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MAY 15, 2025

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TARA FISCHER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

FLYING HIGHER

The recent installation of new flag poles and the overall enhancement of the war memorial area on West and Main streets was celebrated by Berlin officials before Monday's Mayor and Council meeting. Above, representatives from the American Legion Post #123 join town officials at the site. The legion donated \$7,500 to the We Heart Berlin group, which then turned the funds over to the town to complete the work. The new poles stand 30 feet tall compared to the previous 20 feet and feature larger flags.

Hartman ticked by town appeal of reassessment

Says he fought to get state to adjust property's value, now Berlin spars over \$4k

By Tara Fischer Staff Writer

(May 15, 2025) Much to the consternation of the property owner, the Town of Berlin recently appealed a property tax assessment to Dollar General that yielded over a 20% reduction in property value.

If the decreased assessment is upheld, the municipality would see a property tax revenue loss of around \$4,000.

Wayne Hartman, who owns the property currently leased to Dollar General on Decatur Street, came before Berlin's Mayor and Council on Monday, May 12. Hartman said that he received a letter from the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation that informed

him the municipality had appealed a reduction in property valuation of his commercial site. Hartman is also a delegate representing District 38C in Maryland.

The value appealed by the town came in at around \$1.8 million, or a drop of approximately \$491,000 from the original \$2.5 million assessment.

On Monday night during citizen comments, Hartman informed the Berlin council, which was unaware the town had filed an appeal, that prior to the municipality's involvement, he had issued a reconsideration for a tax bill on his Dollar General property. After a "two-year, hard-fought battle" and with help from Realtors, his petition was granted, and the store's property value was reduced.

"Back when I bought the property three years ago, interest rates were See TOWN Page 4

Groups want to have say in Visitor Center's future

Town staff will use space as temporary quarters, what happens next undecided

By Tara Fischer Staff Writer

(May 15, 2025) Berlin Town Hall is set to undergo renovations soon, requiring town staff to temporarily move to the town's Main Street Visitor Center and potentially displacing community groups.

The Berlin Mayor and Council are seeking potential new uses for the

welcome center and invite community members to share their suggestions.

Two weeks ago, town officials briefly discussed the issue with plans to broadly talk about the facility's future at an upcoming meeting. The conversation was brought up on Monday night by Calvin B. Taylor House President Melissa Reid during the public comments portion of the meeting.

Reid asked the governing body to include stakeholder groups in the dis-See GROUPS Page 3



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Groups want voice in Visitor Center's future

Continued from Page 1

cussion when considering potential avenues for the town's welcome center. Currently, the building is utilized by Berlin's two-person Economic and Community Development Department, the Berlin Chamber of Commerce and the nonprofit Beach to Bay Heritage Area. The center also services as a welcome area for tour buses as well as contains literature about the town and its businesses.

Reid added the Taylor House also uses a closet at the site to store things like tents and chairs used sporadically for special events.

When the improvement work at Town Hall begins, displaced staff will be moved to the Visitor Center until the construction is completed. As of now, the chamber and Beach to Bay Heritage Area will be forced to find new accommodations. The nonprofit and the chamber relocation may be temporary, and their use of the facility is unclear once the Town Hall project is finalized.

However, town officials maintain the move-out could well be permanent.

"I think it would be great if there could be a larger conversation with maybe some of the stakeholders who are currently utilizing [the Visitor Center] ... explore some uses of the building before a final decision is made about what happens to that building after the renovations to Town Hall," Reid said

Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall maintained the council would consider a wide range of options before making a concrete decision.

Councilman Jack Orris noted that a plan should be agreed upon soon so the groups currently in the Visitor Center can strategize.

"After the renovations are done, and our staff is back to where they're going to be, and [the Visitor Center] is empty...is there a strong feeling one way or another of any direction the building should go?" Orris said. "Sold? Bringing the folks back that were there, sharing the space? The ultimate thing is I think that the groups who were there, I think they understand what's happening. We're doing a renovation. They are just looking to see...they need to have some solid plan on our end because they have to look for other options."

Councilman Steve Green asked if the departments currently using the Main Street facility pay rent to the Town of Berlin to use the site. Town Administrator Mary Bohlen confirmed they do not.

"I'm interested in hearing about these different avenues," Green said. "... Rent space should be charged, and what that looks like, that's an exploration process I'm very interested in hearing about."

Tyndall maintained the storage closet used by the Taylor House will be unaffected throughout the Town Hall renovations. However, the closet cannot be promised when the improvement work is completed and the Visitor Center is potentially repurposed. The new public works structure planned for Heron Park will likely be able to accommodate items from the museum for storage.

"The goal is to have some storage capacity at the new public works building," Tyndall said. "Can I promise that everything the Taylor House wants to store there will be accommodated? No, but I can say that if we can be a good community partner to help out with stuff like that, we're not going to say no, more than likely, within reason."

The museum can pay rent for any storage space they need, Reid noted.

According to Tyndall, the Visitor Center conversation began following a letter from Beach to Bay Heritage Area (BBHA) to the Berlin Mayor and Council.

"The Beach to Bay Heritage Area is hoping that you will continue to allow us to operate in this space, and with your support, BBHA can continue to offer programs, and funding ... at the same level unencumbered by the expense of rent and utilities," the correspondence reads. "We will be able to continue to participate in showcasing Berlin as a town with such a strong link to the heritage of the region."

Per the group's letter, BBHA's mission is to "preserve, protect, and promote the heritage assets within each designated area. Our area is comprised of Worcester, Wicomico, and Somerset counties. We advocate for strong support of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA), fair and consistent funding for its partners, and the resources our communities need to grow and thrive, and to promote heritage tourism."

The note adds the nonprofit offers an annual \$25,000 mini-grant program, and that an impact report from 2020 revealed that the team "contributes to \$230 million economic impact, supports 3,000 jobs and adds \$29.6 million in state and local taxes."

Tyndall said that while the future of the Visitor Center is uncertain, his position remains the town will likely not lease the building at a decreased amount.

"How this whole conversation got started was Beach to Bay wanted a reduced rate on rent and what I said ... was that's probably not going to happen, that we're not going to lease the building to Beach to Bay at a reduced rate where the town still has the liability of maintenance and upkeep," the mayor said.

Tyndall said the goal is to move staff from Town Hall to the Visitor Center in December. Thus, a pathway must be decided on soon.

"I think there could be some options that could be discussed and then certainly that's your all's decision, that might be able to solve a couple of dif-



FILE PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The current Berlin Visitor Center is pictured on Main Street.

ferent problems," Reid said. "All I'm hoping is that there can be some kind of collective discussion before a final decision is made."

Tyndall concurred, reiterating that any suggestions are welcome.

"This is the gathering of ideas phase," he said.



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Town appeals delegate's assessment change

Continued from Page 1

very low," Hartman said. "So, the cap (capitalization) rate was very low, and it was fixed based on the rent. So, if you do the math, the value of the property was very high. I paid nearly \$2.5 million for the property. Since then, we have had a dramatic increase in interest rates, and now the cap rates are much higher, so rent being the same ... the value of the store is much lower ... I had valuations from different Realtors, and the valuation that the state came back with lowered my assessment to \$1.8 million."

As the assessment reduction was more than 20% of its original value, courtesy by the state is to send a letter to the Town of Berlin. Upon receipt of the state's notice, the municipality filed an appeal of the property value decrease. Hartman argued against this move at the meeting and had previously reached out

to Councilman Jay Knerr about his concerns.

"I think it's a very bad look for the town to be fighting these [reductions]," Knerr said. "...We could have gone to [Hartman] and said, 'Hey, what's going on here?' I think that would have been a fair approach."

Other staff and council members argued that Dollar General's property value reduction would result in the town losing funds necessary to provide residents with goods and services.

"My standpoint on the appeal is reduction of assessed value, which is lost revenue for the Town of Berlin," said Natalie Saleh, the town's finance director. "As the finance director, I would advocate to appeal because we're losing the revenue that provides services to the citizens and residents of the Town of Berlin."

Other than Knerr, the Berlin council



FILE PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Property owner Wayne Hartman, who leases the land to the Dollar General, came before Berlin's elected officials looking for answers as to why the town appealed a recent reduction by the state on the commercial property assessment.

was unaware of the town-filed appeal against the reduction of Hartman's Dollar General property. Still, Councilwoman Shaneka Nichols agreed with Saleh, noting that a decrease in accumulated property taxes does not serve the town.

"It's a loss of revenue for the town," she added. "... I'm not saying that any constituent or any property owner in this town ... I'm not saying that any of them shouldn't have the right to appeal, but at the same time, if it comes to the town and it looks like you could possibly lose revenue that's coming into the town, we have that same right as well."

The conversation was heated, and it was unclear who within the Town of Berlin directed the appeal to be made.

Saleh said she sent an appeal letter to the State of Maryland at the direction of Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall and administration for more information as to why the reduction took place.

"The page we received stated that this particular property had filed a reduction in assessed value," the finance director said. "As the Town of Berlin and Mayor and Council, you have the right to appeal the decision ... so me receiving instructions from the mayor and the town administrator to proceed with the process, we have filed an appeal to basically appeal the reduced value of the 20% of the commercial property."

Hartman responded, arguing that if Saleh filed the appeal at the direction of Tyndall, it "changes a lot of the conversation"

However, Tyndall maintained that he stayed out of the appeal process.

"The direction is that staff were asked to handle this at the staff level," the mayor said. "I did not play the part in drafting the letter, I did not play a part...[Hartman], you're trying to find something that doesn't exist ... The reason I was staying out of that was because I don't think this process should be political."

Hartman continued to express his dissatisfaction with the town's appeal, whoever ordered it.

"[Tyndall], you told me you had nothing to do with it," Hartman responded. "Natalie just said that she was directed by you. That's a big difference. As an elected person, you're directing somebody to work against somebody investing in the town."

The property owner said that supporting a small business like Dollar Gen-

eral is necessary to maintain a community that supports all its residents. According to Hartman, many Berlin citizens use the shop for their household and grocery needs because they don't have transportation to larger stores like Food Lion or Walmart.

If the reduced property value is overturned, Hartman worries that the costly property taxes may discourage Dollar General from renewing its lease and thus ending its services to the Berlin community.

Hartman added that as the landlord in a triple net lease arrangement, he is not responsible for the tax bill but wants to do his best to retain fairness and the shop's benefit to residents.

"With stores like that, my concern is that their margins are getting smaller," Hartman said. "... If that store goes dark, where do those constituents go? Those constituents that you represent are the ones who are going to be impacted by a decision like this. If we're not going to be fair, if it's about a need for money, so desperately, for the town, then I'm glad we had this conversation."

Nichols resisted the idea that Berlin's Dollar General is at risk of shutting down. According to the councilmember, the brand is re-strategizing to markets, offering customers a more well-rounded shopping experience with additional merchandise.

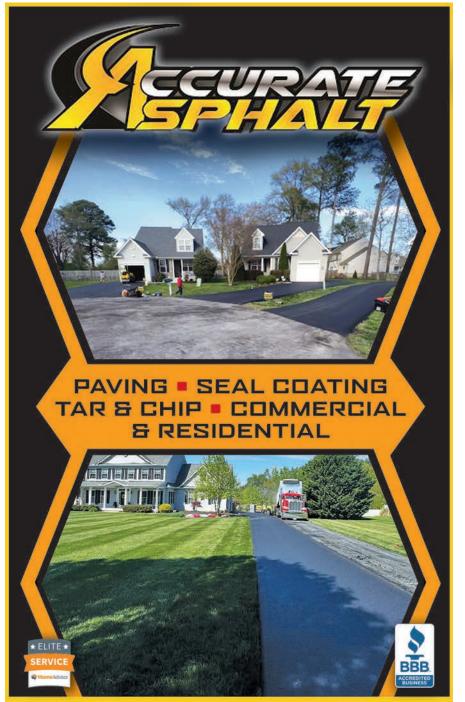
"Maybe Dollar General is different from what I see, but what I've heard and read and seen with my own eyes is that they're not closing, they're rebranding and opening Dollar General Markets now," Nichols said. "I don't see this one closing because of this right here."

Hartman hoped the councilwoman was right, but if the appeal led to the reinstatement of a higher property value and thus raised the taxes, Berlin's shop would be at risk.

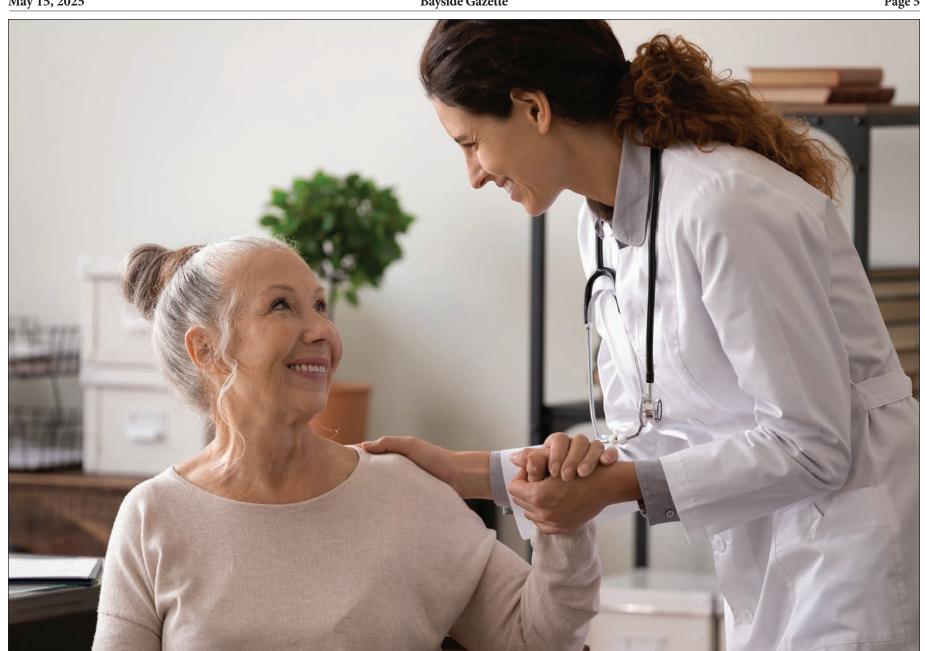
"We can't look at businesses as an ATM," he said.

Berlin staff maintained that this was the first assessment reduction over 20% in recent memory. As such, no current policy or precedent requires staff to always appeal the new estimate. Even so, Hartman reiterated that the move to appeal in this case does a disservice to Dollar General shoppers.

"I just want what's fair," Hartman concluded.



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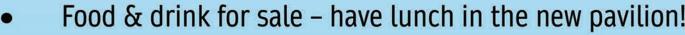
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Groups ask for help in keeping bays healthy

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(May 15, 2025) The Bay Day event is coming back to Ocean Pines this weekend for its sixth year. Experts will provide attendees with resources, tips, and information on protecting nearby waterways.

The Ocean Pines Association (OPA) and the Maryland Coastal Bays Program (MCBP) will welcome community members to White Horse Park on Sunday, May 18, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Representatives from MCBP, OPA, and local environmental groups will be on-site, hosting educational activities and booths to garner community support for continuing to improve and advocate for the health of the channels that shoulder Ocean Pines.

"The Ocean Pines community resides directly on the St. Martin River, a waterway that historically scores lower on overall health compared to the bays," said MCBP Education Coordinator Liz Wist. "The hope in holding it in Ocean Pines is that a large population of residents will come out to learn about resources available to them to help improve the river that impacts so many of their lives."

Attendees can take bay boat tours on the OC Bay Hopper, visit a live animal exhibit, take a storybook walk, and embark on a scavenger hunt. A sensory area will also be set up for young children. Wist added that there will be hands-on make-and-take nature art for youth and opportunities for adults to "interact with and learn from dedicated organizations who work towards the health of our bays."

"This event does not just cater to one age bracket," the education coordinator said.

A recycling station will be set up where community members can drop off their alkaline batteries,

old phones, and other items for recycling. Go green OC will collect compost on-site. Local parks, museums, art associations, farmers, fishing groups, garden clubs, advocacy organizations, and other environmental non-profits are also slated to participate in Bay Day.

"Bay Day itself is unique for the wide range of educational activities offered," said Wist. "We are hoping we are able to broaden our community's knowledge on topics that we are already interested in, and maybe even spark a new passion."

Bay Day typically yields around 1,000 to 1,500 attendees. Organizers are hopeful this year's event brings in similar numbers.

"The weather is looking good for us," Wist noted.

In addition to focusing on protecting the community's environment, Bay Day will feature entertainment and refreshments. The May 18 function will include live music from Schizophrenic Boogiemen and food from The Street Kitchen, Kona Ice, and the Kiwanis Club.

Bay Day is a collaborative effort between the MCBP and OPA. Wist said that the environmental group "organizes all the moving parts of the event that include the activities, exhibitors, volunteers, materials, and some of the marketing," while OPA takes on more of a "backbone" role.

"[OPA] gives us creative freedom for the event, provides the funds to make this happen, helps support marketing, and is the most gracious host site that supplies us with bathrooms, water fountains, the stage, trash cans, and more," Wist said. "It truly is collaborative, and we appreciate the sixyear relationship we have had with their Recre-



SLIBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Stations and booths will be set up at White Horse Park this Sunday for residents to learn how they can help keep the bays clean.

ation and Parks Department."

OPA and MCBP hope that the event will spur community involvement in the efforts to maintain the health and cleanliness of the bays surrounding the wooded neighborhood. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn more from the environmental teams about initiatives aimed at supporting this mission and what they can do to help the cause.

"The Maryland Coastal Bays Program relies on our communities to help us protect the resources and ecology of our Coastal Bays," said MCBP Executive Director Kevin Smith.

"Events like Bay Day are important to communicate relevant and current environmental information to interested citizens and provide a basis of support to help keep our waterways clean and beautiful."





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Ocean Pines prepares for a community expo

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(May 15, 2025) The second annual Ocean Pines Season Kickoff Expo will be held this weekend at the Worcester County Veterans Memorial Park, providing residents the opportunity to explore local businesses, neighborhood amenities, clubs and more.

On Saturday, May 17, Ocean Pines citizens are invited to the Veterans Memorial Park between the South Gate Pond and Racetrack Road. The event. featuring booths from community activities, nearby establishments, and amenity information, will kick off at 11 a.m. The function will end around 3 p.m.

The Ocean Pines expo is free to attend. Attendees can ask about community offerings, like golf, aquatic, or racquet center memberships. Residents can also connect with local businesses, gather information on available lessons and upcoming social events, and discover volunteer opportunities. According to a press release by the Ocean Pines Association, the kickoff will include giveaways and raffle prizes.

Linda Yurche, OPA's Communications Committee leader, and Gary Miller, the chair of the Aquatics Advisory Committee, are co-captaining the event. The community release maintained that last year's inaugural kickoff at White Horse Park yielded nearly 1,000 attendees. To accommodate similarly anticipated numbers this time, the organizers moved the function to the Worcester County Veterans Memorial Park.

"The new location allows for additional vendor space, more convenient parking, and increased visibility," the press release said.

Food vendors will be on-site for OPA residents to purchase lunch as they browse the community information booths. Yurche said that Kona Ice was at the expo last year and agreed to bring its shaved ice to the kickoff this week. Additional refreshment offerings will also be available for participants. Furthermore, seating will be arranged for shade and dining accommodations in the new Veterans Memorial Park pavilion, completed in November.

When planning last year's expo, the original mission was to market Ocean Pines' amenities in the springtime, informing residents of what's available and spurring membership numbers ahead of the summer season. Yurche noted that the idea expanded to include clubs, nearby businesses, and volunteer groups as preparation continued.

Maintaining a lively, involved neigh-

borhood is the event's primary goal.

"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," Yurche said in February. "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."

OP veterans park plans celebration for Memorial Day

(May 15, 2025) The largest Memorial Day ceremony in the region returns to the Worcester County Veterans Memorial in Ocean Pines, on Monday, May 26, starting at 11 a.m.

The event each year draws thousands of people to the memorial grounds and features music, demonstrations, and public speakers honoring U.S. Military men and women who gave their lives in service.

"Memorial Day honors all who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our county," Veterans Memorial Foundation President Marie Gilmore said. "This year's ceremony, as those before it, will honor the brave men and women who served our country and lost their lives in doing so."

Gilmore said the keynote speaker this vear will be retired U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander Robert J. Rosales, a Naval Academy graduate who grew up in Seaford, Del. and attended then-Worcester Country School (now Worcester Prep).

The ceremony will also honor local Gold Star families. During World War I, families would fly flags or banners with a blue star for every immediate family member serving in combat. If one of them died, a gold star replaced the blue star.

Walter Webster, a member of the Maryland East Chapter of Ex-POWs, will place a wreath in honor of all current and former prisoners of war.

The program will also include patriotic music performed by Randy Lee Ashcraft, The Delmarva Chorus, Patrick Lehnerd a local performer and Seaside Christian Academy chorus.

The program is scheduled to run for one hour.

Public parking will be available at Veterans Memorial Park on Route 589 and Cathell Road in Ocean Pines. Limited seating will be available during the Memorial Day ceremony and guests are encouraged to bring chairs

In case of inclement weather, the Memorial Day ceremony will move to the Ocean Pines Community Center and be announced on the www.oceanpines.org and www.wocovets.org websites and on social media.







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Parking reduced at proposed hotel in Berlin

Developers of planned Microtel received a parking variance at recent meeting

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(May 15, 2025) The site plan for a proposed Microtel Inn and Suites by Wyndham in Berlin will now only include 69 parking spots, a reduction from the previously required 83 spaces. The Town of Berlin's Board of Zoning Appeals approved the variance request at a meeting this week.

On May 7, developers for the proposed Microtel, a new lodging site intended for the east side of Route 113 near Franklin Avenue in Berlin, requested a decrease in the facility's required parking spaces. The developer came before the Town of Berlin's Board of Zoning Appeals on Wednesday to formally ask the body to eliminate 14 of the necessary parking spots. The number of needed spaces was formerly deemed at 83 to accommodate the 77 rooms planned for the hotel.

Brett Ewing, project planner with Lane Engineering, said the parking reduction is required, as much of the parcel is unusable due to the space's stormwater management features and nontidal wetlands. While the



SUBMITTED PHOTO/RAYSIDE GAZETTI

Included in the Berlin Board of Zoning Appeals packet for last week's meeting was this image cited as a "parking variance exhibit" for the proposed Microtel Inn & Suites in Berlin.

property spans five acres, only approximately two acres are available for development. To create the whole four-story, 77-unit building, develop-

ers must reduce the size of the parking lot. The BZA approved the ask after considerable deliberation.

"It seems like it's a fairly large par-

cel, but in reality, it's not large at all," said Mark Spencer Cropper, attorney for property owner Tom Zambetis.

Cropper added that the parking re-



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Microtel parking change OK'd

duction is consistent with other areas. Codes for towns like Easton, Ocean City, and Salisbury require a similar number of spaces to the 69 that the Berlin Microtel developers proposed.

"This project, if in those jurisdictions, would be compliant," Cropper said.

According to Zambetis, the Microtel in the unincorporated area of West Ocean City, also has 77 units and offers fewer parking spaces.

Project officials assured that the parking spot decrease would be offset by an agreement with the owner of other properties on Franklin Avenue, who agreed to offer 24 spaces to the Microtel.

Ewing said the nearby property is "compatible" with the planned hotel. The buildings include office space, which will require parking at different times of the day.

"You have a hotel that has its demand on evenings and weekends as opposed to an office building next door that is 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the weekday," he said.

Zambetis added that these spots are "almost always empty" and that hotel guests' access to the overflow lot will be seamless, as they are aligned to the Microtel property line.

"They don't have to park down the street or around the corner," the property owner said.

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Members of the BZA inquired as to why developers could not address their land shortage issues by building a smaller structure. Zambetis said that a three-story building was considered, but was deemed impractical.

The property owner claimed that per a cost-benefit analysis, "with all the work done with architectural and engineering, it was more expensive to do three stories than to finish the four-story [building]."

Officials also argued that the decreased parking would not be as noticeable as expected, as all 77 units will rarely be full.

"When you have 77 rooms, you never typically have all your rooms in service," said Ernie Felici of Beacon Hospitality, Microtel's project manager. "No matter how hard you try, you typically have a few rooms that are out of service. You only operate at max capacity, sold out, maybe 10 to 12 times a year. Typically, if you look at your average hotel, average annual hotel occupancy is 50% or less."

The BZA approved the parking reduction request. The board asked that developers receive written documentation of access to the 24 additional spots from the nearby property owner as a condition of their approval. The project will soon go before the Berlin Planning Commission for final site plan review.





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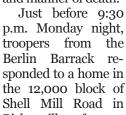
Arrest made in Bishopville murder

(May 15, 2025) Maryland State Police homicide investigators arrested and charged a woman with the murder of a man whose body was found deceased in a home Monday night in Worcester County.

The suspect is identified as Bonnie Hackendorn, 61, of Bishopville. After consultation with the Office of the State's Attorney in Worcester County, she was charged with first- and second-degree murder, first- and second-degree assault and other related firearm charges. Hackendorn was transported to the Worcester County Detention Center where she is currently being held without bond.

The victim is identified as David Shaulis, 57, of Bishopville. Shaulis was pronounced deceased at the scene by Worcester County emergency medical personnel. His body was transported to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Baltimore for an autopsy to

determine the cause and manner of death.



B. Hackendorn

Bishopville, after receiving a call from a woman, later identified as Hackendorn, reporting that her boyfriend had been shot.

Upon arrival, troopers were met by Hackendorn, inside the home. Shaulis was located unresponsive and lying on the floor with an apparent gunshot wound. A request was made for the Maryland State Police Homicide Unit to respond and conduct the investigation

Investigators from the Homicide Unit and the Criminal Enforcement Division responded to the scene, as did crime scene technicians from the State Police Forensic Sciences Division. Search warrants were obtained, and the scene was processed for evidence.

Based on information developed and evidence collected during the preliminary investigation, State Police homicide investigators took Hackendorn into custody and transported her to the Berlin Barrack for processing.

The investigation is continuing.



By Tara Fischer Staff Writer

(May 15, 2025) Berlin's property tax rate for fiscal year 2026 will remain unchanged at \$0.8275 per \$100 of a property's assessed value. The town's council unanimously passed the tax ordinance at the May 12 meeting.

The real property tax rate for FY26 is flat, yielding no increase from FY25. According to Berlin Finance Director Natalie Saleh, one cent equals around \$50,000 for the upcoming fiscal year.

The proposal to keep a flat property tax rate was initially discussed publicly at an April 7 general fund budget work session. At that time, Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall maintained that while the property tax rate will remain unchanged, the fees will generate additional revenue for the town in FY26, as property tax values rise.

In FY25, the real property tax rate brought in \$4,563,392. A 7% to 8% increase in that figure, or a total revenue of around \$4,922,500, is expected for the upcoming fiscal year, which begins on July 1.

"This budget keeps the tax rate the same, and that's at \$0.8275 per \$100 assessed value," Tyndall said last month. "Keeping the tax rate the same will generate about \$359,000 in additional revenue for FY26, which comes out to about a 7% increase from FY25."

At the April work session, Saleh opposed maintaining the property tax rate. The finance director concurred that the increasing property value will generate additional revenue for the Town of Berlin in FY26, even with a flat rate. However, she argued that even with the escalating property values, the current fee structure is insufficient to keep up with rising costs.

"We are advancing a lot from reserves to fund capital projects," Saleh said in April. "It's not a good practice to advance money from reserves and fund future capital projects ... Most of the projects we see on the general fund and the utility sides are either a carried forward project funded from reserves or a new project which will be funded potentially from reserves."

Saleh maintained that small, yearly increases in the property tax rate are necessary to ensure the Town of Berlin's finances remain on track.

"We ... pretty much rely on the real estate tax as revenue for the general fund," she said. "I encourage you to rethink an incremental increase in the tax rate so that it will allow us to plan for a five- and 10-year capital plan in the future and be sustainable going forward."

Despite previous pushback from the town's finance director, the council unanimously voted to retain FY25's real property tax rate heading into fiscal year 2026.



HDC approves cafe's plans for exterior improvements

Main Street operators seek facade improvements, will use grant to complete work

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(May 15, 2025) Cafe Berlin is revamping its front exterior with funding from a facade grant to better align itself with the neighboring Main Street properties and businesses.

Last month, Cafe Berlin, formerly On What Grounds? in downtown Berlin, received funding through Berlin's 2025 Facade Grant Program. Through the initiative, the Town of Berlin gets \$50,000 from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, which is then dispersed among business and commercial property owners. The grant application maintains that priority recipients include "buildings that will keep its historical integrity, buildings that contain retail, art, or restaurants," and renovation projects instead of new construction.

Cafe Berlin intends to use the funds to remove and replace an existing awning, repair and clean exterior red brick, install a "historically appropriate" pediment, replace both entry doors, refurbish the windows, and install new hanging signage.

Owner Mike Ewing went before Berlin's Historic District Commission last week to receive approval for the changes. The body unanimously greenlit the renovation request.

The Berlin Facade Grant Program provides matching grant funds. Per Ewing's grant application, the scope of the work is expected to cost around

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\$19,918. The business owner requested half, or \$9,959, from the improvement program to be used for the project.

According to Ewing, the Cafe Berlin owners will replace the structure's existing awning to match the style of tin coverings along Main Street. The exterior's windows will be repainted and recaulked, and a hanging sign will be installed underneath the new awning. The facade's two doors will also be replaced, and the entrances will see a style change to a more farmhouse aesthetic.

We have three doors in our front, but the one to the apartments above will stay [the same] and we want to replace the [other] two doors, just spruce it up," Ewing said. "I think it's in dire need of a refresh.'

Burley Building Company is slated to take on the exterior improvement work, which Ewing hopes will be completed before the official start of the summer.

Ewing and his wife, Christina, opened Cafe Berlin earlier this year. The pair purchased the former coffee shop, On What Grounds?, from the previous owners and have continued the establishment's coffee and breakfast tradition while incorporating their personal flair. New menu items include a line of gourmet toast and various flavors of homemade mac-

Other businesses to receive funding through this year's Berlin Facade Grant Program include The Atlantic Hotel, Bay Four LLC, Roadie Joe's Berlin, Decatur Investments, Salon 16, and a new town novelty, The Ghost Museum.





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Berlin exploring new well addition near Route 346

Testing initiative to provide data for larger, permanent well within municipal limits

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(May 15, 2025) The Berlin Town Council approved a series of motions at a meeting earlier this week, including a bid for a test well initiative, a road paving project and a Polaris vehicle for the town's police department.

On Monday, May 12, the Berlin Town Council unanimously agreed to allow HCE LLC, out of Delaware, handle a rehabilitation road paving initiative for Lee Road by Spray Site A for \$61,274.86. Jamey Latchum, Berlin's director of water resources, maintained that the road is currently in "bad shape" and requires a two-layer paving to ensure durability.

"Lee Road is at Spray Site A," Latchum said. "It's the main road going in and out of there. It's in really bad shape ... I think over 25 years, there's never been anything done to it. I feel bad for the guys that work there, a couple of them have some nice cars, and the road is in bad shape."

According to Latchum, only \$50,000 was budgeted for the project. However, the septic hauler fund has reserves available to cover the remaining cost of the improvement work.

The Berlin Town Council also awarded Somerset Well Drilling an RFP (request for proposal) to install a test well on Berlin property, located off Route 346, as part of a water capacity management and water supply improvement project. The town will employ Somerset Well Drilling to handle the work for \$19,985.

The test well will provide data necessary to account for when a larger, permanent well will be constructed on the site in the near future. If constructed, this well will be the fourth for Berlin.

"Test wells will let you know water quality, and they can roughly figure out how many gallons we could actually get out of the ground at that location," Latchum said. "...We will look at nitrates, everything that possibly could be in the water, so we're in the right spot to drill a well for the town, so we don't have to put a whole bunch of treatment in."

The water resources director added that a test well is a required step to ensure the smooth installation of a new well.

"I feel if we do not do a test well, we are not doing our due diligence for the mayor and council and the residents of the Town of Berlin," he said. "We are trying to do the proper steps before we drill a new well."

The council unanimously approved the bid award to Somerset Well Drilling.

Also on Monday, the municipality's governing body approved the purchase of a new utility vehicle, a RANGER CREW XP 1000 NorthStar Edition Premium, for \$32,332.19, plus \$2,100 for lights, totaling \$34,438.

The town unanimously passed the purchase of the vehicle, which has four doors and can travel at all speeds within the town limits. The goal is for the utility vehicle to make it easier for emergency officials to get to and weave around downtown Berlin during events.

Funds accumulated from the town's speed camera initiative will fund the vehicle.



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Community advocates for fair school budget

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(May 15, 2025) Public school advocates filled the sidewalks and packed the commissioners' chambers to lobby elected officials, 120 seconds at a time, for a fully funded Worcester County Board of Education budget.

The vibe was upbeat when school supporters, many of them teachers or school personnel, queued up outside the Worcester County Government Center hours before the start of the 6 p.m. budget hearing May 6. Many wore black teachers' union T-shirts and planted a raft of orange "Support Public Education" yard signs along the North Washington Street curbside.

Speakers' remarks were limited to two minutes, a constraint not lost on Emily Gelman of Ocean Pines, mother of three Showell Elementary students. She advocated for smaller class sizes, so students with differing needs can be served better by classroom teachers.

"How do I convince you in two minutes that your decision is, above all else, about the kids in this community?" she said. "Educators can tell you countless inspiring student stories about these students. So, I need to ask you, what is the right decision for these students?"

Christina Hulslander, who lives in the Pocomoke area, asked the commissioners to fully fund the budget in order to maintain not only the school system's top state rating but smaller class sizes

"I am a taxpayer. I am a voter. I am okay at times when you need to increase my taxes to support schools," she said. "I don't think you need to do that this time around. I think we just need to commit to having the will and finding the way to support our schools 100 percent."

While the public was welcome to comment on spending from any county department, 19 of the 22 people who spoke Tuesday in Snow Hill were there to champion Worcester County Public Schools. Its request for \$116.5 million is about \$8.5 million more than last year's ask. The county is budgeting for \$284.5 million in revenue for fiscal year 2026.

Mary Hathaway, a Stephen Decatur High School history teacher and mom to a first grader, told commissioners that the WCPS budget request isn't a "wish list" but a "responsible, transparent, and data-driven budget for what it costs to educate a child in 2025."

"Every decision, some cuts and some increases, were made deliberately with students in mind," she said. "It is grounded in what they need, small class sizes, highly trained educators, and a chance that they all deserve."

Hathaway also reminded elected officials how they didn't fully fund Worcester schools for the last two years. In fiscal 2025, schools got \$105

million from the county, about \$1 million shy of their ask. For fiscal 2024, schools received flat funding of about \$100 million.

"Our insurance, our wages, our building operation costs continue to rise," Hathaway added, "and our students shouldn't suffer because of those increases"

Many who spoke and attended the hearing are active in the teacher advocacy group Worcester United and have fought for to support teacher raises and cost of living increases.

One of those people was Tom Simon of Berlin, a dad to two students at Buckingham Elementary, who said fully funding schools should be elected officials' top priority.

"You have the tools, you have the reserves – please use them," he said. "This is not the year to shortchange our schools or cut back on public services. It's the year to step up, use the resource that we've set aside and make sure Worcester County stays strong for the families and businesses who live here year-round and for the generations to come."

County schools are facing external constraints this budget cycle because of a state mandate to pay teachers a \$60,000 minimum salary by the start of the 2027 school year, part of a legislative package out of Annapolis

called the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

To meet this, the Board of Education has budgeted an across-the-board \$4,000 salary increase, with plans to repeat the raise next year, to meet that mandate.

Berlin Intermediate School parent Kim Jackson told commissioners she supports those teacher raises in this year's budget.

"It is difficult to recruit and retain high quality teachers and staff without a competitive salary scale year over year," she said. "(WCPS) leads the state and student achievement. The return on investment is clear. Pay for our staff needs to reflect their performance."

WCPS Superintendent Lou Taylor told commissioners that teachers, support staff, and bus drivers deserve their negotiated salary increases.

He added that this budget was carefully crafted by his finance depart-

SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

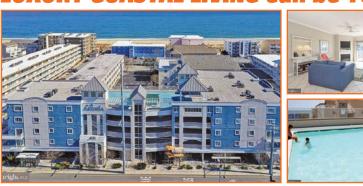
Educators, like Snow Hill High School teacher Kyle Wheatley, pictured, asked county officials to grant the school system's entire funding ask.

ment to put an emphasis on small class sizes, special education, multilingual instruction, and mental health and emotional support services.

"We know this is a difficult and often thankless task, but please know that we remain grateful for the time you devote in service to our community," Taylor said. "I humbly ask you that you fully fund the budget of education this year and provide our communities with a school experience they desire and that our children so much deserve."







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Money transfer will likely cover utility deficit

Mitrecic, Fiori blast Bertino, claiming he misrepresented budget shortfall situation

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(May 15, 2025) Worcester County officials have pivoted from a proposal that would ask water and sewer customers to absorb a sizeable revenue shortfall with across-the-board rate hikes, calling the plan "not feasible."

It's also possible that the system-wide deficit – once estimated to be \$2.1 million before officials calculated the loss as closer to \$1.1 million – could be covered by dipping into county coffers instead of passing the cost onto ratepayers.

However, pulling from the general fund is easier said than done, because

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there are more outstretched palms than revenue in the 2026 budget, according to Worcester County Administrator Weston Young.

He shared news of the course correction with the County Commissioners and a room full of citizens May 6 at a public hearing convened specifically to address the deficit issue and solicit public comment.

To this, County Commissioner Chip Bertino – who had railed against the notion of a rate hike for his Ocean Pines constituents whose profitable water-sewer district did not contribute to the deficit – expressed a kind of restrained vindication.

"Does that mean," he asked Young, "that the county cannot move forward in placing the debt repayment when service areas did not contribute it? Is that what I'm hearing? That option is

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now off the table?"

Young said yes. Some in the audience broke into applause.

When Bertino followed up to ask when that decision was made, Young said it's complicated.

When assembling the budget, "we have to lock things down in March – basically, no more edits," Young told him. Straying from that regimented process – review the numbers in April, hold a public hearing in May, and finalize the budget in June – would introduce moving targets in every department, creating an accounting nightmare.

Piners express relief

A large group of people who attended Tuesday's public hearing were from Ocean Pines, and they had intended to stand and speak out against the proposal. However, when Young announced that the universal rate hike was no longer an option, they bowed out and yielded their reserved speaking time.

Elaine Brady, a board member of the Ocean Pines Association, did speak. She expressed satisfaction that about 10,000 water and sewer customers in the community would not get stuck footing the bill for a deficit they weren't involved in creating.

"We were very upset to learn about the mismanagement, just like you all, of these funds," she told the commissioners. "We truly found that we should not all be paying off the debt. There are other ways to do that.

"We really felt that this was being rushed and pushed through," Brady added. "We need to be looking into these funds and making sure that they're being done properly. It's our money. It's not your money. It's our money and everybody needs to remember that."

One reason the county administration abandoned the idea of a univer-

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sal rate increase to raise new revenue is that, technically, the county's own regulations don't allow for it.

There are 11 separate districts that provide water-sewer service in Worcester County, and they vary in customer base, services provided, and rates charged. According to county code, making changes to rates charges can only be done district by district, not in blanket fashion across all 11.

It means raising prices wholesale for the county's 18,000 total water and sewer customers – regardless of where they live or whether their sewerage district contributed to the deficit – would be a violation of the code.

Yet another reason for setting aside the everyone-pays-more approach for wastewater rates? Lawyers. Young said the outside attorneys they consult on issues of borrowing – for state bonds, federal borrowing, and general obligation debt – told them it was probably a bad idea.

This wastewater deficit and its causes are complex, officials say.

Most of the county's sewerage districts haven't been charging ratepayers enough to cover operating costs. Not only that, but, for years, some treatment plants simply didn't have enough customers to generate enough revenue to break even.

Moving forward, if officials do choose to pursue a universal rate increase, they'll have to amend the code to make it kosher. However, that in itself is a lengthy process involving its own set of public hearings, and it doesn't quite dovetail with the tight, pre-determined budget timeline.

"We knew spreading the deficit would require a code change," Young told the public hearing audience Tuesday night. "And spreading existing debt is a bit trickier. It's best keeping those with the service areas they're tied to. We've been working on new scenarios to discuss with the commissioners at their next budget work session, which will be next week."

Dispute among officials

Another twist in this tale came early Tuesday, hours before the public wastewater hearing, during a regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners.

Commissioner Joe Mitrecic (District 7, Ocean City) angrily confronted Commissioner Chip Bertino for making what he said were false public statements.

While Worcester County's sevenmember Board of Commissioners had discussed various approaches to tackle the deficit, they had not yet agreed on a path forward, not before soliciting public feedback from the public hearing later that night.

However, the commissioners who represent Ocean Pines – Bertino



County axes controversial plan to remedy revenue loss

(District 5) and Jim Bunting (District 6) - hosted an April 23 meeting where constituents were told that a solution had, in fact, been agreed

Bertino presented this in a paper handout shared with attendees, with a timeline detailing the events of a March 18 meeting. The handout said:

"To make up the entire deficit, a majority of Commissioners (Elder, Fiori, Mitrecic and Purnell) vote to require ALL SERVICE AREAS - regardless of debt contribution - to repay the shortage amount in equal shares. This equates to about \$32 per ratepayer per quarter on top of any other rate adjustments."

But the commissioners never voted to implement a rate hike, and they didn't conclude that all wastewater service areas would equally repay the deficit. The only decision made, in a unanimous vote, was to share this plan as a proposal and send it to a public hearing.

All this drew the ire of the typically taciturn Mitrecic, who felt Bertino had misled the public and stirred unnecessary outrage. He went on to cite similar comments made by Bertino that were quoted in the OC Today-Dispatch.

Now, I'd like to know when we made that motion – the motion that was made and the vote that was made," Mitrecic asked Bertino.

"The motion was to put that plan forward," replied Bertino, "and that's what is -

Mitrecic cut him off.

"The motion was to put this," – he slammed his hand on the dais - "on a public hearing and that vote was unanimous."

"No, it wasn't," Bertino said. "Yes, it was!" Mitrecic shot back, pounding the desktop a second time. You wanna go back and look at the tape?"

"This is an inflammatory statement," Mitrecic continued, raising his voice, "made by you in order to rile up the people."

He added, "that piece of paper there in print that was showed to the Ocean Pines people is lie, flat out, and I expect an apology."

Bertino stated that he stands by his comments that other commissioners were advocating for an unfair solution to paying down the wastewater debt.

"I believe that is unfair, not just to Ocean Pines, but to the other service areas who have contributed nothing to the anticipated debt, that at one time was a \$2.1 million, it dropped to \$1.8, it may even be less than that, he said. "That's the only issue. It's a question of fairness. That's what I was expressed at the town meeting. I've articulated that from the moment that this plan was put forward."

Bertino also was on the record in the newspaper as saying that "one commissioner" was trying to push things through. When asked by Mitrecic who that person was, Bertino declined to specify - until Commissioner Eric Fiori joined the already heated conversation to say it was him.

"Commissioner Mitrecic, I appreciate you bringing that up, because I believe that commissioner name is myself, Commissioner Bertino." Fiori said, agitated. "I think I need an apology as well."

Fiori also accused Bertino of preventing county staffers from speaking at his informational session. Bertino countered that this wasn't true and named several employees who attended and spoke at the meeting.

Bertino had the last word in the 15minute dispute as he reiterated his position.

"I will not be – will not submit to as if I'm on a witness stand in a criminal trial to be cross-examined," Bertino replied calmly. "I have said publicly and privately that I feel that this plan is not correct. It is not fair."

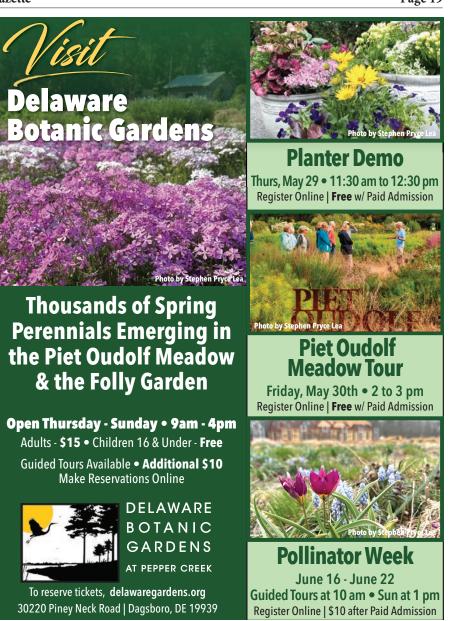


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Snapshots





UBMITTED PHOTOS/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

BIKE TO SCHOOL DAY

Hundreds of students, teachers and parents took part in the annual Ride to School day for Buckingham Elementary School last Thursday. Above left, a group heads toward school in Berlin from West Street, including BES Principal Chris Welch, above right.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

NEW MEMBERS INDUCTED

Five new members of the Kiwanis Club of Greater Ocean Pines-Ocean City were inducted at the April 23 meeting. Pictured, from left, are Sponsor Jim Spicknall, Matthew Stensland (sponsor Diane Sparzak, not pictured), Seth Thatcher (sponsored by Jim Spicknall), Maddie Pettolina and Arthur Thomas (both sponsored by Tom Southwell), Terri Ulman (sponsored by Jim Ulman), Kiwanis Club President Tom Southwell and Jim Ulman.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

ART HONOR SOCIETY

As part of the Worcester Preparatory April Honor Society inductions, 18 students were inducted to the National Art Honor Society on April 10. The National Art Honor Society recognizes students who have shown outstanding ability in art, character and service. Pictured, front from left, are middle and upper school art teacher George Zaiser, inductees Catherine Cullen, Sydney Mize, Avery Roselle, Emily Patrowicz, Quinn Solloway and middle and upper school technology teacher Nancy Raskauskas; second row, students Nathan Montague, Ayla Yonker, Emily Ferguson, Olivia Owens, Samantha Bontempo and Owen West; and, back, students Dillon Scopp, Ryan Mann, Lucas Nicastro, Allen Zhang and Grant Crothers. Not pictured were Jennifer Kimbrew and Andrew McCormick.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

TECH SCHOOL DONATION

The Ocean Pines Garden Club (OPGC) visited the Worcester Technical High School (WTHS) campus this month for a donation presentation, a tour of the school grounds, and a stellar luncheon provided by the culinary students. OPGC donated \$600 to build and plant six raised garden beds on site. Principal Tony Bevilacqua, pictured with OPGC Co-President Nancy Mulligan, hosted the tour and explained that many of the school's disciplines contribute to the building, planting, tending, and harvesting of the beds. Several more beds and native plantings are planned with the help of some well-earned grants.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

STRAIGHT A'S IN HIGH SCHOOL

At last week's WeXL banquet at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center, Stephen Decatur High School senior students who recorded straight A's for 15 consecutive terms throughout high school were celebrated. The students were Sullivan Auker, Brooke Berquist, Samantha Boger, Benjamin Chase, Brogan Clark, Frederick Donahue, Logan Donmoyer, Ksenia Drakos, Sydnie Harrington, Walker Hastings, Anika Karli, Lucas Magathan, Madison McGinnis, Marley Noonan, Adelina Olerta Josephine Palmer, Andrew Sullivan, Evan Todd, Melih Unal, Julianna Wooden and Lin Zheng.

Cancer research awareness day held in Berlin

By Adrian Harpool

Contributing Writer

(May 15, 2025) Sunshine and solidarity filled Dr. William Edward Henry Park on Saturday, May 10, as over 150 residents, cancer survivors, families and community partners gathered for the inaugural Cancer Research Awareness Day, hosted by the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Maryland, Eastern Region, and Lincoln Lodge #53.

With the theme "Small Steps, Big Impact," the event offered a moving and memorable experience rooted in community support, education, and fun. The day opened with a heartfelt community prayer, led by local clergy and attendees, setting the tone for a program that honored resilience and encouraged collective action in the fight against cancer.

One of the most emotional moments came during the Testimonials, Remembrance & Reflection segment where cancer survivors and medical professionals shared powerful stories of hope, healing, and perseverance. Their words moved many in the audience to tears and ultimately to action.

"The testimonies were incredible," said Victor Smack, Worshipful Master of Lincoln Lodge #53 and co-organizer of the event. "It reminded all of us why we came together — not just to raise awareness, but to build a network of support for families who have faced this fight."

Attendees enjoyed an energetic performance by the Gospel Steppers: Heart and Sole, followed by a lively line dance tutorial that got people of all ages up and moving. Children activities included snacks, games, music, and warm community energy while adults visited information tables hosted by the American Cancer Society and Atlantic Gen-



LIDAVITTED DIJOTO (DAVCIDE CAZETTE

Pictured, from left, are Willie Miller, Eastern Region Deputy Grand Master; Michael Haynie, Sr., Junior Grand Warden PHGLMD; Berlin Councilwoman Shaneka Nichols; and Zsavelle Smack, Most Worshipful Master Lodge #53 Eastern Region.

eral Hospital. Volunteers collected resource "passports" connecting participants to local support

As the afternoon progressed, the park buzzed with excitement during the much-anticipated cornhole tournament, which drew over 40 participants in friendly competition. Laughter, applause, and high-fives echoed across the lawn as teams tossed beanbags and cheered one another on.

"This was more than an event — it was a celebration of life and a commitment to progress," said Willie Miller, co-organizer of the event. "We saw families bonding, survivors smiling, and new partnerships forming. It's the kind of community spirit that creates real change."

The event concluded with closing remarks from

Berlin Councilwoman Shaneka Nichols expressing gratitude for all those who made the day possible, including a special thanks to Lincoln Lodge #53, participating community organizations, the dozens of volunteers, and event's sponsors Pepsi, Road Wolves MC, and Somerset Technical School.

Organizers say the success of the day has sparked enthusiasm for future events focused on cancer prevention, health equity, and youth education. Plans are already in motion to expand next year's awareness day to include screenings, health workshops, and even more family-centered activities.

"This is just the beginning," Smack said. "The turnout, the impact — it tells us that our community is ready and willing to stand together. And we will "



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sam – spm

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NANCY JARVIS

and much more!

Opinion

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

Town looks political in tax appeals case

Had it been anyone but Delegate Wayne Hartman who succeeded in convincing the state tax office that the assessed value of his Decatur Street property was higher than it should have been, the Town of Berlin probably wouldn't have challenged the state's finding.

But that's what it did in response to the rollback of his assessment, which resulted in the loss of the \$4,000 in new property tax revenue the town would have received. It has appealed Hartman's assessment appeal to recover less than one-tenth of a percent of its total property tax revenue.

Worse, no one seems to know who authorized the town's pursuit of a more detailed explanation of why the state knocked 20 percent off its 2023 valuation of the Dollar General store property. Certainly, it wasn't the council, since its members didn't learn of the situation until the subject came up Monday night.

Despite Mayor Zack Tyndall's assertions that he wanted to keep politics out of this discussion, this chasing down of an amount that wouldn't quite cover the cost of the Finance Department's office supplies sure does look like it. It's either that, or the town's hard up for money, which doesn't appear to be the case.

Fair or not, the perception is that someone in Town Hall is challenging Hartman's case because he has a higher public profile than the average property owner. The money involved isn't significant enough to suggest anything else.

Worse, however, is that the town's appeal jeopardizes the state's ruling in the Hartman case, because it exposes him to the possibility that the state tax office will rethink its position — all for an amount of money that wouldn't pay the town's Maryland Municipal League dues.

This isn't to defend Hartman because of who he is or the position he holds. On the contrary, this would be financial nitpicking no matter who was involved. Unfortunately, regardless of town's arguments in defense of its position, that's not how it appears.

BAYSIDE W GAZETTE

11934 Ocean Gateway, Suite 6, Ocean City, Md. 21842 Phone: 410-723-6397 / Fax: 410-723-6511.

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Worcester Tech educator recognized

Chef and high school teacher honored for student engagement

(May 15, 2025) Chef Phillip Cropper, a high school culinary instructor at Worcester Technical High School in Newark, has been named as the 2025 James H. Maynard Teacher of the Year by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation.

The award was presented on May 4, 2025, in Baltimore during the 2025 National ProStart Invitational. Cropper was recognized for his innovative approach to teaching and equipping students with culinary knowledge through the ProStart® program.

Cropper's work is marked by mentorship and a commitment to helping them prepare for future careers in the restaurant industry. By incorporating industry standards and nationally recognized certifications into his classroom, Cropper aims to equip his students with realworld skill development and experience.

His innovative teaching strategies have included the creation of a student-run teaching café – called "The Pines Café" – as well as community outreach initiatives and sustainable hydroponic gardening to supply herbs and produce for his kitchen



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Worcester Technical High School culinary teacher Phillip Cropper is pictured accepted the James H. Maynard Teacher of the Year award from the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation.

classroom.

"Chef Phillip Cropper epitomizes the dedicated work of a ProStart educator, creating a personal and innovative experience for students that empowers them with in-depth understanding of culinary arts and the restaurant industry," said Rob Gifford, president of the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. "His investment in young people is exceptional and we're honored to recognize him with this award."

With support from Golden Corral, the James H.

Maynard Teacher of the year award is part of the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation ProStart Educator of Excellence fellowship program, which highlights the program's top educators who demonstrate classroom excellence and an unparalleled commitment to helping their students make the most of ProStart's opportunities.

Cropper was also recently named the Worcester County Teacher of the Year and will represent the county in the statewide program this year.

Singing group ready for performance

Ocean Pines chorus prepares afternoon of costumes, vocals

(May 15, 2025) With 11 new members, the Pine Tones Chorus announces its upcoming concert on June 8.

Musical Director Jenny Anderson said the extra voices, the rehearsals and enthusiasm for the material are paying off.

"We are sounding better than ever," said Anderson, who added additional voices in each section provide more power and presence for the spring presentation, Sounds of the '70s.

The chorus will present a fun show with period costumes and a variety of ensemble and small chorus presentations on Sunday, June 8, at 3 p.m. at the Community Church at Ocean Pines.

Tickets will be available at the door for \$15 (cash or check only). Chorus members and audience alike will groove to classic favorites like Bridge Over Troubled Water, Joy to the World, Rocky Mountain High, Where You Lead, and Shambala.

The chorus has a 40-plus year history as a non-profit, all-volunteer group of folks who love to sing for their community. This season is partially funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, through the Maryland State Arts Council and Worcester County Arts Council.

Obituaries

JOSEPH WALTER THOMAS

Rerlin

Joseph Walter Thomas, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, greatgrandfather, brother, uncle, and



Joseph Thomas

friend, passed away peacefully on Monday, May 12, 2025. Born on August 17, 1942, in Washington, D.C., he was the cherished son of the late Walter Elmer Thomas and Margaret Thelma Thomas.

Joseph was preceded in death by his son, David Thomas, and his grandson, Jamil Johnson. He is survived by his loving wife, Marion Thomas, and his devoted children: Daniel Thomas and his wife Brenda, Buddy Thomas and his wife Donna, Kimberly Disney and her husband Greg, and son Joseph Thomas. He is also survived by his sister, Linda Davis and her husband Joseph, along with many beloved nieces and nephews. His legacy extends through his 21 grandchildren and 20 greatgrandchildren, who brought him immense joy and pride.

Joseph dedicated his career as a Stone Mason worker for the federal government, showcasing his craftsmanship and commitment. Beyond his work, he was an active member of several organizations that reflected his strong sense of service and camaraderie, including the Moose Lodge, Sons of the American Legion, and the Elks Lodge.

Back in the day "Athleticism and joy defined Joe in so many ways. Whether he was sprinting across the football field, lining up a perfect golf shot, or swinging for the fences in fast-pitch softball, he played not just to win but to enjoy every moment. And when the games ended, his spirit remained just as lively. He had a gift for bringing people together—whether through the thrill of compe-

tition or the rhythm of the dance floor. He loved to move, to celebrate and, to make sure that every moment was filled with laughter and energy. Joe wasn't just present—he was the heartbeat of every occasion, the life of the party, the person everyone

wanted to be around."

"Sports were more than just a pastime for Joe—they were a way of life, a passion that carried through every stage of his journey. As a young athlete, he took to the football field with determination, embracing the grit and the camaraderie of the game. Later, he passed that love forward, coaching men's softball and helping

OBITUARY NOTICES

Obituary Notices cost \$50 per week for Print and Online Publications. E-mail: editor@baysidegazette.com Mail: 11934 Ocean Gateway, Suite 6, Ocean City, Md. 21842

Fax: 410-723-6511

others hone their skills, find their confidence, and experience the thrill of competition. But nothing could rival his loyalty to the Washington Redskins. Every game was an event, every victory a celebration, and every season a reminder of the love he had for the sport. For Joe, football, softball, and all the games in between weren't just about playing—they were about community, about tradition, about bringing people together through the spirit of competition and joy."

Joseph was the heart of a large, loving family, and his warmth and generosity extended far beyond relatives—he was also surrounded by too many dear friends to count. His presence will be deeply missed, but his spirit will live on in the countless lives he touched.

"Above all, Joe lived his life with a steadfast faith in God—a faith that gave him strength, guided his steps, and filled his heart with love and kindness. He believed in the power of grace, in the promise of eternal peace, and in the comfort that comes from knowing God's presence is always with us. As we say our goodbyes, we take solace in knowing that he has returned home, embraced by the love and light of the Lord. Though we grieve, we also rejoice, for we know

that his journey does not end here it continues in a place of everlasting joy and peace.

Family and friends are invited to pay their respects during the visitation on Monday, May 19th, from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm at SonRise Church, located at 10026 Main Street, Berlin, MD. A service in celebration of Joes's life will follow at 1:00 pm, with interment immediately afterward. Fellowship will take place back at the church, where loved ones can gather to share memories and honor Joe's life.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made to SonRise Church located at 10026 Main Street Berlin, Md 21811. Condolences may be shared with the family via www.burbagefuneralhome.com.

JEAN MARIE BEALL

Ocean Pines

Jean Marie Beall, age 69, of the Parke, Ocean Pines, passed away from throat cancer on April 12, 2025, at home. She was born September 25, 1955 and was the daughter of the late John and Hilde Brawders.

Jean Marie is preceded in death by her parents and brother-in-law John Wagner. She is survived by her husband, Clarence Beall, of 35 years, her son Robert Beall, daughter-in-law



ean Reall

Kate Beall, her stepson Morgan Beall and his wife Jordan Beall, her sister Kathy Schoeffmann and brother-in-law Mark Schoeffmann, sister Connie Wagner, brother John

Brawders and sister-in-law Susie Brawsders, and most of all, her only granddaughter Emmie.

Jean Marie graduated from the University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire in 1977. She was proud of her journalism career, especially with the National Guard Association, where she traveled the world to include Europe, Egypt, and Central America.

She was close to family and always remembered birthdays! She had an infectious smile and a warm personality that impacted everyone she met. She'll be missed by family, friends, and neighbors.

A celebration of life was held on May 3 at the Parke Clubhouse.

In remembrance, a donation may be made to the American Cancer Society or Cancer.org in her name.

Arrangements with Eastern Shore Cremation & Funeral Service, 504 Franklin Ave., Berlin, Md 21811. Please visit www.easternshorecremation.com.



Puzzles

FORCE PLAY BY BRANDON KOPPY / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Brandon Koppy, of Dripping Springs, Texas, is a performance director for an ad agency. This is his 21st crossword for The Times. He thought of its time-sensitive theme in late January, constructed the puzzle on a Sunday, wrote the clues on Monday and Tuesday and quickly submitted the result — just in time for us to say yes and schedule it for today. — W.S.

- 1 Things hidden after purchasing a premium account, maybe
- 4 Follower of a bit?
- 8 Bank robber's
- accessory 12 "The Wild Duck"
- playwright
- 17 Egg_ _ yung
- 18 Big name in deodorant
- 20 Contents of a blog
- 21 Handle
- 22 Product that "can cut a slice of bread so thin you can almost see through it!" in old ads
- 24 Try to open, as a gift 25 Toon fighter of
- Skeletor 26 French name that's an anagram of a mostly
- German river 27 Features of jalaneños and piña coladas
- 29 Coach Lasso on TV
- 31 Confirmation, e.g. 32 Brand with a line of 'Calm + Restore' products
- 34 Bunless cookout
- 37 Land
- 38 Natl. economic stat
- 40 Spirit for a spritz
- 41 Moves one's butt (over)

LOTTERY

PROPANE REFILLS

44 Book reviews of sorts?

Online subscriptions: Today's puzzle and more than 4,000 past puzzles, nytimes.com/cr (\$39.95 a year).

- 47 Reason to take iron supplements
- 49 Concave umbilicus
- 50 Gives one's all
- 52 Given reluctantly
- 54 The Aztecs of the
- 57 Damning info
- 58 Some hosp, workers
- 59 Texter's "Bye!" 60 It squirts on a squid
- 63 Royal house of Mary, Queen of Scots
- 67 Many air travelers'
- texts, for short 70 Sci-fi-inspired
- to eight squares in this puzzle 76 Gives a hand
- 77 "Au___les Enfants" (1987 film)
- 78 Apparel for wizards and thieves
- 79 Bad spot for a tear, in brief
- 82 Saison avant l'automne
- 84 Possible cause of insomnia
- 86 2017 Pixar film inspired by el Día de los Muertos
- 87 Companion who might take your breath away?
- 91 Camp inspection after lights out
- 94 Ballet handrail
- 95 "Grand" things
- 97 Over and over
- 101 All mixed up 103 They contain brains
- 105 Sorority member, endearingly
- 106 Org. with a tip line

- Vinci drawing with four arms and four legs
 - 109 Turns down
 - 111 Little feud 113 Contracted
 - 114 Like organic food products, for short
 - 117 Droops
 - 118 Invasive Japanese vine
 - 120 Alphanumeric component
 - 122 Steaminess
 - 124 Drinks that get slushy over time
- greeting that's a hint 125 Places for some braces
 - 126 Senator Baldwin or Duckworth
 - 127 Prefix with -lithic
 - 128 Alternative name for our planet
 - 129 Goes from 0 to 60?
 - 130 Some summer babies
 - 131 "Despicable Me" character voiced by Steve Carell

- 1 Currency unit of Kabul 2 Enthusiastic reply to "Want to?"
- 3 Poems also fancily known as
- quatorzains 4 Barely managing
- 5 Coffee holder
- it ____ (rhyming class nickname) 6 Lit
- 7 Antique purchase for an audiophile
- 8 Dew, for example
- 9 A nemesissssss to Indiana Jones?
- 10 More dignified

- 107 Famous Leonardo da 11 Lead actress in the Vinci drawing with "Twilight" movies, in tabloids
 - 12 "More or less"
 - 13 Game vou likely get worse at the longer you play
 - 14 Band with the 1998 hit "Closing Time"
 - 15 Coup d'_
 - **16** Zip
 - 19 Gospel/jazz singer Reese
 - 20 Make believe
 - 23 "Well, OK"
 - 28 Exodus
 - 30 Practice group?: Abbr
 - 33 Drooling pooch of the comics
 - 35 Tool for grooming
 - 36 What vinegar or lemon juice adds to a dressing
 - 39 Focus of some psychotherapy, for short
 - 42 Lilliputian
 - 43 Company behind the Saturn and Dreamcast consoles
 - 45 The Masters host city 46 Minty herb used in
 - Japanese cuisine
 - **48** Veep from 1969 to 1973
 - 51 Boxer Beterbiev
 - 53 Countrylike
 - card
 - 55 Kendrick Lamar title that completes the lyric "I got power, poison, pain and joy inside my ..."
 - 56 Where to see contrails
 - 61 Tuna type 62 Handed over
 - **64** Dune buggy, e.g., in brief
- Ridgeback, dog breed originally from Zimbabwe

111

124

128

- 66 Classic sports car. familiarly
- 68 Hub code for Delta 69 Necessity for off-
- roading 71 Photog's setting
- Kane, longtime role on "All My Children"
- 73 Chairman (old N.B.A. nickname)
- 74 The N.B.A.'s Thunder, on scoreboards
- 75 Grp. with so-called "camp shows"
- 79 "Money, Money, Money" group

125

129

- 80 Attired
- 81 Term of address aboard the Death Star
- 83 Bringing forth
- 85 Third degrees? 88 Big name in organs
- 89 Amanda of film '___ Croft: Tomb Raider'' 90 "
- 91 Witticisms
- 92 Wednesday Addams's werewolf roommate on TV's "Wednesday"

122

126

- 93 Routes across low waters
- 96 Baby monitors 98 TurboTax activity
- 99 Getaway driver, for instance
- 100 Sentiment in a letter from home
- 102 Just what the doctor ordered?
- 104 Perturbation

- 108 Screwdriver component
- 110 Zip
- 111 Piece of improv
- 112 Hue of a dry bloodstain, maybe

127

131

- 115 Cafeteria offering
- 116 "I've got this one" 119 Women's soccer
- powerhouse 121 "Who knew?!"
- 123 Sport that takes place in a dohyo

su|do|ku

Fill in the blank spaces in

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

© Puzzles by Pappocom

HARD - 86

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.

Answers to last week's puzzles

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

K I S S A B L E S O N O T T R U E T H E O N E R I N G E A D A I D S N O T A T A L L T R U T H B O M B S A N T A C L A U S TORY PENTAX OLE SILT ALLETSLIPPE S I A L C C R O O K

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Bayside Gazette May 15, 2025 Page 25

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., May 15

AN EVENING WITH THE FAB FOUR

Ocean City Performing Arts Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, 7 p.m. Enjoy note-fornote live renditions of the Beatles' classics. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets: https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/ 53375922/an-evening-with-the-fab-fourocean-city-oc-performing-arts-center.

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 are required: Robin Rohlfing, 410-641-9726.

STORY TIME: ROYALTY TEA PARTY

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. Songs, dancing and crafts. For ages 2-5 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BUS TRIP TO THE BARNES FOUNDATION

Art League of Ocean City, 502 94th St., 8:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m. Tickets \$115. Join in for a Bus Trip to the Barnes Foundation in Philly! Departing from the Acme parking lot on 94th Street in Ocean City. Tickets: https://canvas.artleagueofoceancity.org/c lasses/2323.410-524-9433

NATURE LOVERS CRAFTING

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 1 p.m. Nature themed craft: Strawberry Fields Forever for Beatles MAYnia. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

TISSUE PAPER FLOWERS

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 2 p.m. Learn to make these festive flowers that are part of Mexican paper art traditions. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

POP CULTURE BOOK CLUB: 'CRYING IN H MART' BY MICHELLE ZAUNER

Game Theory Board Games & Coffee, 1822 Philadelphia Ave., Ocean City, 5 p.m. Join the Ocean City Library with Game Theory Cafe for an afternoon of popular culture nonfiction. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

PLAY TIME

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill

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

Fri., **May 16**

OC MAHJONG CLUB

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Join in for a morning of playing tile Mahjong. Feel free to bring your own tile set. All adults are welcome. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

HOMESCHOOL HISTORY FAIR

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 11 a.m. Open to all homeschoolers of all ages. Choose an event, person or time period to make a creative project for the library's History Fair. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

SURVIVAL SPANISH: SER VS. ESTAR

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 1 p.m. Join in as the group learns how to say some basic phrases in Spanish. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BOOK OF THE MONTH CLUB: 'THE BANDIT QUEENS' BY PARINI SHROFF

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

FANDOM FRIDAY: SUPERHEROES

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 3:30 p.m. Join in for crafts, quizzes and discussions about the monthly topic. For ages 12-18 years, 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

FRIED FLOUNDER DINNER

Bowen Fellowship Church, 8426 Newark Road, Newark, 4:30 p.m. Fried flounder, green beans, Mac & cheese, cornbread, dessert and beverage. Cost is \$10. Carryouts available. 410-632-4939

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 Continued on Page 26





THE PEN HOUSES

May 15 - 22











			may 10		
DAY/TIME	ADDRESS	BR/BA	STYLE	PRICE	AGENT/AGENCY
Fri-Mon 11am-4pm	Heron Harbour, 120th St., Bayside 1	BR/2BR/3BR/4BR+	Condos, Towns & SF	-	Nanette Pavier/Holiday Real Estate
Mon-Fri 9am-4pm	12430 Old Bridge Rd., West OC	2BR/2BA	Single Family	from \$284,750	Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community
Saturday 10am-4pm	12430 Old Bridge Rd, West OC	2BR/2BA	Single Family	from \$284,750	Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community
Saturday 10am-Noon	12505 Assawoman Drive #1N, Ocean City	2BR/1BA	Condo	\$275,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 10am-Noon	8500 Coastal Highway #805 Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$699,900	Rosemarie Leonard/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	73 Birdnest Drive Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$429,000	Debbie Bennington/BHHS PenFed Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	12141 Landings Blvd, West OC	4/BR/3.5 BA	Single Family	\$559,900	Cindy Crockett/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-1pm	12808 Coastal Hwy #206, Ocean City	1BR/Unit	Efficiency	\$214,900	Power of 2 Team/ Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-1pm	149 Captains Quarter Rd Unit 201, Ocean Ci	ty 2BR/2BA	Condo	\$260,000	Eileen Bumba/Long & Foster Real Estate
Saturday 12:30-2:30pn	n 201 S. Heron Dr. Unit B22, Ocean City	2BR/2.5BA	Condo	\$499,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 12:30-2:30pn	n 121 70th Street Ocean City #8	3BR/2.5BA	Townhome	\$659,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 4-6pm	17 Juneway Lane Ocean Pines	4BR/3BA	Single Family	\$569,000	Marlene Ott/BHHS PenFed Realty
Sunday 10am-Noon	201 S. Heron Dr. Unit B22, Ocean City	2BR/2.5BA	Condo	\$499,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 10am-3pm	12430 Old Bridge Rd, West OC	2BR/2BA	Single Family	from \$284,750	Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community
Sunday 11am-1pm	121 70th Street #8 Ocean City	3BR/2.5BA	Townhome	\$659,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	58 Chatham Court	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$439,000	Nikki Rayne Rose/Keller Williams Realty
Sunday Noon-2pm	12141 Landings Blvd, West OC	4/BR/3.5 BA	Single Family	\$559,900	Cindy Crockett/Hileman Real Estate
Sunday 12:30-2:30pm	10300 Coastal Hwy #1802 Ocean City	1BR/Studio	Condo	\$269,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty

Calendar

Continued from Page 25 before bingo and at intermission. 410-524-7994

Sat., May 17

BOARDWALK ROCK

Hugh T. Cropper Inlet Parking Lot, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 12:30 p.m. Doors open at 12 p.m. Featuring an unforgettable weekend of great music and delicious food. Headliners include Def Leppard, Nickelback, Shinedown and more. Tickets: https://www.board-walkrockfest.com.

BARN YARD SALE FUNDRAISER

10245 Harrison Road, Berlin, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. A wide assortment of gently used goods available. Sponsored by the Stephen Decatur Alum to support a commemorative past teachers and a memorial tribute for past members of the class.

FRIED CHICKEN/BAKED CHICKEN N'DUMPLINGS PLATTERS TO GO

Calvary United Methodist Church, 8607 Ironshire Station Road, Berlin, 10:30 a.m. Platters include dumplings, choice of two sides (potato salad, greens, string beans) and a roll. Cost is \$13. Also: cornbread, drinks, bread pudding, cakes, etc. Serving until sold out. Come early.

WALK WITH A DOC

Southgate Pond, Race Track Road, Ocean Pines, 9-10 a.m. An AGH representative will speak on a topic of their expertise, and then will lead the group for a walk around the park's trail. First 10 participants receive a \$10 Walmart gift card. 410-641-9268

BBQ CHICKEN

St. Paul United Methodist Church, 405 Flower St., Berlin, 11 a.m. 1/2 BBQ chicken, roll and a drink for \$12. Proceeds benefit St. Paul United Methodist Church Men's Ministry.

OCEAN PINES SEASON KICKOFF

Veterans Memorial Park, Race Track Road, Ocean Pines, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Demonstrations, interactive exhibits, music, raffles, giveaways, and local food and beer trucks. Learn what Ocean Pines has to offer. Free and open to the public.

OceanPinesKickoffExpo@gmail.com, 410-641-7052

ORIGINALS ONLY: NO COVERS, JUST CREATORS

Art League of Ocean City - Center for the Arts, 502 94th St., 6-8 p.m. This event brings together poets, comedians, musicians, and performers to showcase their unique voices and stories. One-of-a-kind performances, celebrating originality.

https://artleagueofoceancity.org

GET YOUR WIGGLE ON!

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 11 a.m. Let's sing and get moving to music. For children ages 0-5 years. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

HI-HO CHERRY-0

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 1 p.m. Play a lifesized version of this classic game. Fun for the whole family. Registration required: 410-957-0878. 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., May 18

BOARDWALK ROCK

Hugh T. Cropper Inlet Parking Lot, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 12:15 p.m. Doors open at 12 p.m. Featuring an unforgettable weekend of great music and delicious food. Headliners include Def Leppard, Nickelback, Shinedown and more. Tickets: https://www.board-

walkrockfest.com.

BAY DAY AT OCEAN PINES

White Horse Park, 239 Ocean Parkway, Ocean Pines, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Boat rides, hands-on activities, live animals, live music, native plant giveaway, environmental exhibitors, food and drinks. MD-CoastalBays.org, OceanPines.org, 410-641-7052

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY

Museum of Ocean City, 217 S. Baltimore Ave., 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Enjoy free admission to the newest museum in Ocean City. ocmuseum.org, 410-289-4991 (Note: Ocean City Life-Saving Station Museum will be closed due to Boardwalk Rock.)

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

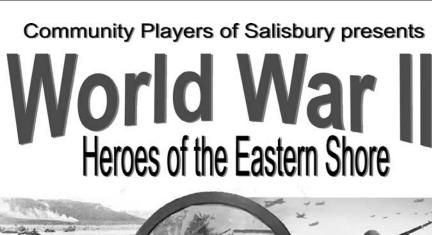
Sundays - Berlin Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, 212 West St., Berlin, 10 a.m. www.jw.org

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

FREE BIKE SAFETY RODEO

Swim & Racquet Club Pool, 10 Seabreeze Road, Berlin, 3-5 p.m. Activity stations, bike safety and education





Community Players' Theater, 5109 Nutters Cross Rd, Salisbury, May 16, 7:30 PM
American Legion, 30880 West Post Office Rd, Princess Anne, May 17, 2 PM
American Legion, 29511 Canvasback Dr, Easton, May 18, 2 PM
American Legion, 2308 Philadelphia Ave, Ocean City, May 24, 2 PM
American Legion, 1109 American Legion Rd, Salisbury, May 25, 2 PM
VFW, 115 Sandy Hill Rd, Cambridge, May 26, 2 PM

Admission is free. Donations are accepted. Seating is limited. For reservations call 443-235-3272.

The show is sponsored by Beach to Bay Heritage Area.



Calendar

materials and bike/helmet inspections. Bring your bicycle & helmet and wear covered toe shoes. For kids ages 4 years and older. Pre-register: 410-641-7052.

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

Mon., May 19

STORY TIME: GERMS, GERMS, GO AWAY

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

GREAT BOOKS DISCUSSION

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2:30 p.m. The group is reading from Book 6 of the Great Conversations Anthology. The focus will be on poetry. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BIKERS WITHOUT BORDERS FOUNDATION DINE & DONATE

Taphouse W. Bar and Grille, 12513 Ocean Gateway, Ocean City, 5-9 p.m. Happy hour until 6 p.m. and it's burger night. Show flyer to your server. Flyers available from members or at the door. bikerswithoutbordersfoundation@gmail

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-

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., May 20

LIFE LINE SCREENING EVENT

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway. Screenings are simple and painless. Cost is \$159. Appointments are required: 888-814-0466 (promo code HSCA001); LLSA.SO-CIAL/HSCA; or text "circle" to 216-2791607. For anyone over the age of 40

BASIC FIRST AID INFORMATIONAL **PROGRAM**

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10-11:30 a.m. Topics include falls, seizures, defibulator, wounds, shock, dehydration, choking, strokes and more. This class is not for certification. Registration required: 410-208-4014 or at the front desk. Free.

GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m. The workshop starts with a 20-minute lesson on genealogy research. Bring a laptop, tablet or papers containing family information. Registration requested: 410-208-4014. www.worcesterlibrary.org

STORY TIME AT CYPRESS PARK

Cypress Park, 7 Bridge St., Pocomoke City, 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and outside play. For ages 0-5 years. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

STORY TIME

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10:30 a.m. Geared for ages 0-5 years featuring seasonal themes designed to support early literacy skills with stories, songs and fingerplays. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BABY TIME

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 10:30 a.m. Songs, rhymes and stories. Stay after to socialize with other families. For ages 0-2 years. 410-632-3495, 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

MERMAID LORE: THEN AND NOW

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. Professional mermaid Tasha Haight weaves a tale about the mythology surrounding mermaids and sirens. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

CHAIR YOGA

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 2 p.m. Certified yoga instructor, Nicole Long, teaches this class that stretches and strengthens in a gentle manner. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

SURGICAL CLASSES

Atlantic General Hospital, Conference Room 1, 9733 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 5-6 p.m. Learn what to expect, get information about your upcoming surgery and directions about post-operative

care. Atlantic General Hospital's Pre-Admission Testing Department, 410-641-9814

BEACH HEROES-OC

Tuesdays - Volunteer beach clean-up group meets from 9-10 a.m., year-round. Trash bags, grippers and gloves provided. Check the Facebook page "Beach Heroes-OC" for weekly meeting locations. All are welcome.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

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

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY

Tuesdays - Worcester County Health Department, 9730 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 3:30-4:30 p.m. TOPS is a weekly support and education group promoting weight loss and a healthy lifestyle. 410-289-4725

OC KNITTING CLUB

Tuesdays - Worcester County Library -Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m.

ARGENTINE TANGO PRACTICE

Tuesdays - Experienced dancers and others interested in watching or learning more are welcome, 7-9:30 p.m. No partner required. Info: TangobytheBeach.com.

ZUMBA TONING TUESDAYS

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

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT AND WELLNESS GROUP

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

Wed., May 21

BARIATRIC SUPPORT GROUP

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

SENSORY STAY AND PLAY

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Get ready to squish, build, splash, shake and scoop through several fun stations. For ages 0-5 years. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BACKGAMMON CLUB

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. Drop in for a game whether you're an expert or want to refresh your skills. Beginners welcome. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

PUZZLE SWAP

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 1-5 p.m. Bring your gently used puzzles and swap for a new-to-you puzzle. Don't have a puzzle? That's OK too. All puzzles must be in their original boxes. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

John H. "Jack" Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center, 9707 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 1-2 p.m. For survivors and current patients battling breast cancer. Women Supporting Women, 410-548-7880

STORYTELLERS THEATER

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 5 p.m. Theater activities like improv, memorization, public speaking and learning about theater. Best for ages 6-11 years. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

KIDS PAINT NIGHT

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Cost is \$22/painter and includes all materials and instruction. For ages 8 years and older. Pre-registration required: 410-641-7052.

KIWANIS CLUB MEETING

Wednesdays - Ocean Pines Community Center, 239 Ocean Parkway, 8 a.m. Doors open at 7:30 a.m. Last Wednesday of the month meetings are offsite and information can be found on the website and Facebook. www.kiwanisofopoc.org.

ONGOING EVENTS

BUS TRIP TO CAMDEN YARDS

Baltimore Orioles vs. Washington Nationals, May 18. Pick up at 8:30 a.m. at Ocean Pines Community Center. Game time is 1:35 p.m. Cost is \$120 and includes transportation, seats in the picnic perch (Section 286) and all-you-can-eat food until the 7th inning. Tickets: Ocean Pines Recreation & Parks, 410-641-7052.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH CRAFT

Ocean City library, 10003 Coastal Highway, May 5-17. Relax and get creative at the library or at home with a mindfulness craft kit. For ages 0-18. 410-524-1818

MAY INSPIRATION CHALLENGE

Snow Hill library, 307 N. Washington St., during May. Art, photography or poetry challenge for all ages. Pieces will be displayed in the library for viewing. The theme for May is "Music." Due by May 28.410-632-3495

BEATLES MAYNIA

Snow Hill library, 307 N. Washington St., during May. Trivia, crafts and display celebrating The Beatles all month long. 410-632-3495

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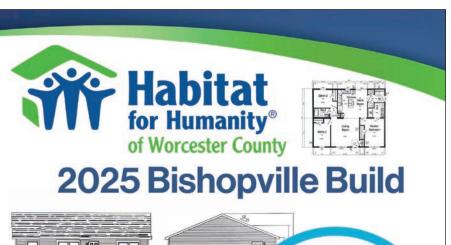
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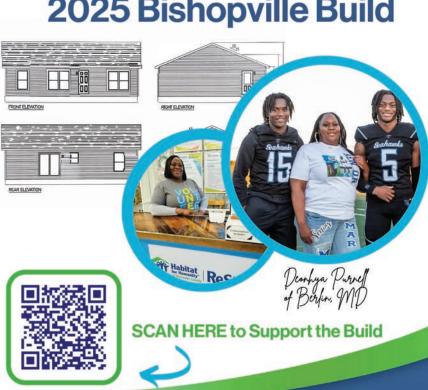
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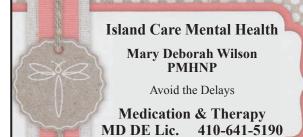
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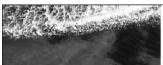
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