, new vendors," Yurche said. "Anyone who wants to get involved early, this is the time to get in on the ground floor."

Organizers expect a high turnout, similar to last year's event, and hope people will be eager to leave their houses and enjoy the neighborhood in the sunshine as winter winds down and the warmer season kicks off.

Yurche also noted that she believes the expo will create a positive community atmosphere heading into the busy summer months.

"I think the value of this event now, and hopefully going into the future, is that it connects people, businesses, and organizations in a positive way," the event co-chair said. "When you're on social media, you hear people complaining about this and that. There's always something that could be better, that people could do better, and you can get a downer view if you just listen to what people say on social media. When they come together in person and see their neighbors, all of a sudden, all of the good stuff comes back to you, and I think that guides our vision."

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Pullover law raises concerns for region's police agencies

Sheriff, Ocean City police submit opposition to major changes proposed for Md.

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Feb. 14, 2025) Local law enforcement honchos say they're not happy with a proposal in Annapolis that outlaws a police officer pulling over a driver for minor infractions like a busted headlight, expired registration, or missed turn signal.

Those and other now-primary reasons for a traffic stop would be relegated to secondary violations under legislation now pending in the Maryland General Assembly. It means police action on a secondary infraction would only be legal after an officer has already detained a driver for a suspected violation of another offense.

Traffic violations relegated to secondary enforcement under the bills would include driving an unregistered vehicle, driving without evidence of registration, improper turning or stopping, wheel-spinning, excessive noisemaking, or driving in a bus lane.

Senate Bill 292 and House Bill 635, also says if a police officer doesn't comply with the rule, then evidence obtained in a traffic stop may be inadmissible in court. It also says non-compliance would be grounds for disciplinary action.

Sen. Charles Sydnor (D-44, Baltimore) is the primary sponsor of Senate Bill 292. He was inspired to draft the legislation after a "distressing experience" being pulled over for a moving violation with his family in the car. It led him to pursue recommendations on more equitable policing.

"This particular officer was harsh. He was condescending. I felt as though he was attempting to emasculate me in front of my wife and girls. For what? Driving too slow in the left lane," he shared in testimony Jan. 28 before the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. "Not only did this unnecessary interaction have no public safety purpose, but it made my entire family feel unsafe."

Sydnor also shared that Black drivers in Baltimore County were 73% more likely to be stopped by county police than white drivers, based on 2018 data. The data also

The legislation, cross-filed under

See DANGEROUS Page 8



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Pocomoke man dies in early morning 113 crash

State police investigating cause, but initial finding states impairment a factor

(Feb. 20, 2025) Maryland State Police are investigating a fatal single-vehicle crash that occurred early Sunday morning in southern Worcester County.

Forest Eugene Crippen 3rd, 34, of Pocomoke City, was the front passenger of a Honda Accord traveling on Route 113. He was pronounced deceased on the scene by Pocomoke City emergency medical services personnel.

The driver, identified as Yakia Shree Brittingham, 35, of Berlin, was transported by ambulance to TidalHealth Peninsula Regional for treatment of her injuries.

Shortly after 1:30 a.m., troopers from the Maryland State Police Berlin Barrack responded to the area of southbound Route 113, south of Blades Road for a report of a single-vehicle crash.

According to a preliminary investigation, the Honda was traveling south when for unknown reasons, traveled off the roadway, subsequently striking a tree. Police believe that impairment may have been a factor in this crash.

Route 113 was closed for the crash investigation but reopened Sunday morning. Assistance on scene was provided by the Worcester County Sheriff's Office, Pocomoke City Volunteer Fire Department, Pocomoke City Emergency Medical Services, and the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration.

The Maryland State Police Crash Team is leading the investigation. Once their investigation is complete, they will submit their findings to the Worcester County State's Attorney's Office, who will decide whether charges will be filed in this case. The crash investigation remains active and ongoing.

Berlin coach accepts plea deal in child abuse case

Princess Anne man guilty of reckless endangerment, other charges dismissed

By **Bethany Hooper**
Associate Editor

(Feb. 20, 2025) A former gymnastics coach has plead guilty to reckless endangerment for his role in an incident that occurred at the Berlin Activities Depot last summer.

Last September, Lionel Evans, now 58, of Princess Anne, was indicted in Worcester County Circuit Court on charges of second-degree child abuse, second-degree assault and reckless endangerment, all stemming from a child abuse investigation at the Berlin Activities Depot last summer. And on Tuesday, Judge Brian Shockley sentenced Evans to 18 months, all but one day of which was suspended, for a guilty plea he

had entered on the charge of reckless endangerment.

"This was one incident where Mr. Lionel went out to discipline a child and it went too far," Thomas Maronick Jr., Evans's attorney, told the judge this week.

Last August, Berlin police launched an investigation after the parent of a four-year-old attending the Berlin Activities Depot reported an incident that occurred at the facility's playground on Aug. 13. The parent told officers Evans, a gymnastics coach at the Berlin Activities Depot, had grabbed his child by the back of his neck, leaving a red mark, scratches and bruising. The parent said his child was not listening and had run away from Evans on the playground.

Police report that footage obtained from the Berlin Activities
See EVANS Page 11

'Dangerous bills' worry police

Continued from Page 7

showed Black drivers were more likely to have their vehicle searched during a traffic stop, according to Sydnor.

Worcester County Sheriff Matt Crisafulli in a statement posted to social media called the legislation "another attempt for Maryland Legislators to limit the ability of law enforcement officers to effectively shield our communities from danger and lawlessness."

"If these dangerous bills pass, it will limit the ability of law enforcement officers to effectively keep our streets and communities safe," Crisafulli wrote Monday.

Crisafulli penned a letter to the legislature expressing his opposition, saying, "... reducing law enforcement engagement in traffic enforcement may lead to increased reckless driving, impaired driving and other traffic-related offenses that endanger innocent motorists and pedestrians. This legislation would effectively weaken the safeguards of our Maryland communities. This type of legislation is dangerous."

Such a law might have a chilling effect on how his officers enforce traffic laws, according to acting Police Chief Mike Colbert.

"A lot of our enforcement comes through stopping cars without – with a headlight out, you know, taillights out. Besides being unsafe and some other issues, then we can (be) able to find other things wrong with them," he told members of the Police Commission at Monday's meeting.

"I don't know how having an unregistered motor vehicle becomes a secondary. I just don't understand

that. I mean, you see a guy's tags, and it's, like, three years since they renewed it. And you gotta look for something else," Colbert added.

State police also would be impacted by the bill. While a supervisor with the Berlin Barrack of the Maryland State Police declined to comment directly when reached by telephone this week, the Maryland Department of State Police (DSP) seems to have taken a position.

"DSP notes it will advise its troopers to stop making traffic stops because of the risk of administrative sanctions, including termination," according to a state legislative analysis of the measure. "While DSP did not provide statistics, the bill may preclude an appreciable number of DSP traffic stops."

On the policy side, pushback is also coming from the Maryland Municipal League, where Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan serves on the group's Legislative Committee.

"We took a position to oppose the bill," Meehan said during Monday's Police Commission meeting. "It's a public safety issue in a lot of ways. I mean, people are driving around without headlights – how is that safe for everybody else? How does that work? None of it. Just from that simple, practical point of view, it doesn't make any sense."

If passed, the measure is not likely to impact Ocean City's Special Events Zone – a tool for resort police carved out by lawmakers in 2018 specifically for a rowdy annual gathering of gearheads – because a traffic charge of "exhibition driving" isn't mentioned as a secondary offense, according to Colbert.

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Pines public works crews go all out in snow

Continued from Page 1
road,” Howard said. “That’s the brine. It stays put better than salt and helps keep roads from icing over – unless it rains first and washes it away.”

Before a big storm, Public Works preps its fleet, which includes six plows, three salt spreaders, and four additional heavy equipment vehicles. Crews also stock their offices with enough food and strong coffee to last up to 40 hours – the time it sometimes takes to fully clear the roads.

The equipment lineup features three one-ton dump trucks equipped with salt spreaders and plows, another dump truck with a plow, two pickup trucks with plows, a backhoe, a track loader, and another loader known as “Manitou.”

The long haul

Once the snow starts falling, the team settles in for a long night. Howard drinks coffee, while Rounds prefers tea.

“Either way, you just keep going,” Howard said.

Both said their bosses, Senior Director Eddie Wells and Deputy Director Nobie Violante, are right there with them.

“Eddie’s out there with us, him and Nobie,” Howard said. “Whatever hours we put in, they’re right there until the end.”

Plowing is a strategic operation requiring coordination.

“We start with the entrances – Ocean Parkway, Manklin, and Cathell Road – and then work our way out,” Howard said. “Two trucks handle the main roads, while smaller trucks tackle side streets.”

But the job isn’t without challenges.

“The hardest part isn’t the snow – it’s the parked cars,” Rounds said. “People leave them at the end of their driveways, and we can’t get through. We have to swerve around them, leaving piles of snow behind. That’s usually when people call and complain.”

Cul-de-sacs also present difficulties.

“Ideally, we’d clear them completely,” Howard said. “But when cars are in the way, we have no choice but to leave some snow behind.”

A cut above the rest

Many residents notice the difference in road conditions compared to surrounding areas.

“Ocean Pines takes care of all the roads – not just the main ones,” Rounds said. “Other places might

plow the big streets and leave secondary roads alone. We make sure people can get out no matter where they live.”

Still, patience is key.

“People look outside and wonder why their road isn’t plowed yet,” Howard said. “There are over 80 miles of roads here. We get to them all, but it does take time.”

Science behind the salt

Wells said no two storms are alike, and each requires a different strategy.

“This last event (last week) was a wet, heavy snow followed by rain, so we didn’t need to salt

because temperatures stayed above freezing,” he said. “But we did have more tree branches down due to the snow’s weight, and that required additional cleanup and man hours.”

“The storm on Jan. 6-7 was drier and colder, so we had to plow and salt. That took longer to get the roads fully clear,” Wells added.

Salt effectiveness depends on temperature. Above 20°F, it melts ice efficiently, but at 15°F and below, it slows down. By 10°F, road salt be-

comes nearly useless, often requiring additional chemicals. At 0°F, it stops working entirely.

“We pretreat when we know it’ll be an all-snow event,” Wells said. “But most storms here start as rain, which washes away pre-treatment. We salt all main roads after plowing if temperatures are expected to dip below freezing.”

The aftermath

Once the snow stops, the team’s work isn’t over.

“After plowing, we still have to clean the equipment, fix any damage, and start picking up fallen branches,” Howard said. “And then, hopefully, we don’t get hit with another storm right away.”

Despite the long hours and brutal conditions, neither Howard nor Rounds complains.

“It’s got to be done,” Rounds said. “Somebody’s got to do it. We just wait for the call, and then we go.”

For Ocean Pines residents, that dedication is why their roads stay clear when winter hits.

So, the next time you see a plow rolling down the street, remember the team inside – running on coffee, tea, and an unwavering commitment to keeping the community safe.

There are over 80 miles of roads here. We get to them all, but it does take time'

Tony Howard,
Public Works

Retired officer dies on fire call

Continued from Page 1
attending EMS crew. Lawson was later pronounced dead at the hospital. An autopsy has been ordered. The West Virginia State Fire Marshal’s Office is considering Lawson’s passing a “line of duty death.”

At the fire scene, a Bradshaw volunteer firefighter collapsed with difficulty breathing and smoke inhalation. That firefighter, Gary M. Coleman, 51, from Jolo, W.Va., was transported to a landing zone where he was flown to CAMC General Division in Charleston. Coleman was treated and released. The structure that was on fire was Coleman’s residence. The cause of the fire is under investiga-

tion.
After completing his law enforcement career in Berlin two years ago, Lawson returned to West Virginia to work as a heavy equipment operator and continued his public service career with the War Volunteer Fire Company.

In April 2024, Lawson was featured in this newspaper’s weekly OCVFC Spotlight article. Lawson said he was grateful for “the opportunity to mold new and old members of the OCVFC into a proud team with the skills, ability, and knowledge to safely and efficiently provide fire and rescue services to the residents and visitors to the Town of Ocean City.”

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Evans receives credit for one day

Continued from Page 8

Depot showed the child running toward the playground equipment and Evans chasing after him. According to charging documents, Evans grabbed the child by the back of the neck, and the child fell to the ground. Police said Evans was also seen “forcefully grabbing the child’s right upper arm and lifting him to his feet.”

As a result of the investigation, Evans was arrested on the three charges, terminated from his position, and suspended from USA Gymnastics, according to his attorney. And last September, the case was forwarded from district court to circuit court as a result of a criminal indictment. Evans continued to deny the allegations last fall, and several parents and children at the Berlin Activities Depot have voiced their support for the former gymnastics coach. The incident also received a swift response from owner Carmella Solito, the facility’s owner, who invited parents to view video footage of the incident.

“Our center remains committed to providing the highest standard of care for your children,” a message sent out last year reads. “We are continuously evaluating and improving our practices to ensure we meet and

exceed all safety and care requirements set forth by the state of Maryland for childcare.”

In court this week, Assistant State’s Attorney Pam Correa said the parents of the victim were adamant that Evans was not the only culpable party. She argued the facility had violated the family’s private by allowing “viewing parties” of the incident, and had failed to inform the family of the incident.

“Their child was assaulted and no one even told them,” she said.

Correa also noted that Evans was not typically tasked with supervising a young age group, as he was a gymnastics coach that worked with teenagers. The victim’s mother also detailed what she believed to be the facility’s mishandling of the situation.

“Mr. Lionel was put in the wrong place at the wrong time because of mismanagement of staff,” she said.

Maronick said his client acknowledged his wrongdoing and took accountability for his actions by entering a guilty plea. He asked, however, that the court grant probation before justice. He argued a conviction would hurt his career prospects.

“He’s going to struggle to find a job, struggle to find employment,” he

said.

At the conclusion of Tuesday’s plea hearing, Shockley sentenced Evans to 18 months, with all but one day suspended. However, Evans will receive credit for the one day he has already served in jail.

Shockley also sentenced Evans to five years of probation, during which time he will have no contact with the victim or their family and no supervision of children under the age of 12. He must also pay a fine and court costs and take an anger management course.

The judge said Evans has 90 days to request a modification of his sentence, which Maronick said his client intends to do.

“While I’m pleased that my client didn’t return to jail ... I’m hopeful we’ll obtain a result that keeps it off his record,” he said in a statement Tuesday.

Evans’s arrest came on the heels of another child abuse investigation, which resulted in two former daycare workers at the Berlin facility being arrested last year.

Steve Rakow, the attorney representing the facility and its owner, Carmella Solito, declined to comment on claims made against the Berlin Activities Depot in court this week.

Senator again proposes custody change legislation

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Feb. 20, 2025) When Annie Kenny discovered that ex-husband was abusing her eldest daughter, it took four years in family court to get a no-contact order from a judge.

“Our case involved complex issues of child sexual abuse, grooming, signs of childhood trauma, and the long-term effects of trauma on children, just to name a few,” Kenny told state lawmakers last month. “But not a single individual in the courtroom during our numerous hearings was trained on any of these topics.”

Kenney, of Mechanicsville, shared her story on Jan. 28 before the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, where lawmakers were considering legislation to mandate specialized training for child custody evaluators.

Primary sponsor Sen. Mary Beth Carozza said the measure, Senate Bill 25, will support the safety and well-being of children involved in custody proceedings that may involve domestic violence and child abuse allegations.

In a contested custody or visitation case, Maryland judges may appoint a
See CAROZZA Page 13

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Opinion

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Schools could benefit by looking internally

As education experts and advisors to the Worcester County Board of Education encourage board members to allow for some overlap when they select the replacement for departing Superintendent Lou Taylor in June, the best way to ensure that happens is to promote from within.

Taylor, who announced in January that he would retire on June 30, gave the board plenty of time to conduct a search for candidates and, possibly, to have that individual in place before Taylor closes the book on his 41-year career.

Having the future and current superintendent on board at the same time would allow Taylor to give his replacement the lay of the land before handing over the reins of the county's public school system.

Obviously, people already serving in the system's administration would have an advantage in that regard, especially when it comes to the school system's dealings with the Worcester County Commissioners.

Knowing who the players are and how they feel about public education would be more than merely helpful come budget time, it could be vital to striking a fair and reasonable school budget. No one should have to walk into that exercise without knowing what to expect.

This isn't to say that all candidates from outside this immediate area shouldn't be given strong consideration if they appear to be up to the task. Former Worcester County School Superintendent and current school board member Jon Andes, who came to this county after working his way up the career ladder in more populous Harford County, did an exceptional job here.

Surely, there are others like him out there who might do an admirable job and they should not be ignored if local candidates are less qualified. But all things being equal, promoting from within also means installing a superintendent with the kind of institutional knowledge that will help keep the school system on the path that has been working well for many years.

County prepping for super search

National effort up next to fill vacancy with Taylor retirement

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 20, 2025) The Worcester County Board of Education is preparing to search for a new superintendent following Lou Taylor's announcement to retire this summer.

Prior to the board's Tuesday, Feb. 11 budget workshop, the board heard a presentation from Maryland Association Board of Directors (MABE) Executive Director Milton Nagel and Edward Shirley of the MABE Superintendent Search Committee, detailing the process that Worcester County is about to undergo in their search for Taylor's replacement. MABE is offering its services to assist the county in recruiting and hiring.

According to Nagel, the goal is to have a superintendent selected on or before the end of Taylor's term, which expires on July 1. Ideally, the chosen candidate and Taylor would have some overlap so the new hire may transition into the position seamlessly.

"We would love to get to the finish line by early June, especially if it's an external candidate that has to relocate to the area," Nagel said. "You want to give them plenty of time to do that. It would be a bonus if there is some overlap with the outgoing superintendent ... it's hard to turn over the keys to the castle in just one day."

The first phase of the process is planning the search. This includes identifying a spokesperson to represent the board who will help develop a timeline and communicate information to the public when the search transitions out of its confidential status. The board will also establish candidate criteria and identify the characteristics they hope to prioritize in the new superintendent during the initial

stage.

The second part of the search process is advertising and recruiting, where staff at MABE will work with Worcester County to develop marketing materials to get the position posting and corresponding information pushed out to the world. Nagel maintained that once the job is posted on the website, anyone can apply, regardless of whether in the region or the state.

"Some boards think they just want to do a local search," the executive director said. "You can ultimately want that, but as soon as you put something on the internet, you have opened it up to the whole world to look through."

'If that is not unanimous, you have already set the new superintendent up with a challenge, and that is that they don't have the full support of their board'
Milton Nagel,
Executive Director

Nagel said any candidate who meets the state requirements to fill a position like the superintendent of a Maryland school system will be screened. However, it is up to the Worcester County Board of Education to decide whether they want to weed out who they believe "doesn't fit the mold," like someone unfamiliar with the education system in Maryland.

Following the recruitment phase, the board will then begin to screen and select candidates to speak with. The board will review and rank applications based on established criteria and characteristics, identify potential hires for first-round interviews, agree on questions, and conduct the discussions.

"The first interview should be very structured in

that you develop a list of set questions, and those candidates are only asked those questions and only respond to those questions," Nagel said. "It's meant to be that way because there could be a lot of [candidates] and you want to have a uniform grading process in how to determine from that first round of interviews who makes it to the second round."

Upon the completion of the first round, the board will identify candidates for second-round interviews based on their performance from the initial conversations. Nagel said these follow-up talks will be more open-ended and allow for additional questions.

Before the second-round interviews, but after those selected to move on, MABE will perform a deeper background check on each potential hire while maintaining candidate confidentiality.

A few finalists will be selected based on the second-round interviews. According to Nagel, the quantity is subject to the board's decision, based on how many "high fliers" there are and how many the educational body is willing to make known to the public.

Nagel said that a top priority of the search process is maintaining the confidentiality of the applicants to ensure their current jobs are not at risk. However, when the finalists are chosen, the candidates must be ready to have their intent or switching roles known.

"Up until the point of which you name finalists, all those candidates probably are employed somewhere else," Nagel said. "They may or may not have told their current employer that they have applied, so you have to respect and protect that confidentiality they have... Don't disclose any individual names because you could have a detrimental impact on somebody's professional career if they are working for a neighboring school district or around the state. Once

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BAYSIDE GAZETTE

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Carozza: 'A moral obligation ... long overdue'

Continued from Page 11

custody evaluator to assess the best interests of a child. Carozza's bill says those evaluators must be licensed and board-certified psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical therapists, or certified social workers.

The text of the bill also says evaluators must have training, knowledge, and experience in the areas of domestic violence, child neglect and abuse, the impact of trauma, the dynamics of family conflict, child and adult development, and the impact of divorce and separation on children and adults.

This year marks the fifth consecutive legislative session that Carozza (R-28, Worcester) has introduced some version of the bill in Annapolis. On each attempt, the bill died in committee.

Carozza says her efforts failed in part because members of the state judiciary have hurt the measure with unfavorable feedback – because judges would rather self-govern, she says, and not have the legislature dictate policy through laws.

"When we think about the many qualifications and training bills that this Maryland General Assembly has passed into law over the years," Carozza said at the hearing, "yet we have not put this into law – dealing with our most precious responsibility and resource, our children. I believe

we as legislators have a moral obligation. It is simply long overdue."

The issue arose in 2019 after a bipartisan group of legislators convened to study custody proceedings. One goal was to update a regulation regarding the appointment or approval by a person to perform a child custody evaluation.

Their findings, published in 2020, showed that courts follow the recommendations of the custody evaluation in more than 90% of cases, according to Carozza.

After listening to parents, advocates, and legal experts over the past five years, "there is a distinct need for custody evaluators to have consistent qualifications and training before being appointed or approved to one of these most sensitive court cases," Carozza said.

"That time," she added, "is forever lost by not having these child protections in place."

At her bill hearing, Carozza made her case with statistics: An estimated 58,000 children nationwide are court-ordered into visitation or custody with a dangerous parent. In Maryland alone, 21 youths were reported killed as a result of situations involving divorce, separation, custody visitation, child support or court-involvement between 2008 and 2023.

Other testimony came from Hera

McLeod. Her child's father was convicted of homicide in connection with the 2012 death of their 15-month-old son, Prince. The boy died by drowning during an unsupervised visitation that had been granted by a family court judge.

"My son came home to me in a body bag," she told legislators in 2022.

Carozza said the man's attorney was able to get a child custody evaluator's testimony thrown out of court because of a lack of training specific to child abuse. If the custody evaluator had been properly trained, Carozza argued, "Here's a case most likely would have had a different outcome and Prince would be alive today."

Additional testimony came from court reform advocate Tina Swithin.

She said custody evaluators wield incredible influence over children's lives, yet their training and expertise varies widely and "often falls short, leading to inconsistent and dangerous outcomes."

"It's fundamental that anyone making decisions that impacts a child's life has training in domestic violence, child neglect, abuse, and trauma. This is common sense. We need to raise the bar when it comes to the safety of our children," Swithin said.

In 2022, the legislature passed a bill requiring training for judges and magistrates presiding over child custody cases involving child abuse and domestic violence. Carozza says "it only makes sense" that custody evaluators would require the same kind of training.

Superintendent search to start

Continued from Page 12

you have decided on finalists, it becomes public, and that's when those candidates have to be okay with becoming forward-facing."

The goal is that after the final interviews, the board will reach a unanimous agreement on who will make the next superintendent. Nagel emphasized that while some board members may prefer one candidate over another, it is important that the group is united in their public decision to ensure an easy transition for the new hire.

"If that is not unanimous, you have already set the new superintendent up with a challenge, and that is that they don't have the full support of their board," the executive director noted. "They need full support."

While not ideal, if the board cannot unanimously select a new superintendent, they can hire an interim

for one year.

Once the new superintendent is selected, a contract will be negotiated. The terms of the agreement will extend for four years. Board member and former Worcester County Public Schools Superintendent Jon Andes said that a standard contract would include an agreed upon salary, wages, benefits, reasons the agreement can be terminated, under what conditions a contract can be terminated, and what timeframe the party must give to terminate the contract. The document may also detail how the superintendent will be evaluated.

The salary range or minimum the board is willing to offer will be advertised in the job posting to avoid a crossroads upon final negotiations. Taylor's annual salary was increased to \$210,000 (from \$186,000) when he signed his current contract in 2021.

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Obituary

CHARLES THEODORE PURNELL, JR.
Ocean City

Charles Theodore Purnell, Jr., age 77, passed away on Saturday, February 1, 2025, at Coastal Hospice at the Lake in Salisbury.

Born in Breman, Germany, he was the son of Irmgard Stockman Heinecke and the late Charles Theodore Purnell, Sr.

Ted was the kindest of souls, loved animals, boating, fishing and his family. He lived life on his terms, especially on Sundays with his beloved Ravens.

Ted served during the Vietnam War, in the US Navy, as a Seaman First Class, and upon discharge returned to Ocean City where he worked in the HVAC trade. He was helpful to others and took great pride in his many friendships. He was always contagiously happy and his laugh would never fail to make one smile.



Charles Purnell, Jr.

He is survived by his mother Irmgard Stockman Heinecke, brothers, Clay Stamp, Bill Stamp, and Ralph Stamp, and sisters, Cindy Stamp and Susan Krut-sick.

In addition to his father, he was preceded in death by his sisters, Linda D. Purnell Stamp Wilson and Marta K. Purnell Stamp O'Connor.

Cremation followed his death. Honoring Ted's wishes, no formal services are planned. Letters of condolence can be sent to the family via www.burbagefuneralhome.com. Arrangements are in the care of The Burbage Funeral Home and donations may be made to Coastal Hospice.

ALOC announces youth show

(Feb. 21, 2025) The Art League of Ocean City invites students in middle and high school in Worcester County to enter their original artwork and be eligible to win cash prizes.

The Shirley Hall Youth Art Show will hang in the galleries of the Ocean City Center for the Arts from March 7-9, 2025. The show coincides with National Youth Art Month and the 9th Annual Ocean City Film Festival.

Entries will be accepted in-person at the Arts Center, 502 94th St. bay-side, from Sunday, Feb. 23 through Saturday, March 1 during regular Arts Center hours, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. and weekends, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

For more than 33 continuous years, the Art League has presented an annual youth art show for Worcester County students. Originally sponsored by the Women's Club of Ocean City and coordinated by member Shirley Hall, a former Art League president, the Art League continued to coordinate the show after the Women's Club disbanded, believing it central to its mission. When Shirley Hall passed away in 2006, the Art League re-named the show in her honor.

The show is open to all middle and high school students in Worcester County, including public, private, and homeschool students. Artwork must be original, and all two-dimensional art is eligible: paintings, drawings, photographs, mixed media, etchings, and more.

The artwork must have been created in the past year. Artwork must be matted or framed and ready to hang.

Questions should be directed to Kacie Neeb, gallery coordinator, at the Art League, kacie@artleagueofoceancity.org.

The Art League of Ocean City is a non-profit organization dedicated to

bringing the visual arts to the community through education, exhibits, scholarship, programs and community art projects. Financial support comes primarily through membership dues from individuals and corporate sponsors.

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Snapshots



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CLUB WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

The Ocean City Berlin Optimist Club recognized seven new members who have already been busy participating in the many programs sponsored by the Optimists. Pictured, from left, are Kevin O'Rourke, Candy Thumser, Gary Thumser, Optimist President Christina Dolomount-Brown, Karen Porter, Donna Smith, Mitch Francis, Alexis Mumford and Membership Chairman Roger Pacella. All prospective new members are welcomed at the club's monthly meetings that take place the first Tuesday of each month.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

DAR MEMBER RECOGNIZED

Member Carol Wanzer of the General Levin Winder Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution was presented with a rose and certificate of appreciation for her outstanding service since joining the chapter in 2012. Wanzer, an Army veteran of Cherokee descent, served multiple terms as recording secretary and treasurer as well as chairing the chapter's National Defense and American Indians committees. Wanzer is relocating to the Annapolis area and will be missed. She is pictured with Regent Sharon Moak.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

DISNEY SPIRIT DAY

Ocean City Elementary School held its annual Disney Spirit Day on January 17. Pictured are some of the students who got into the spirit.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

STUDENT PAGE SERVING IN ANNAPOLIS

Stephen Decatur High School Senior Evan Todd, the Worcester County Page Representative for the Maryland General Assembly, spent one week in Annapolis engaging with elected leaders, helping maintain bill books, running errands and delivering messages for members, and assisting visitors as they navigate the Maryland State House. Todd will serve an additional week as a Maryland Page in March. Todd is pictured with Senator Mary Beth Carozza this month.



Coastal Drug celebrates 10-year milestone

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 20, 2025) As Coastal Drug Pharmacy in Ocean Pines celebrates its 10th anniversary, the owners reflected this week on a decade of pharmaceutical care and the business's community-first services.

Coastal Drug has served the Ocean Pines and the surrounding communities for 10 years. The store was initially located near Atlantic General Hospital before it moved to the former Walgreens in Manklin Station, where it had existed for approximately five years. In 2023, owners Ray and Arti Patel had the opportunity to purchase its current location at 11005 Manklin Meadows Lane across from the South Gate Pond, where it sits today.

"It's always a good business decision to own something rather than pay rent," Ray Patel said of moving storefronts. "[The current location] has a better visibility of the four-way stop sign, and it has 17 parking spots."

The pharmacy's business model for the past 10 years has been to offer patients a localized "mom and pop" approach to prescription care. Coastal Drug builds strong connections with its customer base to differentiate itself from its competition, including the nearby Rite Aid, Walgreens, Walmart, AGH, and TidalHealth.

"We try to build a bond with each of our patients, and they love the fact that they get that concierge service," Patel said. "We don't look at them as a number. We try to know as much as we can. Our objective is to make sure they're taking care of their health. We go in-depth with them if they have any questions about their medications."

"It's building that bond for long-term relationships and ensuring they are taking care of their health by providing that key service of medication that can be a little overwhelming for many people."

Many of these connections are built by providing trustworthy and consumer-first services, which a lot of larger, more well-known pharmacies

do not or cannot offer, including delivery.

According to Patel, Coastal Drug will deliver medications to Ocean Pines, West Ocean City, Ocean City, and Berlin patients struggling to leave their houses. While the service used to be free, the owner maintained that to keep up with costs like having a driver on staff, insurance, gas, and the vehicle, they started to charge \$3 for the drop-off assistance.

The shop also has qualified nurses who will conduct home visits for vaccination admissions for homebound residents. The nurses are also licensed in Delaware. Last week, one of the healthcare workers headed all the way to Selbyville to administer a vaccine.

"We do it because we care," Patel said. "It's easier for [the patient]. It's good business, but more important than business is doing the right thing and making sure patients get what they want. That has been the core formula for our pharmacy."

Coastal Drug also provides compliance packaging to strengthen the "mom and pop" experience. This method involves organizing up to 15 or 20 different medications into an easy-to-understand assortment, like separating nighttime and daytime pills and offering customers bingo cards to track their prescriptions adequately.

Patel said the bingo slips allow consumers to "pop a bubble" to indicate that they had taken that medication that day. This is typically helpful for dementia patients who may struggle to remember if they have taken a particular pill. The card is a tool to avoid mistakenly taking medication too many times in one day.

"Those kinds of things happen more than people know, but providing compliance packaging takes that responsibility off [the patient's]

hands," the pharmacy owner said. "The kids love it. If their mom or dad are by themselves in Ocean Pines, a lot of our customers' kids are in different states; once they find out about the programming, it's such a good feeling for them to know that the Coastal Drug team is taking care of their mom and dad."

A hallmark of the Ocean Pines business is educating its customer base on healthcare — not just the contents of their prescriptions but also about insurance and medication options. Patel said that Coastal Drug is different from bigger pharmacies because its community shop is committed to researching the best prices.

"Customers can say, 'Hey, this is what I'm paying with my insurance. Do you think I can get it at a better price if we don't use our insurance since this is a generic prescription?' The answer is yes nine times out of 10," Patel said.

Having options is essential for patients.

"Right now is a perfect example where everybody has a high deductible," the owner noted. "But if they're never going to hit their deductible, [customers] can get that medication for a fraction of the cost out of pocket. That is the decision they don't know about; we have to explain it to them, and once they understand the complexity of healthcare and how insurance plans are, they can make their own choices."

Patel continued sometimes a high price on medications prevents people from taking them, even if they're a necessity. The Coastal Drug team aims to alleviate this stressor through its commitment to personalized patient care and education.

With a decade under its belt, the pharmacy hopes to make business strides within the next five years. The



TARA FISCHER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Ray and Arti Patel have operated Coastal Drug Pharmacy in Ocean Pines and in 2023 purchased its current site at Manklin Meadows.

shop aims to expand with an "Ashley Furniture Store" that houses walkers, hospital beds, and wheelchairs. Patel said that he and his wife have identified this service as a need in the community. The pair are researching this possibility but hope to get it off the ground in five years, "if not sooner."

"That's our next step on our journey of growing," Patel said. "But we will not get into something we are not 100% sure of. If I'm going to get into it, we want to provide that perfect service, but it will take time, and once we are ready for it, it will be another add-on to the community that we can provide that nobody else can."

Patel said he is thankful for the community's support of Coastal Drug and hopes that by providing a personal experience, those who use Walmart or Rite Aid as their pharmacies will consider making a switch.

"[Our customers] treat us like family; they tell us stories of their families and vacations they go on," Patel said. "We love building that bond and having those conversations with our patients. All those little things our customers bring to us make our day."

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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., Feb. 20

CPAP MASK FITTING

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

STORY TIME: DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. Songs, stories and crafts. For ages 0-5 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 0-5 years. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

NATURE LOVERS CRAFTING

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 1 p.m. Nature themed craft projects for adults. Refreshments provided. February: Wood Chip Wind Chime. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

CODE SONGS OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 2 p.m. Code and signal songs were used as means of communication by those traveling the Underground Railroad. Join in for a live performance of some of those songs. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

MAGIC THE GATHERING

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

QUIT SMOKING & VAPING CLASS

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. 1103 or www.worcesterhealth.org.

Fri., Feb. 21

FANDOM FRIDAY: VAMPIRES

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Drop in anytime during the day 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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, OCEAN PINES LIBRARY!

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. The Ocean Pines Library turns 25 this weekend. Come help celebrate by enjoying music and a sweet treat. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BOOK OF THE MONTH CLUB: 'JUST AS I AM' BY CICELY TYSON

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

Sat., Feb. 22

LOVE ON TAP AT SEACRETS - SHORE CRAFT BEER FEST

Seacrets, 117 49th St., Ocean City, 1-5 p.m. Featuring all-you-care-to-drink with 12 local breweries and live music. Cost is \$40 general admission and \$65 for VIP. Tickets: <https://shorecraftbeer.ticketspice.com/love-on-tap-secrets-2025>. 410-703-1970

LIKE WATER FOR CHOCOLATE - SCAVENGER HUNT

Event held throughout Ocean City and West Ocean City, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Complete a puzzle, then turn it in at Ocean 13 by 6 p.m. for a chance to win prizes. Participating locations: <https://chamber.oceancity.org/events/details/like-water-for-chocolate-scavenger-hunt-42230>. 443-664-3052

AUCE BREAKFAST BUFFET

Whaleyville United Methodist, 11716 Sheppards Crossing Road, 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 kids.

HEART HEALTHY FAIR

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 9 a.m.-noon. Get to know your heart health with a variety of free screenings and education. No RSVP is required. Alyce Marzola, 410-641-9268

GERMANTOWN SCHOOL HOSTS TALK WITH GENERAL BIRCKHEAD

Stephen Decatur High School, 9913 Sea-

hawk Road, Berlin, 11 a.m. Doors open at 10 a.m. Hear Snow Hill native, MD Adjutant General Janeen Birckhead share her story of advancement in the military. Registration recommended: germantownschool@gmail.com or 410-641-0638.

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Friendship Church, 10537 Friendship Road, Berlin, 4-7 p.m. Includes salad, spaghetti w/meat sauce, garlic bread, dessert and beverage. Eat in or carry out. Cost is \$15. Friendship Church of Berlin Men's Group.

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.

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

Sun., Feb. 23

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., Feb. 24

DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB OF WORCESTER COUNTY REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10 a.m. Conversation, 9:30 a.m. Guest speaker, Angela Gibbs, M.D., will discuss "Taking Care of Ourselves During Stressful Times." www.dwcmd.org

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

John H."Jack" Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center, 9707 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 3-4 p.m. Those newly diagnosed, in treatment or in remission are welcomed. Friends and family members are encouraged to participate. 410-641-2626

STORY TIME: BLACK HISTORY MONTH

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

FIBER ARTS

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 2 p.m. Bring your own fiber art project (crochet, knitting, etc.) and join in for a casual meet up to work on projects. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

LEGO MASTERS CHALLENGE

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 4:30 p.m. Join in for a Lego challenge event. All materials provided. For ages 6-11 years. 410-208-4014, 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

Tues., Feb. 25

ARTSCAPE

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 6 p.m. A casual meetup for artists of all levels to share techniques and explore different mediums. Basic painting and sketching supplies available for use, or bring your own supplies. 410-957-0878

Calendar

STORY TIME: COUNTDOWN TO COUNTING

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 10:30 a.m. Songs, stories and crafts. For ages 0-5 years. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

SENSORY STORY TIME

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and fingerplays. 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

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.

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

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

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

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., Feb. 26

BARIATRIC SUPPORT GROUP

Online Zoom call held the third and fourth Wednesday of each month. For surgical patients. Atlantic General Bariatric Center, 410-641-9568

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 - BOOK PAGE FLOWERS

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Turn old book pages into literary blossoms. Limit 30. First come, first served. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Atlantic General Hospital, Conference Room 1, 9733 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 3-4 p.m. The goal of the support group is to provide participants with hope for the future. Gail Mansell, 410-641-9725, gmansell@atlanticgeneral.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.kiwanisofpoc.org.

ONGOING EVENTS

FREE IN-PERSON TAX PREPARATION

Takes place through April 15. By appointment only, call 443-584-5661 or online at the following sites.
 • Mondays at the Ocean Pines library, www.tinyurl.com/t8km843p
 • Tuesdays at the Berlin library, www.tinyurl.com/2rvvha2y
 • Saturdays at the Ocean City library, www.tinyurl.com/3bt6ujx7.
 The program is open to taxpayers of all ages. AARP membership is not required. Find sites near you: aarpfoundation.org/taxaide.

BUS TRIP - WASHINGTON CAPITALS VS. EDMONTON OILERS

Capital One Arena in Washington, D.C., Feb. 23, game time is 1 p.m. Depart from the Ocean Pines Community Center at 8:30 a.m. Cost is \$135 and includes ticket, transportation and food package (unlimited beer and wine for the first two periods of the game). No glass or alcohol allowed on bus. Tickets: 410-641-7052.



OPEN HOUSES

Feb. 20 - 27



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	2BR/1BA	Single Family	from \$179,900	Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community
Mon-Fri 9am-4pm, Sat 11am-3pm	12430 Old Bridge Rd, West OC	2BR/2BA	Single Family	from \$284,750	Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community
Saturday 10am-Noon	221 Wicomico St.#302, Ocean City	3BR/3BA	Condo	\$859,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 10am-Noon	14 40th St. #303 Ocean City	1BR/1BA	Condo	\$259,900	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-Noon	26219 E. Old Gate Dr., Liberty East, Millsboro	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$599,000	Kim Dixson/Redfin
Saturday 11am-1pm	19 High Sheriff Drive, Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$524,888	Debbie Hileman/Hileman Real Estate
Sunday Noon-2pm	7709 Scotts Landing Road, Snow Hill	4BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$709,000	Debbie Bennington/BHHS PenFed Realty
Saturday Noon-2pm	23 Seagrave Lane, Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$359,900	Cindy Crockett/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 12:30-2:30pm	6201 Atlantic Ave., Unit 108, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$699,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 1-3pm	12736 Carnouste Lane, River Run, Berlin	3BR/2.5BA	Townhome	\$524,900	Kim Dixson/Redfin
Saturday 1-3pm	149 Captains Quarters Rd #101, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$315,000	Team Bouse House/ReMax Advantage
Saturday 1-3pm	9402 Coastal Hwy #204 Ocean City	1BR, 1.5BA	Condo	\$449,900	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 3-4:30pm	5603 Atlantic Ave., Unit 301, Ocean City	3BR/3.5BA	Condo	\$1,499,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	5603 Atlantic Ave., Unit 301, Ocean City	3BR/3.5 BA	Condo	\$1,499,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	6201 Atlantic Ave., Unit 108, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$699,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 1-3pm	13110 Coastal Hwy #609, Braemar, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$532,000	Kim Dixson/Redfin
Sunday 1:30-3:30pm	221 Wicomico St.#302, Ocean City	3BR/3BA	Condo	\$859,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty



Classified

MARKETPLACE

Call **410-723-6397**
by Monday 5 p.m.

Classifieds appear in **OC Today-Dispatch & Bayside Gazette** each week and online at octodaydispatch.com & baysideoc.com



HELP WANTED

COASTAL REFRIGERATION SERVICE
Looking for **FULL TIME HELP**
Willing to train.
Must have a valid Driver's License.
Wages based on experience.
410-726-1717

DUNKIN' DONUTS
AMERICA RUNS ON DUNKIN'
NOW HIRING!!
Production Crew
for our WOC kitchen facility
Up to \$20/hr.
Apply online at:
www.delmarvadd.com

Classifieds
410-723-6397

HELP WANTED

Maintenance Personnel Person
Needed for condo in OC.
Full time, year-round. Light duty, family atmosphere.
Please call SeaTime Condo, 135th St. for application, 410-250-2262.

SPEEDWORLD
Small Engine Mechanic.
Year-round.
Wage starts at \$15/hr & up based on experience.
Benefits available.
443-754-1047

JOHNNY'S PIZZA PUB
NOW HIRING!
• **BARTENDER**
Call Pam
410-726-7061
or apply within
56th Street

HELP WANTED

KITE LOFT MANAGER
If you are looking for a year-round job that is Fun, Adventurous and Rewarding then look no further. The Kite Loft is seeking an outstanding, outgoing, optimistic individual to work in a high volume, fun retail environment as a Store Manager. Prior Retail Management experience required. Must be able to work weekends and nights. Excellent salary and rewards to the successful.
Please email your resume to: info@kiteloft.com

HELP WANTED
Year-round, full time, RENTAL AGENT for established local company. Must work weekends and have own transportation. Looking for someone that wants a career with opportunity to do sales on the side. Call for details.
Resort Rentals/OCVacations, 410-524-0295

DEPENDABLE CAREGIVER needed for disabled Senior. Light housework, hours & salary negotiable. Driver's Lic. and Ref's. Req. Fenwick, DE area.
814-201-2601, leave message

JOLLY ROGER FT POOL MAINTENANCE
Inspecting & assessing condition of pool equipment, performing minor & major repairs, documenting all pool maintenance & repair activities for record keeping. Outdoor work, lifting heavy objects. Mechanical, basic pool pump & motors. CPO a plus/must be able to pass CPO test. Includes weekends and long hours. Wages start at \$15/hr & up based on experience. Benefits available.
410-289-4902
Ask for Suzanne.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

CRAFTERS WANTED
Spaces are filling up!
Ocean Pines Craft Club
47th Annual Craft Fair
August 2, 2025
For info contact:
J.wolnick63@gmail.com

Run your business card in our SERVICE DIRECTORY
CALL 410-723-6397 for pricing!

RENTALS

SEASONAL RENTAL
Efficiency condo with pool available Mid-May - Mid-Sept. \$8500. A/C, parking, 2 people occupancy.
Resort Rentals/OCVacations, 410-524-0295

YEAR-ROUND RENTAL
\$1700 per month, \$1700 sec. dep. required. 1BR, Furnished Condo, 59th Street, Ocean City, MD. All utilities included. Excellent credit and employment references. No pets, no smoking. Seasonal pool. 2 Blocks from ocean. Available now. **Interested persons please email davis.kathy459@gmail.com**

FOR RENT YR TOWNHOME
3BR, 2 1/2BA. Furnished, modern appliances, washer and dryer. Newport Bay Dr., Bayside on canal. \$2,300 monthly, no pets.
Call 410-848-1767. Dougherty35@aol.com

YEARLY RENTALS WEST OCEAN CITY

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Laundry on premises.
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www.bbapartmentsoc.com

YR RENTAL AVAIL. IMMED.
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703-819-7400

RENTALS

RENTAL
2BR, 2 BA CONDO w/Boat Slip
DOWNTOWN OC
Yearly or Seasonal (5/23/25-9/1/25)
410-733-0748

SUMMER SEASONAL RENTAL
1BR / 1 bath, 47th St., Ocean block
Kitchen, A/C and pool. \$12,500 for 4 months and 1 day. This includes all utilities. There is an extra, refundable \$800 sec. dep.
Call OCVacations - 410-524-0295

YR RENTAL Move-In Ready
4BR, 3BA, W/D
Horn Island Drive
West Ocean City
Call 410-449-1434.

Seeking YR & Seasonal Rentals!
Call Howard Martin Realty
410-352-5555.

SEASONAL WEEKLY RENTALS
Burgandy Inn
1210 Philadelphia Ave.
410-289-8581

Holiday REAL ESTATE, INC.
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www.holidayoc.com

REAL ESTATE

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\$415,000
10333 Tudor Road
2 Bedrooms, 1 Bath
Porch, large yard, new HVAC system, 1344 sq. ft.
Contact Spencer Cropper
Attorney for Owner
410-723-1400

COMMERCIAL

Commercial Space Available
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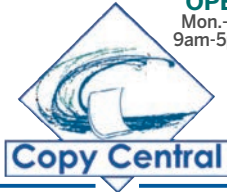
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