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A Saturday morning light around sunrise is pictured with the navigation lights from the Verrazano Bridge to Assateague Island.

PHOTO COURTESY TYLER LAYTON

Town to test water supply lines for lead

State grant enables Berlin to take on massive project

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Oct. 2, 2025) To ensure access to quality water and to comply with federal mandates, the Town of Berlin will begin a search-and-replace project to remove any service lines that contain lead.

With the assistance of a state grant, the town will begin by examining line on around 350 properties, starting with William Street in January or February 2026. The program is slated to proceed to Broad Street by roughly March 2026, and then Bay Street in April 2026.

Testing will be conducted at the properties to determine if the water lines contain lead, and if so, they must be replaced with safer materi-

See BERLIN Page 2

Marina Village seeks rental restrictions

But first must rally enough voters to create quorum to decide fate of amendment

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Oct. 2, 2025) Marina Village in Ocean Pines may restrict short-term rentals if it can secure an adequate number of voters to approve a change in its rules.

In an open meeting last week, Marina Village Townhome Association's board of directors discussed an

amendment to its community rules. Marina Village is run by an association as does the Ocean Pines Association.

According to David Volrath, a Marina Village Townhome Association board member, the 25-year-old community needed to refresh its guidelines and bylaws, as many of the regulations were outdated, no longer applicable, or, in many cases, no longer accurate to the neighborhood today.

To resolve those issues, Volrath said he had created a work group to

review the old documents. Once its work was completed, the the group returned to the board with 50 potential adjustments to the governing documents.

Of those, 24 were compiled into an amendment that requires association members' approval to push through.

At the association's annual meeting last weekend, however, there was not enough community participation for a valid vote to occur, Volrath said. The board is now looking to attract enough voters to establish support or opposition to the proposed changes.

Restricting short-term rentals to a minimum of 14 days was listed as an item on the amendment for approval. Volrath said this recommendation was based on the high volume of violations committed by people staying in a unit for a limited period.

"In terms of nuisance violations, that's why we're doing this," the board member said. "There are issues with noise, respect to neighbors, trash compliance, imposing on the marina down the street, and pet management.

See MARINA Page 10

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Berlin to begin testing for lead in water lines

Continued from Page 1

als. Pipes slated for replacement would be any that are “constructed of lead, are galvanized and currently or historically downstream of lead, or contain lead connectors, goose-necks, or fittings,” reads a project report.

Copper lines are not currently a concern for this effort, said Nick Bradley, an engineer at the firm Davis, Bowen & Friedel, at an information session in Berlin last week.

The Lead Service Line Inventory and Replacement process is required by the State of Maryland and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Per the EPA’s Lead and Copper Rule Revisions, water systems must have developed an inventory of service line materials by October 2024 and then take corrective action in instances where lead is present.

The project’s goal is to ensure that individuals’ drinking water is free from the dangers posed by this neurotoxicant, which can have a devastating effect on otherwise healthy individuals, but especially on children and pregnant women.

In children, the ingestion of lead can lead to serious developmental problems such as learning disabilities and lower IQs. It can also lead to

kidney issues in adults.

Project leaders discussed the specifics of the endeavor at an assembly on Sept. 25. Water lines that feed each home run from the town water main to the house, which is divided into two parts: one owned by the town and the other by private property, Bradley said. Previously, the municipality had only been responsible for its portion, from the water main to the water meter. The property owner was responsible for the portion from the water meter up to the house.

However, under new federal requirements, the town is unable to use state funding for this initiative unless it replaces the line all the way up to the house from the water main, or in other words, both the town-owned and privately owned sections.

Still, the town itself will be unable to touch the part of the service line that runs from the meter to the house, said Jamey Latchum, Berlin’s water resource director. Instead, the contractor awarded to complete the

work will select a licensed plumber for that segment of the project.

“From the meter to the house, the Town of Berlin will not be able to touch that, because you have to be a licensed plumber,” Latchum said. “We’re licensed to do the work out from the meter, but not the meter to the house.”

A grant from the Maryland Department of the Environment will cover the cost of Berlin’s water service line replacement project. In 2023, MDE awarded a total of \$80 million in funding to be distributed among various local water distribution systems throughout the state. The Town of Berlin was awarded \$172,040 for water line inventory and \$1.1 million for the actual replacement of lead service lines.

Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall maintained that if the municipality had not obtained the financial backing from the state, residents would have been burdened with the price tag.

“It is important to note that if we

did not receive this grant, it would likely result in increased cost to our water department, which would then come from service charges to all of us, the customers,” he said.

Luckily, Berlin was able to secure the necessary funds, and that money will now be put to use. The town is gearing up to solicit bids from firms to conduct testing and construction work. The awarded contractor will be required to begin the project on William Street around January, as from April to June, that road will be repaved by the Maryland State Highway Administration—a plan that has been stalled for three years. Town officials hope first to complete the line replacement on William Street to make room for SHA’s surfacing plans.

At last week’s line replacement information session, Latchum addressed William Street residents directly about the upcoming intentions for their specific roadway.

“It’s going to look rough on that road for the first couple of months,” he said. “But the reason is that William Street was to be paved three years ago. I worked with State Highway to push it back a year. Then that year turned into another year... When we’re done [with William Street’s line replacement], I just

‘We might not have to go in your yard, but we still will replace the service from the main to the meter. We still have that obligation.’

Jamey Latchum,
Berlin’s water resource director

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have to tell the State Highway, and they're coming in and paving the whole street. You will have a new road...We just want it done."

Staff hope to make the line replacement project as painless as possible, but residents may still need to make some adjustments, such as modifying parking arrangements. Water service locations—which differ property to property—will be identified closer to each road's construction start date. The contractor and the municipality will coordinate with residents of these sites, and in some cases, may ask tenants to move their cars to avoid interfering with the work.

Latchum said that any parking re-configurations may only last a day, or even a half day, for each resident. The water resources director added that citizens will be notified at least three to five days in advance of the construction arriving at their house.

Officials note that they require written consent from property owners and tenants for the town's team to complete the inspection and, if necessary, make replacements. Residents who have not yet completed the mandatory documentation are encouraged to contact the municipality to ensure their house can be tested.

Latchum also asks residents to

share any previous work history that may have occurred on lines from the meter to their home. On properties where this is the case, the water resources director said that only the line from the main to the meter will be touched this time around.

"We might not have to go in your yard, but we still will replace the service from the main to the meter. We still have that obligation," he said.

The three streets prioritized for this phase of the service line replacement project — William, Broad, and Bay — are run by the state. Latchum said that Main Street was "complicated," but officials still plan for it to undergo the same type of upgrades sometime in the future.

"Our biggest goal was to get the state highway roads," he said. "We did not accomplish Main Street. Main Street was complicated, but it's still on our horizon. We'll start applying for more grant funding in January. [Bradley] and I have already sat down for new projects to try to start with for next year."

Residents should contact the town with any questions they may have regarding the lead service line initiative. Berlin wants to obtain consents from impacted properties prior to the start of the phased project.



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SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

TEACHER OF THE YEAR GALA

Although he did not take home the evening's top award, Worcester County Teacher of the Year Phil Cropper was celebrated last Friday in Cockeysville at the annual Maryland State Teacher of the Year Gala. Cropper was one of seven finalists for the state teacher of the year award won by Alonna Soward-Puryear, a fourth-grade teacher in Frederick County Public Schools. Cropper, a chef who has led Worcester Technical High School's culinary education program since 2012 and spearheaded the opening of the Pines Café last year, is pictured at the gala with Board of Education members, administrative team officials and leaders from the tech school.

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Berlin eyes funding model change

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Oct. 2, 2025) The Town of Berlin is weighing a request to the county about funding for in-town fire and EMS services.

At a work session of the Berlin mayor and council with the Berlin Fire Company and Emergency Medical Services on Monday, town officials proposed a new, simplified means for the fire and EMS teams to receive financial assistance from the county government.

Berlin Fire Company President David Fitzgerald and Fire Chief Andrew Grunden were present at this week's work session, where they heard the council's fresh funding proposition.

Currently, each year, the municipality seeks an unrestricted grant from the Worcester County Commissioners, and a majority of the funding is provided to the fire company and the company's EMS for in-town service. The county pays the company and EMS for out-of-town calls for service based on a formula.

According to Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall, Councilmembers Steve Green and Council Vice Dean Burrell have discussed the idea of changing the way fire and EMS receive their portion of funding from the county. If

adopted, the new method would see the Town of Berlin remove itself from the process and instead let the emergency services negotiate with Worcester officials directly through a task force of fire officials and county staff and commissioners.

Under this procedure, the county government would use its funding formula and, through discussions with fire and EMS, determine how much to grant the departments, instead of giving the money to the town, which would then offer the funds to the fire company and EMS.

Essentially, the middleman, the Town of Berlin, would be eliminated from the process in exchange for not receiving the annual grant from the county like other municipalities.

"Sometime in the spring, near the end of the budget process, we talked about the annual gap between the ask and what the town's able to budget," Green said. "I think it was the mayor that brought up the possibility of the county eventually taking over funding, instead of the town's annual grant, and what that might look like. I think it's a consideration for us to explore."

While able to meet the budget request on the fire side in the current process, the EMS annually receives less from the town than requested be-

cause of budget constraints.

Tyndall added the emergency services would then have a method to ascertain how much funding they will require annually to operate efficiently. Reducing the town's involvement could simplify that process.

"We're saying it would be a discussion with the commissioners that the town no longer seeks unrestricted grant funding from the commissioners every single year," the mayor said, addressing the emergency team personnel. "And in lieu, allow you all to use the funding formula you have with [the commissioners] ... We're saying that you do a lot of the reporting for them already, that we would say the town is going to take a step back from that and let you all handle it."

The potential funding method is not definite. Tyndall will make the formal recommendation to the Worcester County Commissioners and gauge their interest in updating the procedure.

Green asked Fitzgerald if he foresaw any pushback from the county on the proposal. Fitzgerald said he would imagine concerns could surface over the precedent it would set with other municipalities but looked forward to hearing how the proposal is received by the county.

National Park Services planning off-season paving

(Oct. 3, 2025) Effective Monday, Oct. 6, Assateague Island National Seashore will launch a major paving project.

The National Park Service will repave hard-surfaced parking lots in the Seashore's Maryland District, Old Ferry Landing Road and all Bayside Camping Loops.

This work will increase the lifespan of much of the seashore's infrastructure and help ensure that visitors can enjoy the island for years to come.

The project will cause short-term closures of both the Maryland Assateague Island Visitor Center and Old Ferry Landing Road. Bayside Campground Loops will also close, one at a time. The North Beach Parking lot will close incrementally, but never all at once. This will allow visitors continuous beach access. While this work takes place, various locations may need to switch temporarily to one way traffic.

The campground will remain open, but at a lower-than-normal capacity. The visitor center and Old Ferry Landing will close for one or, possibly, two days each. (Dates will See PAVING Page 8

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Students look to form Turning Point chapter

Questions about school’s policy on clubs arise but guidelines being followed

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Oct. 2, 2025) Reactions to recent political events have reached Worcester County, where students at Stephen Decatur High School have kick-started a conservative thought-based group.

According to an Instagram post from last month, some SDHS students have conducted their first meeting of a new chapter of Turning Point USA (TPUSA), a club that, according to its website, aims to promote conservative values through activities, campaigns and open dialogue.

The social media picture, which shows around seven members at a Panera Bread, was posted by the mother of two boys who started the group. The parent did not respond to a request for comment.

Turning Point USA was the brainchild of Charlie Kirk, the 31-year-old conservative and debater who was shot and killed on Sept. 10 during a TPUSA event at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah. Kirk was conversing with an attendee as part of his “Prove me Wrong” segment when the assassination took place.

The murder has been labeled as an act of political violence, sparking outrage and furthering the tumultuous tension on both sides of the aisle. The incident has also led to an increased interest in Kirk’s organization. According to a Sept. 18 report by For-

tune, TPUSA has received approximately 60,000 inquiries for new chapters for high school and college campuses.

One of these branches has made its way to Worcester County, where high school students have become involved, starting a non-school-sanctioned club to promote their right-leaning beliefs.

The news of an SDHS TPUSA chapter has initiated a passionate response from the community on social media, particularly in regard to a post by Worcester County Board of Education member Katie Addis, who, after being reached out to by a parent of the group asking if any staff member could advise the club, took to Facebook to seek an interested teacher publicly.

However, despite allegations that

it was Addis who initiated the group’s formation, the board member maintained that she takes no credit for getting the club off the ground. She said that she simply commented at a board meeting after Kirk’s passing, urging students to “keep Kirk’s legacy alive.” She adds that the group of students had submitted an application to the TPUSA chapter even before Kirk’s assassination.

“Less than a week later, I saw a post on Facebook saying the TPUSA high school chapter at Decatur was official, and the first meeting was a success,” she said. “... At no point did the actual members reach out to me for assistance.”

Addis said that she let the parent who had reached out to her know that she would see what she could do to get an advisor.

“I then took to my personal Facebook page, asking publicly for any willing and able teachers to consider being an advisor for this group,” she noted. “A teacher was confirmed two days later. This is the extent of the involvement I’ve had with this group.”

Addis’ social media post from last month seeking a faculty member to oversee the club reads, “I’m excited to reach out and discover if anyone knows any teachers at Stephen Decatur High School who would be passionate about being an advisor to a newly established TPUSA high school chapter. The students are eager to launch initiatives and host local events, and with the right advisor, they’ll be empowered to make a meaningful impact. If you know someone who would be an ideal fit, please don’t hesitate to connect us. Together, we can inspire positive change and nurture the next generation of leaders.”

Decatur’s TPUSA chapter is not
See CLUBS Page 11

Paving project to begin Monday

Continued from Page 7
be determined on short notice.) Lots at Life of the Marsh Trail, Life of the Forest Trail and the Lifesaving Station will be closed for 1-2 days each.

The following areas will not be affected: Assateague Island State Park, Maryland 611, Bayberry Drive, Bayside Drive and Oceanside Drive. South Beach and Bayside Parking lots will remain open.

The exact schedule of closures is not yet known. If you are planning a trip to Assateague Island in October, please check the park website or social media sites to check daily closures. NPS staff will keep these as up to date as possible, but schedules are subject to change according to the pace of work, weather and tides.

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Marina Village needs quorum

Continued from Page 1

Volrath said that two weeks had been decided as the magic number to meet residents on both sides of the debate in the middle, despite some claiming that the board “plucked it out of the air.”

“We actually surveyed the board and people randomly,” Volrath said. “We found that there were people who didn’t want any rentals here, period. Then there were those folks, the rental folks, who didn’t want any limits on short-term rentals. On one extreme, they’re saying no one can rent at all, and on the other extreme, they’re saying go ahead and rent your house out 365 days a year, like it’s a hotel room. From those extremes, we worked to the middle.”

The board considered everything from a 30-day minimum to a seven-day minimum before landing on two weeks. Volrath added that the goal with the proposed restrictions is to ensure property values do not diminish, as some argue happens with an influx of quick stopovers, and to protect the quality of life for full-time residents.

“The shorter the term, the less likely the renters are going to care about you,” the board member said. “The shorter the term, the more frequent the turnover, and the more frequent the turnover, the more likely people won’t know the rules, or break them. To me, that’s common sense.”

However, those that rent out their property claim that setting a limit on short-term rentals can throw a wrench into their income.

An Ocean Pines resident, Megan Mardiney, responded to a Facebook post by fellow OPA homeowner Amy Peck, soliciting discussions about the validity of short-term rentals.

Mardiney argued that short-term rental restrictions will not solve issues with violations and complaints, but would instead harm property owners.

“People behave badly, whether full-time resident or guest,” she writes. “We have wonderful guests who rent our house each summer. We could not afford to keep it without that income. Funny enough, they have complained about our neighbor’s noise, who is full-time.”

While the short-term rental issue is contentious, Marina Village’s proposed rule-modification amendment includes 23 additional action items. However, as these mainly include verbiage clarifications and language changes, they have not received the same level of attention from community residents.

At least 50 owners must submit a ballot for a final decision to be made, which they did not reach last week. The board is now seeking ways to reorganize a vote without corrupting the process, Volrath said.

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Clubs permitted to meet, but not during school hours

Continued from Page 8
school-sanctioned, officials say. However, if it meets specific criteria, the club would be allowed to meet on school property during Out-Of-School-Time (OST).

This criterion, as outlined by Worcester County Public Schools' protocol for student-led organizations that meet during OST, reads, "to ensure consistency, transparency, and alignment with federal and state guidelines, all religious or political clubs within Worcester County Public Schools' OST program must operate under [certain] principles."

For instance, according to Carrie Sterrs, WCPS's coordinator for public relations and special programs, "requests to form the clubs must come from interested students, not outside organizations or adults," and "the purpose and activities of the club should reflect the students' genuine interests."

The organization must also be student-led. Meaning, gatherings are to be directed by students, and outside adults may only provide occasional support as guests. Adults cannot lead or run the club.

Sterrs cited the school system's criteria for OST clubs further, ex-

plaining that "each club must have a WCPS staff member who serves as the school-based advisor," and that "the advisor's role is supervisory, ensuring compliance with school policies and maintaining a safe environment." Advisors are also not to lead religious or political activities. However, they should be present to support and oversee. Parent permission slips that outline the nature, activities, and purpose of the club must be signed.

Sterrs said that regarding the TPUSA organization at Decatur, "should the chapter meet the criteria above, it would be allowed to meet on school property during OST."

Sterrs noted that she is aware of a staff member who has expressed an interest in acting as the group's advisor. The name of that faculty member has not been made public.

Turning Point USA has over 1,000 chapters on high school campuses across the nation. The organization's website says that, "TPUSA High School is energizing a new generation of pro-America patriots."

Sterrs added that to operate, even as a club that meets on school property during OST, the organization requires a high school chapter charter.



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Wastewater transfers questioned by Bertino

Fund rearrangement called out, commissioner blasts administration's handling

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Sept. 26, 2025) Worcester County staffers say funds were moved from Ocean Pines wastewater accounts to cover shortfalls in an escrow account for developers' projects, exposing local ratepayers to costs they weren't responsible for.

County Commissioner Chip Bertino sharply criticized county staff as "being asleep at the switch" when he learned through an internal memo that \$231,000 had been moved from the Ocean Pines sewerage district to rectify negative balances in other areas.

"I'd just like to know what is going on and how is this allowed to happen," said Bertino, who represents Ocean Pines, at the commissioners' Sept. 16 meeting in Snow Hill. "How did this happen to begin with? Why weren't these balances being watched and monitored on a regular basis?"

County Administrator Weston Young explained that when a residential development is being built, Worcester County will ask for developers to put money in an escrow account for third-party inspections, because "we don't always have staff available" for proprietary inspections.

If the escrow runs dry, then "we have to keep paying for the inspection," Young said.

The Ocean Pines water-sewer account is one of 11 such self-sustaining

sewerage districts county-wide, called enterprise funds, where revenue comes from residential and commercial customers hooked into the system.

When the treasurer's office and the former enterprise fund controller encountered situations where the escrow account needed funding, they pulled money from Ocean Pines' enterprise account, according to Young.

Bertino wasn't thrilled to hear that explanation.

"We had a situation where we had developers who should have been on the hook to the county for some things – nobody was watching these balances. And now we're ending up with the Ocean Pines water/wastewater [fund] footing the bill to rectify this oversight? Is that overall what I'm seeing here?" he said.

Deputy County Administrator Candace Savage told the commissioners they'd learned of the issue about two and a half months ago. She also said county staffers are trying to invoice and collect on past due amounts from developers to replenish the cash in the account.

"Why is it taking two and a half months?" Bertino said. "You don't have an answer for it, do you?"

Young stressed that the transfers were executed by a county employee who no longer works there and said, "This is all sins of the past. Going forward with our current enterprise fund controller, they were not making those transfers," Young told Bertino.

"Well, regardless of how it happened, the Ocean Pines service area rate payers are the ones on the hook right now. Am I right?" Bertino replied.

"And we plan to remedy that," Young said.

Quinn Dittrich, who now oversees the county's 11 water and wastewater enterprise funds, said his office is working to fix it and that ratepayers won't be impacted.

See ALL Page 13

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Judge accused of misconduct pays fine, avoids a trial

Law clerk who falsified time sheets also named in case

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Sept. 26, 2025) The retired Worcester County judge accused of misconduct in office has settled the matter by paying a fine and accepting a guilty verdict.

A civil complaint filed by state prosecutors in July alleged Gerald V. Purnell, 69, knew that longtime law clerk Bridget Lowrie, over a four-year period, had falsely claimed on timesheets to have worked 40 hours a week while still collecting a full salary. Lowrie, 46, also was cited for misconduct. She quit last summer after the allegations surfaced, court documents say.

Online court records show both paid a fine last month in Anne Arundel County District Court and accepted a guilty disposition, preventing the case from going to trial as scheduled for Sept. 15. State prosecutors in court documents had asked that each pay a \$10,000 fine as a penalty.

Appointed by Gov. Robert Erlich in 2006, Purnell was the Eastern Shore's first African American District Court judge. He stepped down in August 2024 shortly after suffering a stroke on the bench.

'All sins of the past' transfers

Continued from Page 12

When asked where the money will come from to reimburse the Ocean Pines fund, Dittrich replied, "we're getting there."

"I'm not trying to underplay this," he told the commissioners. "It's a big problem. It's a problem and it needs to be rectified. Everyone's aware that's playing a part in it."

Dittrich added that there had been a similar situation with sewerage funds with the River Run district, in the Showell area of Worcester County, which had a negative escrow balance of \$46,000 that the county just repaid. He also said future deficits likely would be written off by the county if a developer could not repay it.

Projects that have led to negative escrow balances include the Windmill Creek residential community off Beauchamp Road, Triple Crown Estates in Ocean Pines, as well as projects from Ocean Downs Casino, according to Dittrich. He also said, conversely, that some concluded projects have positive escrow balances.

It's a hot-button issue because, over the past 12 months, Worcester County has struggled with problematic financial oversight related to its system of water and wastewater enterprise funds.

The county was forced to tap into its general fund to cover a \$9 million revenue shortfall across several sewerage districts that weren't generating enough revenue to cover expenses – an issue that elected officials only learned about after the fact.

Only after months of internal negotiations and subsequent public hearings did the County Commissioners decide on across-the-board rate hikes for water and sewer customers.

In an interview following the meeting, County Administrator Young said county staffers fell behind on chasing invoices for projects in escrow with developers.

"If we're not asking for that money and enough time passes, they may no longer be in business – can you even collect that money? That's basically what happened," he said.

Young also said while his team opted to notify the County Commissioners as soon as they were aware of the Ocean Pines issue, "I think this is something we should have caught in the budget deliberations six months ago."

"In general, if we uncover something that's not being done right, we want to notify them sooner rather than later," he said. "We identified a problem. We're already underway in trying to solve it."

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County procurement officer takes a position in Salisbury

Nick Rice, former Worcester employee, hired as a city administrator in Wicomico

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Sept. 26, 2025) The City of Salisbury has hired Nick Rice, Worcester County's procurement officer, as its new City Administrator.

"I am grateful to the Mayor and Council for entrusting me with this opportunity. I look forward to applying my knowledge and experience in efforts that will positively impact the progression of our city," Rice said in a statement provided by Salisbury officials Tuesday.

Rice has spent the past 12 years in local government, starting in Ocean City with the Parks Department in 2010 and moving into the purchasing department, according to a public work profile.

He then spent six years as the purchasing agent with Wicomico County before moving onto a similar position for Worcester County. Rice was the first person to work as Worcester's procurement officer, a position that was created in 2022. It meant Rice represented the county in sourcing, procurement, contract administration, inventory management, vendor management, and other related duties.

With that centralization of procurement— that's government-speak for using public money to buy equipment, supplies, or pay for projects – it let staffers focus on their specific job duties rather than managing the bidding process by themselves, Rice said.

The county also now uses purchase orders to directly assign county funds to the acquisition of goods and services. It means departments can now watch their purchase orders in real time, assessing how much of their budget is committed, or still available. It's a transparency that helps prevent budget overspending by showing open commitments as part of projected expenses – and Rice oversaw it all.

He was honored for his work by the Worcester County Commissioners at his final commissioners' meeting in Snow Hill on Sept. 16.

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Rice accepts new role in Wicomico, leaves Worcester

curement officer, Nick set the standard for excellence,” Chief Administrative Officer Weston Young said in a statement. “Whether procuring services or purchasing capital assets, his priority was to obtain the best value for the dollar. His role as a key member of the leadership team has made a lasting mark on the county and all of us. While we will miss his expertise and professionalism, I wish him every success as he takes on this new chapter as city manager.”

A married father of two, Rice makes his home in Salisbury, where he’s also a youth baseball and football coach. He’s a 2009 graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, where he earned his Bachelor of Science in Business Management. In 2013 he earned a Master of Business Administration degree from Salisbury University.

Mayor Randy Taylor expressed his enthusiasm, saying, Rice comes to the job with a strong foundation in finance.

“Throughout the interview process, I was particularly impressed by his depth of knowledge, steady temperament, and well-earned reputation as a dedicated and hardworking professional – all essential qualities for success in this role,” he said in a statement.

Salisbury’s former City Administrator, Andy Kitzrow, left the job in July for a similar role with the Town of Easton. In the interim, Assistant City Administrator Tom Stevenson was subsequently named as acting city administrator while city leaders conducted a search for Kitzrow’s replacement. Stevenson will return to his assistant role once Rice takes over, according to a statement from the city.

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Newly implemented roadway laws encourage safe driving

Fines increased for drivers going significant amount above posted maximum

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Oct. 3, 2025) Excessive speeding can now land drivers in jail, one of dozens of new laws that took effect this week in the state of Maryland.

Oct. 1 was the effective date for more than 150 bills that the General Assembly passed into law during this year's Legislative Session. Many happen to be driving-related, including new policies on speed cameras, license plates, and drivers licenses.

Speeding fines in effect are now on a sliding scale: the faster you go, the more the fine goes up (HB 182). At most, drivers caught going 40 mph or more above the posted speed limit are now subject to arrest and a fine of \$500. That fine doubles to \$1,000 if road workers are present.

Another law makes reckless driving an incarcerable offense and increases to \$1,000 the maximum fines for negligent and aggressive driving. It also expands the list of traffic offenses that constitute aggressive driving, like ignoring stoplights and traffic signs, failing to stop for pedestrians in a crosswalk, and passing in a no-passing zone.

That bill (HB 744) came out of the Maryland House of Delegates and was named for Sgt. Patrick Kepp, a police officer in Montgomery County who was struck by a driver traveling more than 100 mph and was catastrophically injured.

It's a regulation that Worcester County Sheriff Matt Crisafulli is taking very seriously. In a message posted to Facebook on Sept. 26, he reminded drivers how reckless driving will become an arrestable offense under state law.

"Here in Worcester County, our deputies will be out aggressively patrolling, looking for egregious violators," he said. "Slow down, get where you're going safely, because safety is everyone's responsibility. Let's be responsible, especially out here on our roadways, because speed kills."

Another law (HB 343) alters who can cite drivers for speed camera violations. Before, only sworn law enforcement officers could view and sign off on a speed camera violation. Now, a hired non-police officer, designated as a speed camera technician, may now authorize a citation when cameras catch a driver speeding.

Police also are now prohibited from using speed camera photos for anything else than appropriate traffic enforcement (HB 516) and must destroy records of any vehicles cap-

tured on camera that didn't violate traffic laws. The law also says those images must be removed from records after five years.

Drivers licenses were impacted by two new laws. One (HB 189) disqualifies commercial driver's license holders who are convicted of driving under the influence from operating a commercial motor vehicle for one year. Another called Eric's ID Law (HB 707) gives drivers the option to include on their driver's license that they have a non-apparent disability.

Yet another car-related law (HB 470) outlaws the use of a license plate cover to obscure or block any numbers, or to distort or block the plate for traffic cameras in a manner than may prevent identification. The bill also established that police can only enforce this violation as a secondary action when a driver is detained for a primary reason.

Some laws ended roadway restrictions instead of tightening them. For truckers hauling milk, one new law (SB 203) creates an exception for vehicles carrying fluid milk products. They're now allowed to drive on the interstate highway system, which was previously prohibited and had drawn the ire of dairy farmers.



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Opinion

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

Lead testing project proactive, not reactive

Luckily for Berlin — and every other government in Maryland that supplies drinking water to residents — the state Department of Environment says any lead found in water delivered through publicly-owned systems would be insignificant by Environmental Protection Agency standards. And that’s if any lead at all is found, as the town tests its supply lines and the property owner-provided connections they feed. Why, then, is the town about to undertake such as massive project? Because it and the operators of every other publicly owned system in the state are required to do this as a precautionary measure, and not as a mission to fix known problems.

There is nothing wrong with being sure, since having just some lead in drinking water can’t be dismissed as no big deal. On the contrary, lead’s presence at certain levels can be devastating to human health, as Flint, Michigan learned 10 years ago, when residents there learned that their drinking water was severely contaminated with lead and other toxins.

That put thousands of children at risk for developmental disorders and left adults to face the possibility of equally severe health problems. Moreover, even though Flint’s problem was diagnosed in 2015, it was only this past July — 10 years later — that Michigan and Flint finally declared the city’s water lead-free.

Berlin and Flint, of course, have nothing in common. Unlike Flint, Berlin has the state in its corner and Maryland, unlike Michigan, is being proactive rather than reactive as it directs these just-in-case examinations. In addition, if any lead contamination of drinking water is found, health experts agree that the most likely source would be old fittings and installations on private property.

That certainly qualifies as good news, tied in as this project is with the federal government’s requirement that all public water systems to do the same thing. Even better news, however, is that cost of this massive project will not be borne by the town, but by the state.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Pictured, from left, are Anna Mullis, WCAC Executive Director; participating artists Judy Benton, Jeanne Locklair, Joyce Rose, Joanne Guilfoil and Kathryn Redden; and Tamara Mills, juror of the competition.

Art competition winners announced

‘Tell Me Your Story’ exhibitions remains open through Nov. 2

(Oct. 2, 2025) The Worcester County Arts Council announce the winners of the “Tell Me Your Story” juried art competition, a themed exhibition inviting artists to explore and express personal narratives through visual art. The winning entries were selected by Tamara Mills, Fine Arts Coordinator for Worcester County Public Schools, and celebrated during the opening reception held on Friday, September 12

at the Worcester County Arts Council Gallery.

Award winners include first place, Kathy Huegel, “Fish Story” (Acrylic); second place, Joanne Guilfoil, “Final Approach” (Gouache); and third place, Judy Benton – “Feeling the Jazz” (Acrylic). Honorable mentions went to Lisa Leo, “Her Sacrifice” (Mixed Media); Jeanne Locklair, “FAM” (Watercolor/Pen/Acrylic); and Joyce Rose, “My Father – My Teacher” (Acrylic).

“Each of these works reflects the artist’s unique voice and experience, and we are proud to highlight such pow-

erful storytelling through art,” said Anna Mullis, executive director of the Worcester County Arts Council. “This exhibit is a beautiful reminder of how art can connect us on a deeply human level.”

The “Tell Me Your Story” exhibition is currently on display at the Worcester County Arts Council Gallery and will remain open to the public through November 2. All artwork is available for purchase.

For more information about the exhibit or upcoming events, please visit www.worcestercount-yartscouncil.org

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OP market offers fall special events

(Oct. 2, 2025) There’s lots to do and see at the Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market this fall season.

The Harvest & Flannel Market kicks off the fall fun on Saturday, Oct. 18. Wear your favorite flannel and check out festive market stand displays as well as seasonal goodies such as pumpkins, gourds, and mums.

Local singer Sara Campbell will take the Market Stage, performing bluegrass and country music that is sure to get everyone in the mood for the autumn season. Oct. 25 is the annual Hal-

loween Market, featuring lots of Halloween fun, along with the usual marketplace goodies and extra treats. Costumes are encouraged.

Get ready for Turkey Day at the Thanksgiving Festival, happening from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Nov. 22 and Tuesday, Nov. 25. Bakers will be offering a variety of delicious treats, and special orders are welcome. On Tuesday, shoppers can pick up special ordered baked goods, plus grab any last minute items from the green market merchants. Artisans will also be in attendance with unique, handmade

hostess gifts, such as candles and florals.

The Hometown Holiday Marketplace takes place Dec. 6, 13 and 20, offering lots of festive fun and one-of-a-kind gifts. Shoppers might even spot Mrs. Claus.

The Farmers & Artisans Market happens every Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon during the offseason (September through March), and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. from April through August.

More information can be found at <https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/farmers-artisans-market>



Ocean's Playhouse was opened in late summer by Lina Atanasova, pictured, to offer kids and parents a new indoor entertainment option.

Ocean City local opens new playground, this time inside

WOC location offers a rock wall, slides, and ball pit for a dreary weather, winter

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer
(Sept. 26, 2025) A family-owned indoor playground has finally arrived in West Ocean City, offering kids and parents a rainy-day entertainment alternative.

Situated inside the shopping complex Outlets Ocean City on Route 50, Ocean's Playhouse, an indoor play space, welcomes children up to age 12 with its underwater-themed playground elements and lively decorations. Kids can climb up or across a modified rock wall, time themselves racing through an inflatable obstacle course, chase their siblings or friends through a soft play maze structure, go down a few slides, create patterns on a light-up wall, and enjoy a classic ball pit. A compact area is also tucked away for the younger children.

Ocean's Playhouse is owned and operated by Ocean City local and Bulgarian native Lina Atanasova, with help from her husband, Veli. The Atanasovas' inspiration to create a kid-focused indoor entertainment space came from their experience as

parents to two young boys. "I said to my husband, there's no place in our resort town where you can go indoors and entertain your kids," Lina Atanasova said. "We have a mini indoor golf course, but little kids are kind of hard to manage there, because they need to be a little older so they know what they're doing. After that, we would need to travel to Salisbury or Lewes. We shouldn't have to leave our town."

The idea for the playground was thus born. Parents can bring in their children two years old and under for \$14.95, while older kids incur a cost of \$22.95. This pricing model includes both the adult and one child, for an unlimited amount of playtime. Extra adults are typically welcome free of charge if a mother and father are both present, or if a grandparent, aunt, or uncle accompanies them. However, if the facility reaches maximum capacity, each additional adult will be charged \$6.95.

A key component of the playground is that any equipment the kids can play in, the adults are welcome to as well. The elements were created specifically to accommodate all age groups.

"I worked with a designer and I said, 'I want to make sure the struc-

See OCEAN'S Page 21

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Pony Rides • House Tours • Beekeeping • Artisan Soaps • Oils • Vinegars • Fiber Artists
Blacksmithing • Local Honey • Assateague Photography • Lathe Wood Turning
Candles • Homemade Sourdough Bread • Lavender Products • Lyon Rum
Oyster Shell Art • Goat Milk Soaps and Lotions • Horn Working • Children's Games
Scales and Tales • Walnut Hill Violin Studio • Food and Beverages for Purchase
Wreath Making with Gypsea Tide • Muskrat Demonstrations • Gourmet Popcorn
Native American Food • Pies and Quiches • Pine Needle Basket Weaving Demo
Wooden Toys • Petting Zoo • and more

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Puzzles

GIMME A BREAK!
BY ADRIANNE BALK / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Adrienne Balk is a student at Harvey Mudd College, in Claremont, Calif., class of 2027, majoring in chemistry and climate. In her spare time she makes puzzles for the Claremont Colleges and her blog. She notes that two other current Harvey Mudd students are published Times constructors, and another graduated last year — an amazing statistic for a school with a total enrollment of under a thousand. — W.S.

ACROSS
1 Vineyard measure
5 Does acid
10 Tree with doubly serrated leaves
13 [Hey!]
17 Locations in the game Clue
19 Grand duke of Luxembourg beginning in 2000
20 Heart of the matter
22 Palindromic Italian number
23 Traditional form of Japanese drama
25 Pro ____
26 Key spot?
27 Entered on tiptoe
28 “Love, ____” (2014 rom-com starring Lily Collins)
30 Far from conscious
32 Kicked off, as a business
34 2012 Disney film set inside an arcade
36 Had
37 Turns off
38 Lace protector
41 “You may ____”
43 The “me” of “Despicable Me”
44 Bonds
48 “About Us” pieces
49 Holds dear

DOWN
51 Small square
52 Longtime employer of Rachel Maddow
53 Self-love
54 Phases, to Taylor Swift
55 Game with Indigenous origins
58 ____ Fighters (“Everlong” band)
59 Festive outdoor lighting options
62 Classic drinking “sport”
63 “Sorry, maybe next time”
65 “The Last Supper,” e.g.
66 Third-largest land animal
68 Pokémon enthusiast’s collection
69 Puck’s king
71 Muscle firmness
72 Place to perfect a recipe
76 Swanson on “Parks and Recreation”
77 Game typically played in the dark
80 Muchas horas
81 “Was ____ blame?”
82 Bad spirit
84 D.C. pro
85 Fight the urge
87 It gets bucks from Broncos
88 Does a farm job
89 ____ Island (Georgia resort destination)
90 Reform Party founder
91 Feasts
92 Like emailed files

ACROSS
95 “The Silence of the Lambs” villain
98 Certain rescue pet
101 Gleeful feeling
104 Miniaturized Amazon smart speaker
105 Big jerks
107 Remove, as a coupon
109 Dangerous additive in old paint
110 Whopping
112 Bite-size chocolate-covered wafers ... or a hint to what’s found in five squares in this puzzle
114 Croft of video games
115 ____ homo
116 Some slushies
117 Perform horribly
118 TV host Cohen
119 Joke around
120 “No Man Is an Island” writer
121 Slumps

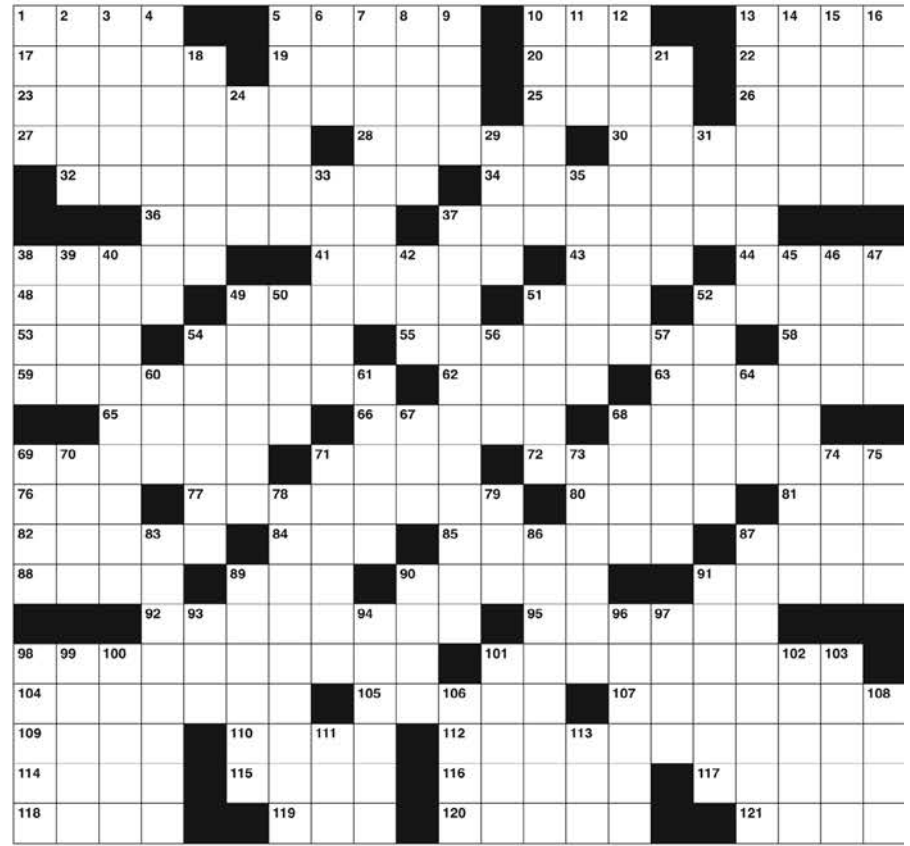
DOWN
1 Holiest locales in synagogues, traditionally
2 Applications of polish
3 Tik-Tok in the Oz books, for one
4 Models after
5 1995 Sandra Bullock cyberthriller
6 “V for Vendetta” actor Stephen
7 Uninvited guest
8 Doings before surgery, informally

ACROSS
9 Dubbed ones
10 They might be glowing
11 Astrological lion
12 Filing services?
13 Programs hosted by SoundCloud
14 Happy hour perch
15 Make a big step, perhaps
16 Rabbi’s reading
18 Regular at a park with half-pipes, informally
21 Breaded, fried Japanese pork cutlet
24 Big successes
29 Victor’s cry
31 Creative pursuit
33 Oscar-winning Ariana of “West Side Story”
35 December drink
37 Gone missing
38 Assist illegally
39 1958 romantic comedy that won Best Picture
40 “I made it big time!”
42 Many a skin-care product
45 Hip
46 Black, in verse
47 St. Andrews resident
49 Esoteric knowledge
50 Roald who wrote “Matilda”
51 “... actually, let’s go to Plan B”
52 Members of the mongoose family
54 Jazz composer Garner
56 Swipe

DOWN
57 Go after, as mosquitoes
60 Graham Greene’s “____ Man in Havana”
61 One way to sell stock
64 Public health agcy.
67 Bank acct. entry
68 Several CBS dramas
69 United Way and UNICEF, in brief
70 ____-chic (dressing style)
71 It incited a famous 18th-century “party”
73 Cleaned up, in a way
74 To be, in Nice
75 Dozes (off)
78 Ambush
79 Neighbor of Lux.
83 Gannett-owned newspaper
86 “Here’s the thing ...”
87 Campground gathering spots
89 Worked hard (for)

DOWN
90 Farm enclosures
91 Jeans
93 ____ Talks
94 Intense, as an argument
96 Music protector, of a sort
97 Slope
98 Guy
99 What the “dalai” of “Dalai Lama” translates to
100 Broken piece of pottery
101 Insurer with a green mascot
102 Justice Sotomayor
103 Seeking justice, in a way
106 Leave tire marks, say
108 Expressions of disapproval
111 B.S. part: Abbr.
113 Barbie’s beau

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



- 57 Go after, as mosquitoes

60 Graham Greene’s “____ Man in Havana”

61 One way to sell stock

64 Public health agcy.

67 Bank acct. entry

68 Several CBS dramas

69 United Way and UNICEF, in brief

70 ____-chic (dressing style)
- 71 It incited a famous 18th-century “party”

73 Cleaned up, in a way

74 To be, in Nice

75 Dozes (off)

78 Ambush

79 Neighbor of Lux.

83 Gannett-owned newspaper

86 “Here’s the thing ...”

87 Campground gathering spots

89 Worked hard (for)
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93 ____ Talks

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97 Slope

98 Guy

99 What the “dalai” of “Dalai Lama” translates to
- 100 Broken piece of pottery

101 Insurer with a green mascot

102 Justice Sotomayor

103 Seeking justice, in a way

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HARD - 66

Fill in the blank spaces in the grid so that every vertical column, every horizontal row and every 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9, without repeating any. There is really only one solution to each puzzle.

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

Answers to last week's puzzles

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

Calendar

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

Thurs., Oct. 2

STORY TIME: FIVE LITTLE PUMPKINS
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. Join in for one of Ms. Angie’s favorite stories. Songs, stories and crafts. For ages 2-5 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

STORY TIME: ‘BIG GORILLA’
Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and rhymes. For ages 2-5 years. 410-632-3495

OC CHESS CLUB
Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Enjoy a relaxing game of chess every Thursday at the library. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

POCOMOKE BOOK CLUB: ‘KIN: ROOTED IN HOPE’ BY CAROLE BOSTON WEATHERFORD
Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 2 p.m. Join in for a lively discussion each month. Stop by the library to pick up a copy in advance. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

CONCERT ON THE PATIO: STEVE KENNEY
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. Hear Steve Kenney’s guitar-powered blend of rock and soul, free of charge, in this outdoor performance. If increment weather, event will be moved inside. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

LEGO MASTERS CHALLENGE
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 4:30 p.m. Join in for a Lego challenge event and enjoy an afternoon snack. All materials provided. For ages 6-11 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

DRY PANTRY
Thursdays - St. Paul United Methodist Church, 405 Flower Street, Berlin, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. For those in need of resources such as paper products, laundry products, baby items, and personal care items. Limits apply. 410-641-0270

Fri., Oct. 3

COUNTRY CALLING
Hugh T. Cropper Inlet Parking Lot, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 12:30-11 p.m. Featuring headliners like Luke Combs, Luke Bryan, Brooks & Dunn and Carrie Underwood, food from festival vendors, classic boardwalk bites and more. Tickets: <https://www.countrycallingfestival.com>.

OC MAHJONG CLUB
Worcester County Library - Ocean City

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

SURVIVAL SPANISH: TELLING TIME
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 1 p.m. Learn how to tell time in Spanish. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

HOMESCHOOL HIATUS
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 1:30 p.m. Take a break from learning to explore STEAM activities and crafts. For ages 6-11 years. 410-208-4014

DISCOVERY DEN AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM
Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 3:30-4:30 p.m. Come enjoy a new topic every week. Week 1: Art Studio. Best for elementary and middle school students, but all are welcome. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

FAMILY PUZZLE NIGHT
Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 5 p.m. Families will compete for prizes and prestige — and pizza. Registration required: 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org.

FIRST FRIDAY OPENING RECEPTION FOR OCTOBER EXHIBITS
Art League of Ocean City, 502 94th St., 5-7 p.m. Meet the artists, enjoy hors d’oeuvres, and see the new exhibits by a variety of local artists! Free. All are welcome. Refreshments sponsored by PKS Investments. Live music. 410-524-9433

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

Sat., Oct. 4

COUNTRY CALLING
Hugh T. Cropper Inlet Parking Lot, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 12:30-11 p.m. Featuring headliners like Luke Combs, Luke Bryan, Brooks & Dunn and Carrie Underwood, food from festival vendors, classic boardwalk bites and more. Tickets: <https://www.countrycallingfestival.com>.

19TH ANNUAL CRUIZERS FOR CHRIST CAR SHOW
Whaleysville United Methodist, 11716 Sheppards Crossing Road, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Entry fee is \$15. Trophies awarded to Top 20 and “Best in Show,” silent auction, gospel music, and food for purchase including scrapple sandwiches,

hamburgers, hot dogs and baked goods.

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

ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT FRIED CHICKEN BUFFET
Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church, 36540 Mount Pleasant Road, 11 a.m. Includes vegetables, beverages and desserts. Cost to dine in is \$17 for adults, \$8.50 for children and free to those 5 years and younger. Carryout cost is \$15. No pre-orders. Info: 410-835-8340.

GLOBAL GOODIES
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 1 p.m. Are all snacks created equal? Taste test some snack from around the world and find out. All food provided. For families. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

OCEAN PINES FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET
Saturdays - White Horse Park, 239 Ocean Parkway, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Shop for everything from fresh local produce to unique handmade artisan goods. Also featuring family-friendly activities, music and unique shopping experiences. Open to the public, year round. 410-641-7052, <https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/farmers-artisans-market>

Sun., Oct. 5

COUNTRY CALLING
Hugh T. Cropper Inlet Parking Lot, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 12:30-10:30 p.m. Featuring headliners like Luke Combs, Luke Bryan, Brooks & Dunn and Carrie Underwood, food from festival vendors, classic boardwalk bites and more. Tickets: <https://www.countrycallingfestival.com>.

DEADLINES TO RSVP FOR GEMS TEA
Gems Tea Event to be held Oct. 19 from 2-4 p.m. at Worcester Technical High School. Cost is \$35. RSVP by Oct. 5 to: Friends of WCCW, P.O. Box 211, Snow Hill, MD 21863. <http://FriendsOfWCCW.org>

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS
St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 3 Church St., Berlin, 2 p.m. All animals are welcome. Must be on a leash or otherwise contained.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER FOR ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT CRAB FEAST FUNDRAISER
Higgins Crab House N., 12801 Coastal Highway, Ocean City. Held Oct. 11 at 1 p.m. Cost is \$65. All-you-can-eat

steamed crabs and shrimp, fried chicken, sides, beer, wine, soft drinks and dessert. Raffles and 50/50 drawing. Register: 302-524-9033 by Oct. 5.

BERLIN FARMERS MARKET
Sundays - Pitts Street, Commerce Street and Main Street, Berlin, May through October, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., rain or shine. Producers only market featuring more than 50 farmers, food cultivators, bakers, distillers, seafood, meat and more. Also featuring a petting farm (9-11 a.m.), free kids art station and live music. The-BerlinFarmersMarket.com

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

JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES MEETING
Sundays - Berlin Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses, 212 West St., Berlin, 10 a.m. www.jw.org

Mon., Oct. 6

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

TED TALKS: STORIES
Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 5:30 p.m. Explore stories about genealogy, the importance of having many stories and how one artist shows us if art can amend stories in history. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

T.O.P.S. OF BERLIN - GROUP #169
Mondays - 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. Elissa, 410-641-8050; on social media; or delmarvachorus.org.

OVEREATER’S ANONYMOUS
Mondays - Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 7-8 p.m. No dues or fees. 410-459-9100

Calendar

Tues., Oct. 7

STORY TIME AT CYPRESS PARK
Cypress Park, 7 Bridge St., Pocomoke City, 10:30 a.m. Meet at the playground for stories and outside play. Bring a blanket and a picnic lunch if designed. For ages 0-5 years. 410-957-0878

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

RACKLIFFE HOUSE
Rackliffe House, behind the Assateague Island Visitor Center, 11800 Marsh View Lane, Berlin, 10:30 a.m. Tour this 18th century coastal plantation house. Registration required: 443-783-6164.

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

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

MASTER GARDENERS PLANT CLINIC
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 11 a.m. Master Gardener Ginny Rosenkranz talks about all things plants. Bring questions and feel free to show your plants as well. 410-208-4014

BLACKOUT POETRY
Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 2 p.m. The group will be using the “blackout” technique to write poems; it’s a good way to start a new work of art. 410-641-0650

CHARMING BOOKS
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 4 p.m. Come celebrate Banned Books Week by creating a book charm using banned book covers. All materials provided. For ages 12-18 years. 410-208-4014

PUMPKIN PAINTING PARTY
Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 4:30 p.m. Paint and pumpkins will be available while supplies last, but feel free to bring your own. For families. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

SAFE BOATING COURSE
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 6-9 p.m. Held Oct. 7 and 8. Cost is \$20. Register: Barry Cohen, 410-935-4807, CGAUXOC@gmail.com.

CROSS FARMS POP-UP FARMERS MARKET
Tuesdays - Flower Street Field across from Henry Park, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Accepting Maryland Department of Agriculture FMNP (WIC & Seniors) Checks and Maryland WIC Fruit & Vegetable Checks. Also offering a "Produce Bucks" program, which doubles purchases for eligible residents. <https://www.facebook.com/theberlinfarmersmarket>.

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

JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES MEETING
Tuesdays - Berlin Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses, 212 West St., Berlin, 7 p.m. www.jw.org

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

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

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

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

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

Wed., Oct. 8

EASTERN SHORE SEWISTS
Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10 a.m. Promoting the needle arts through sewing education, activities and textile crafts. For artisans of all skill levels. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BABY TIME
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m. Songs, stories and giggles. For ages 0-2 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

TEA CARD CRAFT @ 50PLUS CENTER
Snow Hill 50plus Center, 4767 Snow Hill Road, 11 a.m. The group will be making Tea cards, all supplies provided. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

MERRY MAKERS: HONEYCOMB BOOKPAGE PUMPKINS
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 11 a.m. Using recycled book pages and fall colored craft papers, create festive decorative pumpkins to welcome the fall season. Registration required: 410-208-4014. www.worcesterlibrary.org

PUZZLE SWAP
Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 1-7 p.m. Bring your gently used puzzles and leave with new-to-you puzzles. Don’t have a puzzle to exchange but still want one? That’s OK too. All puzzles must be complete in their original boxes. 410-641-0650

POLISH AMERICAN CLUB MEETING
Knights of Columbus, Behind St. Luke’s Church, 9901 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 2-4 p.m. Held the second Wednesday of each month. Members and those wanting to become members are invited. Denise, 443-857-9054.

ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. Historian Mike Dixon discusses how many experiences, if not recorded, are lost in time. Oral history provides a valuable method of capturing these insights. 410-208-4014

FRANKENSTEAM: DOUGH CREATURE
Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 4:30 p.m. Design your own dough creature with a touch of electricity. Learn about circuits, conductive versus inductive and get a taste of the story of Frankenstein. For ages 6-11 years. 410-524-1818

PAJAMA STORY TIME
Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 6:30 p.m. Wear your pajamas and bring your favorite stuffie to snuggle while you enjoy stories and songs to wind down to bedtime. For ages 0-5 years. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

FAMILY FUN NIGHTS
Wednesdays (through Aug. 20) - Ocean Pines Yacht Club Pool, 1 Mumford’s Landing Road, 6-8 p.m. DJ, games and prizes. Food available for purchase. Admission is \$3 for OP swim members, \$5 for OP residents, \$7 for non-residents and free for non-swimmers. Cash only. 410-641-7052, oceanpines.org

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.

CASH BINGO
Wednesdays - Ocean City Elks Lodge 2645, 13708 Sinepuxent Ave. Door open at 5 p.m., bingo starts at 6:30 p.m. Food available before bingo and at intermission. Open to the public. 443-605-5028

ONGOING EVENTS

BUS TRIP TO CHRISTIANA MALL
Bus departs on Oct. 22 at 8:30 a.m. and returns at approximately 6:30 p.m. Cost is \$45. Sign up by Oct. 6. Contact Anna, akins10685@aol.com.

BUS TRIP TO PPA PRO PICKLEBALL TOUR IN VIRGINIA BEACH
Sponsored by the Ocean Pines Racquet Center. Motor coach leaves Oct. 10 at 6 a.m. and returns at 8 p.m. Cost is \$80 and includes transportation, courtside ticket and a chance to win giveaways. Register: 410-641-7228. Info: Todd Phillips, tournamenttodd@gmail.com

YOUNG HISTORIANS ESSAY CONTEST
Snow Hill library, 307 N. Washington St. Open to middle and high school students. All entries that meet requirements will earn one hour of service learning. Winners in each age group will receive an extra prize. Reach out to history@worcesterlibrary.org for any local history research assistance. Stop in or call for full details. 410-632-3495 Due by Nov. 15.

THE BOO-K BAG
Pocomoke library, 401 5th Street, throughout October. Check out a mystery BOO-k bag. Each pack contains a surprise seasonal title, a sweet treat and a cozy cup of hot chocolate. Return the rating slip for a chance to win a prize. 410-957-0878

CREATIVITY CORNER
Berlin library, 13 Harrison Ave., throughout October. Students are invited to visit the library’s Creativity Corner to engage in STEAM-related projects and crafts. Activities change monthly. For ages 12-18 years. 410-641-0650

HISTORY-TO-GO: CROSS STITCHING
Snow Hill library, 307 N. Washington St., throughout October. Includes info sheets, recommended activities, supplies and more. Pick up from the Snow Hill library. 410-632-3495

LEAF IDENTIFICATION GAME
Pocomoke library, 401 5th Street, throughout October. Find the falling leaves throughout the library and match them with their description to property identify the leaf. Complete the game and enter for a chance to win a new Peterson’s Tree Identification Guide book. For families. 410-957-0878

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