# BAYSIDE & GAZETTE

**OCTOBER 16, 2025** 

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#### **BERLIN HOSTS CLASSICS**

About 100 classic cars cane to Berlin last Saturday for the Berlin Chamber of Commerce's Cruisers event including this spooky ride and additions.

## Fire dept. gets major FEMA grant

\$291K award will be used to replace aging breathing apparatus for firefighters

#### **By Tara Fischer** Staff Writer

(Oct. 16, 2025) The Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department was awarded \$291,428 earlier this month to replace essential firefighter breathing equipment.

The OPVFD announced via a press release that they had been selected to receive nearly \$300,000 through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The funds will be used to replace 34 aging Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) units.

According to the Department of Homeland Security's website, an SCBA "is designed to protect personnel in hazardous, toxic, or oxygen-deficient environments...SCBA systems are used when emergency responders need to have a supply of breathable air to work in fouled atmospheres that may pose an imminent danger to health and life."

Now, the Ocean Pines fire group will get a new set of these essential units, replacing the bunch that is nearing the end of its useful life. The apparatuses will guarantee the team complies with the most recent standards from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

"This award represents a major step forward in ensuring the safety of our members and the community we serve," said Joe Enste, OPVFD president, in the department's press release. "SCBAs are among the most critical pieces of equipment for firefighters. These new units will allow our crews to operate more effectively in dangerous environments and return home safely after every call."

The department's announcement adds that the community fire team ap-See GRANT Page 19

## Study finds availability of homes at crisis stage

Survey paints stark picture of prices outpacing income

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Oct. 17, 2025) For renters in Worcester County, the outlook is grim: vacancies are nearly nonexistent, rents have soared beyond what most can afford, and home ownership is "increasingly out of reach."

That's according to a new 127-page study by the Colorado-based firm Matrix Design Group, which says Worcester County's housing market is in a full-blown affordability crisis. The report, released Sept. 22, surveyed 673 residents between February and June.

It paints a stark picture of the housing market where prices are "far outpacing" incomes, leaving many households one emergency away from financial instability. "Younger residents appear to be navigating a fragile housing path, where one unexpected expense or rent increase could tip the balance," the report says.

By conventional standards, housing costs should not exceed 30% of household income. With the average county renter earning \$46,000 a year, it sets a monthly affordability threshold of \$1,149.

But the study found that the average rent in Worcester County jumped 13.3% in a single year – from \$1,966 in May 2024 to \$2,228 in May 2025 – requiring a household income of \$100,000.

Family-sized rentals are even less attainable. The average three-bedroom unit plus utilities rents for more than \$3,000 per month, requiring a household income of more than \$125,000.

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## **Berlin launches 'Helmet Heroes' initiative**

Resident suggested idea after observing similar campaign on Assateague

#### By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Oct. 16, 2025) Riding a bike, scooter, or skateboard in Berlin could lead to a free snow cone from On Thin Ice — so long as the user is wearing a helmet.

The Berlin Police Department, in collaboration with the snow cone stand On Thin Ice, has launched the initiative "Helmet Heroes." Kids spotted wearing a protective helmet while skating, biking, or scootering around town will be offered a voucher, good for one free treat from the local dessert business. The project is a new way to encourage safety by rewarding those who follow the rules of the road.

The endeavor was announced earlier this week, Oct. 11, via a press release from the Berlin Police Department. According to that announcement, Helmet Heroes was the brainchild of town resident Victoria Spice, who was inspired by a similar program at Assateague.

In an Oct. 4 Facebook post garnering support for the idea, Spice wrote, "Been spending a lot of time at Assateague State Park and love that the

rangers hand out ice cream coupons to redeem at The Five Tides to kids riding safely and using their helmets...how cool would it be to get a few sponsors for this in town, and the police department could hand them out?"

She later added, "It's happening. The police department is on board ... We live in a great little town."

Helmet Heroes will specifically target children practicing safe biking, scootering, and skating. Officials hope the initiative will instill a desire to make good choices in the young riders, with the sweet incentive as a bonus.

Berlin Police Department's Corporal Gary Bratten said that to get the ball rolling, officers have been provided 10 vouchers each, specifically for "children they observe under the age of 16 wearing their helmets while operating bicycles, electric bikes, and scooters."

He added, "while we encourage everyone to wear a helmet, under the age of 16 is the law for wearing helmets in the State of Maryland."

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that helmets, albeit a simple headpiece, can reduce the risk of serious brain injury by up to 70%. Ensuring kids understand the necessity of these safety hats as early

as possible can prevent everything from some scrapes and bruises and a concussion, to unthinkable tragedies.

"[Helmet Heroes] is such a simple concept that creates a big ripple of positivity," Spice said in the police department's press release. "It promotes safety, supports local businesses, and builds great connections between kids and community role models."

On Thin Ice is excited to offer its support by providing a treat for the children who understand the importance of taking precautions.

Owner of On Thin Ice, Bree Chmielewski, noted in the police team's announcement, "We're thrilled to support this effort...This is a fun way to give back while helping keep our kids safe."

The project has gained even more support throughout the community. Sweetwater Contracting revealed earlier this week on Facebook that they have signed on as the first community sponsor of Helmet Heroes. According to Bratten, the first 150 coupons were provided by the contracting business.

"We're excited to support this awesome program that rewards kids for wearing their helmets and practicing safe biking habits around town," the company's social media post reads. "We're all about building a safe, stronger, and sweeter Berlin—one deck, one roof, and now...one helmet at a time."

Officers will offer the vouchers until their current supply is depleted, and/ or until a new sponsor provides more. The initiative has already proven effective, as Bratten handed out a free treat ticket this week, on Oct. 13, to a child riding his scooter with a helmet.

The town's police force maintained that the venture is a new, creative way to promote its vision of safety, and a protected, thriving community.

"The officers of the Berlin Police Department are committed each day to promoting and encouraging safe practices within the community," Bratten said. "While the department may be small, its members take great pride in their dedication, compassion, and the strong connection they share with the people they serve. Through ongoing outreach, education, and proactive policing, the Berlin Police Department continues to uphold its mission of ensuring safety while fostering trust and partnership throughout the town."

For more information about Helmet Heroes, contact the Berlin Police Department at 410-641-1333, or follow their social media pages.



## Pumpkins in the Park back for 2nd year at nature trail

Taylor House Museum now organizing after horticulture committee created concept

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Oct. 16, 2025) The second-annual Pumpkins in the Park event is returning to Berlin this month, this time with a different host organization spearheading the effort.

On Friday, Oct. 24, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Berlin residents will have the opportunity to view the decorated, spooky jack-o'-lanterns and painted pumpkins, as they light up the nature trail at Stephen Decatur Park. The themed gourds will be created by businesses and organizations throughout town.

The Halloween-inspired festivity was the brainchild of the Berlin Horticultural Advisory Committee, which led the initiative in its inaugural occurrence last year. This time around, the Calvin B. Taylor House Museum will act as the host, as the horticultural team had prior obligations. Taylor House President Melissa Reid expressed hope that the Pumpkins in the Park's original creators will take the event over in subsequent years.

"We are taking it over for this year; we are not taking it over indefinitely," Reid said. "We agreed to take it on for this year because it was such a cool event last year. It is different from the usual Berlin events."

Here's how it works: non-profits, businesses, or other organizations can pay \$25 to sponsor a pumpkin. The fee includes the autumn squash and a tea light, for if a group opts to carve their seasonal plant. The pumpkins will be displayed throughout Decatur Park's nature trail on the evening of Oct. 24, where Berlin residents can come out, take a nighttime walk, and enjoy the decorations.

Attendees will also get to vote on their favorites.

Representatives from businesses can either drop their creations off or choose to stand beside them. The Taylor House just asks that if an organization decides to stay, they do not pass out candy. Last year, the treats were encouraged to align with the Halloween tradition of trick or treating, but this led to an abundance of wrappers left on the park's trail. The town hopes to avoid this unfortunate byproduct.

While candy may be prohibited, the Taylor House will add to the night's fun by handing out glow sticks.

The glow sticks alone will not be enough light, however. Reid asks that guests bring flashlights or lanterns to provide illumination to the dark trail.

"The nature trail is not lit at night," the Taylor House president said. "It makes it a little Halloween-y, but it's also a little dark. The lights from the pumpkin [and glow sticks] are certainly not going to be enough to light your way."

The trail may be dark, but Reid added that Stephen Decatur Park is a perfect location for the pumpkin event

"It's really great for an event to utilize Stephen Decatur Park," she said. "Stephen Decatur Park is a really wonderful resource for the Town of Berlin. We are really lucky to have that park, and the nature trail is such a cool little spot, especially for Halloween. And it was so cool last year to see all the pumpkins lit up, and the kids with glow sticks."

Interested businesses or non-profits can reserve their pumpkins by reaching out to the Taylor House by email at curator@taylorhousemsusem.org or calling the facility at 410-641-1019. The museum must receive all orders by this Friday, Oct. 17. The next day, Saturday, Oct. 18, representatives from participating groups may pick up their pumpkins and tea lights at a designated table on the Taylor House's lawn, during its annual Berlin Book Festival, from noon to 4 p.m. Teams will be given about a week to decorate their gourds. The creations must be dropped off at the Stephen Decatur Park nature trail by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 24.

Reid reiterated that while they are honored to bring back a beloved autumn-themed event to the town this year, it would not have been possible without the imagination of the horticultural group.

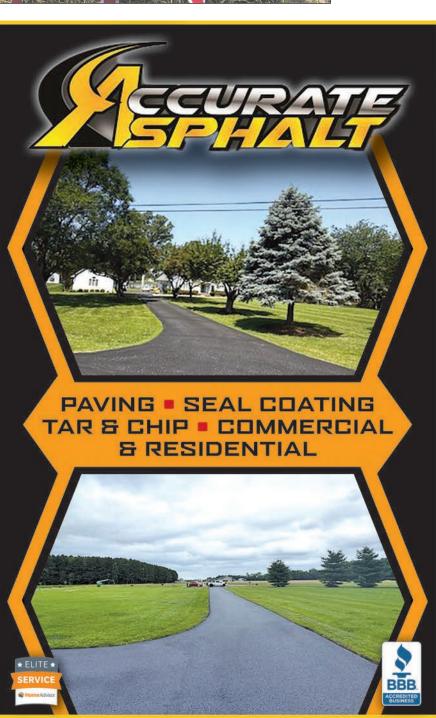
"We can take no credit for the idea," Reid maintained. "It was the horticultural group that came up with it. It's their amazing idea, it's their event. We just said that we would be a placeholder for this year, and hopefully somebody else will pick it up next year, or the horticulture group will be able to take it back again. We just knew that the buzz around it was so cool last year, that we agreed to take it on for this year to make sure it didn't stop."

The \$25 fee incurred by participating organizations for the pumpkins will be used to cover the cost of the event. Any remaining profit will go right back to the museum, to be used as funding for exciting new offerings, including a 2026 exhibit showcasing Berlin's arc from its humble beginnings to the restoration efforts that created the thriving town known by visitors and residents today.



One of the more than two dozen entries in last year's first Pumpkins in the Park is pictured.

FILE PHOTO/ BAYSIDE GAZETTE



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## Students complete Decatur Park projects

#### By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Oct. 9, 2025) Two student-led initiatives were recently completed at Stephen Decatur Park, providing the community with a more functional recreation spot.

Thanks to two separate Eagle Scout members, the space now features a box of books, known as a 'Little Free Library,' and repaired pedestrian bridges for foot traffic.

At the Berlin Parks Commission Sept. 30 meeting, Cody Chesser, the town's public works superintendent, updated the group on the status of park improvement projects. A Little Free Library, Chesser said, has been finalized at Decatur Park, in an effort to encourage reading and story sharing.

The Little Free Library was the brainchild of Stephen Decatur High School student Vincent Schicchi, a Life Scout in Berlin Troop 225, who was working toward his Eagle Scout Rank. The book collection site will act as his Eagle Scout project.

The endeavor was initially proposed at the Berlin Mayor and Council meeting on June 9, where it was approved unanimously. The box is made of plywood, decorated with waterproof and natural-looking wood-colored paint. To ensure the structure is sound, a metal roof and cedar posts were added.

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The library features a diverse collection of children's and adult books. Community members are encouraged to take and return books during their visits to Stephen Decatur Park.

During the municipality's summer meeting, Schicchi stated that his project aims to encourage Berlin residents to shift away from electronic usage and back towards reading books, and to provide an easy avenue for parents to read to their children while visiting the park.

"I think it's very important to implement reading nowadays since many people are on their cell phones," Schicchi said during his initiative presentation in June.

The library box is officially registered with Little Free Library, a Minnesota nonprofit whose mission is to expand access to literature in communities throughout the nation. The small book lockers, which are free and open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, help remove barriers that limit some individuals' ability to access novels and nonfiction works.

Berlin's newest Little Free Library is now complete, offering the community a quick and convenient place to grab or drop off a book.

"It seems like it will hold up really well," Chesser said.

Another project completed at

Stephen Decatur Park this summer was the repair work to two pedestrian foot bridges.

The initiative was undertaken also as an Eagle Scout project, this time the idea of Parker Gill of Boy Scouts of America Troop 261. Chesser said that Gill, along with fellow troop members, reconstructed the park's two foot bridges around the site's pond side.

"The kids did a great job, the Eagle Scouts," said the public works superintendent. "They were awesome. We as the town didn't have to do much, it was very minimal involvement. [The kids] handled a lot of it."

Gill presented his plan to address the structure's instability to the Berlin Parks Commission in July. At that meeting, Chesser noted that the town had already planned to improve the bridges, but would allow the Boy Scouts to spearhead the effort.

The repairs were necessary, Chesser said, as the paths were missing railing pieces. The ones that remained were unstable. The bridges were also plagued by an overgrowth of vegetation, creating a tripping hazard for park visitors.

According to Chesser, the work on the first bridge took about 10 hours. Improvements to the second bridge were faster, finishing up roughly an hour ahead of schedule.

The effort was completed towards

the end of the summer. A plaque with Gill's name has been added near the bridges to acknowledge his contribution to the park.

Now, as the fall approaches, Stephen Decatur Park will feature new pedestrian bridges for walkers and a site to browse free books.

"It's two really nice projects and all the kids did great," Chesser said.

Additionally, at the meeting last month, the public works superintendent presented findings from park inspections.

Chesser said that issues were down at the recreation sites, from 61 last year to 50 this year. A few pieces of equipment at Heron Park and Stephen Decatur Park had head entrapment issues, or a space where a child's head could become stuck, but they were fixed promptly.

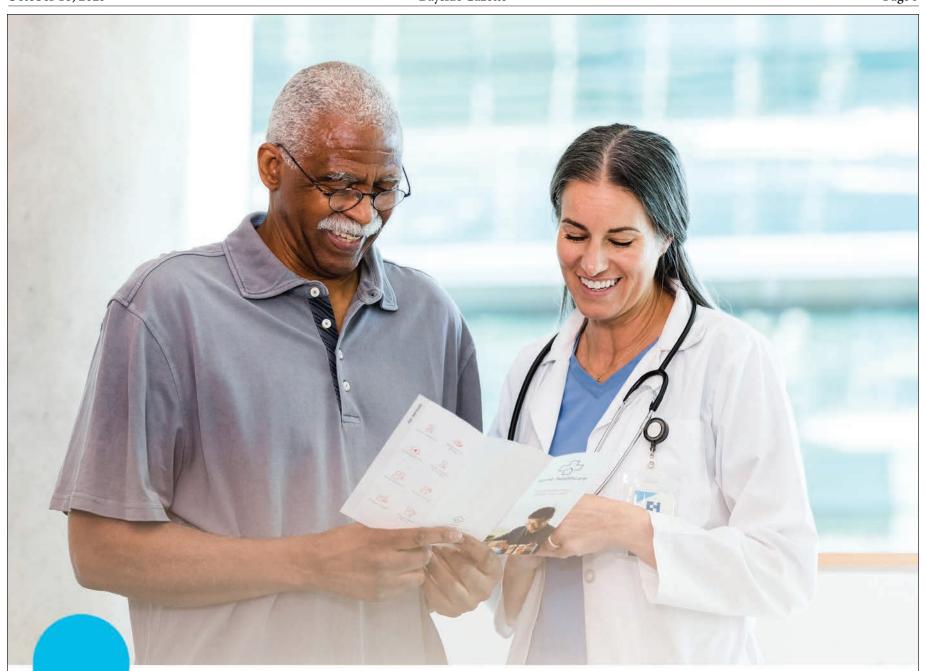
"It's considered one of the most serious types of hazards," Chesser said.

Town staff added that when equipment is installed, the municipality is following all rules and regulations. However, as time passes, laws change, which requires these adjustments.

"Keep in mind, the difference between being in compliance and out of compliance is sometimes like an eighth of an inch," Chesser said. "This stuff here was easy to take care of right away."



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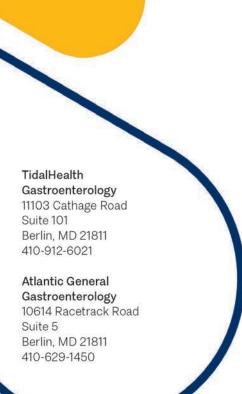
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# Berlin's Oktoberfest returns on Saturday, features music

Regional breweries will be featured in beer garden behind J&M Meat Market

#### By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Oct. 16, 2025) A day of music, German-inspired food and beverages, and family-friendly entertainment is on the horizon for Berlin this weekend, as the town prepares to welcome guests to its annual Oktoberfest celebration.

This Saturday, Oct. 18, residents and visitors will flock to downtown Berlin for what the municipality's Economic and Community Development Director Ivy Wells said is one of the town's most significant events of the year, attracting "a few thousand people."

The festival will feature two stages for live music, hosting performances by The Edelweiss Band and The Dunehounds, a petting farm, kids' crafts, shows by juggler Cascading Carlos, and the annual fall sidewalk sale. The event is free to enter.

A variety of Oktoberfest-themed food, like brats, knockwurst, pretzels, German chocolate cake, and pie, will be available, in addition to ice cream and smoothies. Local breweries and a beer garden will be set up behind J&M Meat Market.

Wells maintained that the planning process for the German-inspired afternoon is year-long, with staff working diligently to secure the entertainment and writing grants for funding.

"We've been getting ready for Oktoberfest since last year," she said. "This event is very special to us, and we ensure it includes all the best Berlin has to offer, and there are activities for all ages."

Main Street festivities are scheduled from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wells noted that in addition to the Oktoberfest-specific entertainment, Berlin's downtown establishments and stores will be open, welcoming patrons.

"[Oktoberfest] is huge for our local businesses; the shops and restaurants stay busy all day," she said. "It's a feelgood day that reminds people why they love coming here."

Additionally, the Calvin B. Taylor House Museum will be hosting its annual Berlin Book Festival on the facility's lawn at the same time as Oktoberfest. Melissa Reid, Taylor House president, said that she hopes there will be a lot of attendee crossover at the events.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTI

Among the live entertainment planned for Saturday on Main Street in Berlin will be the Dunehounds and The Edelweiss Band, pictured during a past event.

Wells added that Oktoberfest has been around for over a decade, firmly establishing itself as a beloved Berlin fall tradition. As the Eastern Shore town has the same name as Germany's capital, Wells said that throwing its own version of the German beer and folk celebration is only appropriate, and "makes sense."

Attendees can park at Berlin Intermediate School and take a free shuttle

sponsored by Ocean Downs Casino downtown, where the event will be in full swing. The car service will run from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The town hopes that this year's Oktoberfest will be just as successful as years past.

"Last year was packed, and with good weather in the forecast, we're expecting another strong turnout," Wells said.



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## Costume contest a highlight at Halloween, Fall Festival

**By Tara Fischer** 

Staff Writer

(Oct. 16, 2025) A longstanding seasonal tradition will return to Ocean Pines later this month, featuring carnival games, refreshments, face painting, and a costume contest.

The Ocean Pines Halloween and Fall Festival will make a comeback on Saturday, Oct. 25, welcoming residents from the Pines and surrounding areas for autumn-themed fun at White Horse Park, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

According to Katie Goetzinger, the program supervisor for the Ocean Pines Association's Recreation and Parks Department, the festival is a beloved tradition, going back at least two decades.

The fall celebration is family-friendly and suitable for all ages, but it explicitly focuses on offering activities for children.

A painter will be on-site to create designs on kids' faces, families are encouraged to partake in an array of carnival games, and attendees can enjoy lunch from food by the Kiwanis Club of Ocean Pines/ Ocean City.

A highlight of the fair is the yearly costume contest. Goetzinger said that the competition is broken down into age categories, to be held at different times: two years old and under, 11:30 a.m.; three to four years old, noon; five to seven years old, 12:30 p.m.; eight to 10 years old, 1 p.m.; 11 to 17 years old, 1:30 p.m.; and 18 and older, 2 p.m. Ocean Pines employees will select the winners. There are no specific parameters that participants must follow.

"People get very creative," the program supervisor said.

Goetzinger added that many innovative costumes from prior celebrations come to mind. Still, a specific highlight from years past is a Transformers car made out of cardboard by a father and son team.

The group-effort creations are always a staple, the rec and parks supervisor noted.

"I enjoy seeing the youngest costume contest, because a lot of family members dress up as well, and they make it a whole themed costume," Goetzinger said. "We have had a family of farm animals and a family of the Wizard of Oz characters."

The event is a well-attended Halloween festivity with over 100 attendees yearly. Community members come out to soak up some much-needed seasonal fun, as the wooded neighborhood prohibits trick-or-treating due to a lack of streetlights.

While safety concerns may limit the beloved children's door-to-door, candy-asking practice, the festival offers an alternative avenue for Halloween entertainment with games, food, and a chance to dress up.

The planning process starts in July. In September, the department reaches out to high school students who may need service hours to volunteer.

"We cannot have a successful event without volunteers to run our carnival games," Goetzinger said.

Information about the event can be found on the OP Recreation and Parks Department's website or Facebook page. The festival is free to attend. The Kiwanis Club will sell food and drinks.

# Yacht Club to host annual Stars, Stripes and Stockings

(Oct. 16, 2025) Come out to the Ocean Pines Yacht Club on Sunday, Nov. 9, to help support our troops at the Stars, Stripes, and Stockings event.

Sponsored by Steel Blu Vodka, the event features live entertainment, passed Hors D'oeuvres, and a cash bar available. Stuff a stocking to be gifted to our soldiers in time for the holiday!

The Giving Tree is located inside

the restaurant, filled with ornaments for items such as hot cocoa packets, hand warmers, and other small gifts. Stop by, take an ornament, and bring your donated items back to the Yacht Club by Friday, Nov. 7.

Then, gather with the community on Sunday, Nov. 9 from 2-5 p.m., to fill stockings to be sent to those in need.

# **OP Trail of Horrors kicks off two-weekend run on Friday**

(Oct. 16, 2025) Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks will host its annual Trail of Horrors starting this Friday, Oct. 17.

The event takes place at a new location this year - the White Horse Park Boat Ramp Trail. Visitors can look forward to fog-filled paths, eerie sights, and spine-chilling surprises around every

corner.

Admission is \$8 per person. The Trail of Horrors takes place Oct. 17-18 and Oct. 24-25 from 7-10 p.m.

For more information, contact Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks at 410-641-7052 or email ddonahue@oceanpines.org.



## Mayor: Bertino seeks deal for room tax vote

**By Brian Shane** 

Staff Writer

(Oct. 16, 2025) Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan accused a Worcester County Commissioner last week of trying to hold the resort "hostage" by linking support for a hotel room tax increase to a separate issue over wastewater capacity.

According to Meehan, Commissioner Chip Bertino (District 5, Ocean Pines) suggested a quid pro quo: the commissioners could back Ocean City's request to raise the county's hotel room tax from 5% to 6% – but only if the town agreed to double the county's daily sewage allocation at Ocean City's wastewater plant from 1 million to 2 million gallons, without restrictions on growth. Growth in West Ocean City has been stifled in recent years due to the lack of available EDUs for residential and commercial development along Route 611.

"Commissioner Bertino really was up front with me about the fact that he believes that the county should get something in return for raising the room tax," Meehan told Ocean 98's Rude Awakening morning show on Wednesday. "I don't believe that should be the case, because raising the room tax not only benefits Ocean City, but it also benefits the rest of the county."

Added Meehan: "To just blanketly

(RIGHT HAND SIDE)

ask us to then allocate an additional million gallons a day to West Ocean City for a plant that was paid for by, you know, the Ocean City ratepayers for development in West Ocean City just isn't something that would be the right thing for the mayor and council to do."

At Tuesday's meeting, Meehan told the commissioners increasing the room tax would result in Worcester County government receiving about \$360,000 in new county revenue. Additionally, Pocomoke could stand to get \$38,000 and Berlin an estimated \$22,000 from the increase. For Ocean City, it would mean about \$5 million in new revenue due to the thousands of hotel rooms and rentals.

The mayor told OC Today-Dispatch that the conversation with Bertino took place Monday, a day before he appeared at the commissioners' meeting to formally ask for the 1% room tax hike. He also said Bertino had floated a similar tradeoff more than a year ago when Bertino served as the president of the commissioners.

At Tuesday's meeting in Snow Hill, the commissioners voted 5-2 to have staffers draft a bill that would enable the county to raise the room tax rate, legislation that the commissioners eventually could vote on later. Bertino and Commissioner Jim Bunting (District 6, Bishopville) opposed the motion.

Because Worcester operates as a "home rule" county, any changes to the room tax rate start with state oversight. Last year, the Maryland General Assembly agreed to let the county commissioners raise the room tax cap from 5% to 6% increase, but that change has to come with a unanimous vote from the seven commissioners.

Meehan also said he believes that 2024 state statute gave the commissioners power to proceed uninterrupted with a vote to move the tax increase forward, without procedural technicalities like public hearings or resolutions. County attorney Roscoe Leslie disagreed, outlining a longer process for two public hearings. The commissioners must vote unanimously on the room tax measure for it to pass.

The lack of consensus threatens not only Ocean City's deadline of Jan. 1 to enact the tax increase, Meehan said, but jeopardizes the \$5 million in new tax revenue for the city and the \$360,000 for the county.

Commissioner Bertino in a written statement to OC Today-Dispatch called the question of a room tax increase "an important issue for Worcester County and Ocean City."

"It became clear at [Tuesday's] Commissioner meeting that there are quite a few procedural requirements, including two public hearings, necessary before a final vote by the commissioners can take place possibly sometime after the first of the year. It is yet to be determined how I will vote," he wrote.

"I will not comment on a private back and forth conversation between Mayor Meehan and me other than to say I am giving serious thought to what we discussed and that I offered, and am still willing, to meet with him," Bertino added.

The issue touches on a long-standing agreement between the city and county: because Ocean City has excess capacity at its midtown sewer plant, it lets Worcester County pipe over up to 1 million gallons per day of untreated sewage for processing, easing the burden on county facilities.

Last month, county officials formally

asked to amend that 1994 memorandum of understanding to add another 170,000 gallons for its West Ocean City-area sewer treatment facilities. The mayor and council tentatively agreed to have their attorney draft an amendment to the agreement to increase capacity.

Now, Meehan told radio listeners, "the Town of Ocean City is not inclined to do that."

"That was before yesterday's meeting," he added. "You know, we would still like to accommodate that request and be good partners. But it takes two entities to make a partnership and both entities have to be good partners. Right now, I think, basically because of at least one, maybe two commissioners, that good partnership just doesn't seem to exist."

The county's room tax generated \$25.6 million for Ocean City in fiscal 2025, and a 1% increase at that level would create about \$5 more in revenue, according to the treasurer's office. The town dedicates approximately 40% of room tax revenue to tourism marketing while the remaining 60% goes to the city's general fund.

Meehan told county officials that Ocean City plans to use new room tax revenue to pay for future police salaries. Earlier this year, resort officials' struck an agreement with its police union for pay raises that will cost \$13 million over the next three years.

He also said some county officials privately suggested the city raise its own tax rate to cover costs – a notion he rejects.

"We've done a lot of things to make sure that we can balance our revenue and offset expenses," he said. "For some reason, one individual that just wants to be a roadblock and wants to hold us hostage. This should not be that type of condition being place on us," he said.

Meehan said Ocean City still plans to press for the tax increase.

"We're going to move forward," he said, "but at the same time, you know, we cannot be in a hostage situation in Ocean City. That's just not the way government should work."



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## County eyes higher fines for illegal dumpers

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Oct. 10, 2025) Trash haulers caught dumping non-local garbage at Worcester County's landfill could face stiff fines or even a one-year suspension, under a new set of landfill rules approved this week by county officials.

The Worcester County Commissioners unanimously approved new penalties for commercial carriers caught disposing of out-of-county waste at the county's central landfill in Newark. Hauling companies will be notified about the penalties through mail, public notices, and social media posts.

According to Public Works Director Dallas Baker, county landfill crews have seen a "noticeable uptick" in the volume of out-of-area trash. Spot checks - meaning, someone rips open a trash bag and checks for locational identifiers like discarded mail - have shown a good portion of this increase is from non-local trash.

Baker says he's planning to start new, more rigorous spot checks for trucks entering the landfill. Upon arrival they'll have to pull to the side, dump their contents, and let county landfill staffers pore through trash bags for identifying factors which also prevents a trucker from trying to blame another driver for a violation.

They'll take photos and collect evidence if the violation is challenged and ends up in court. Violators can either pay a fine or appear in District Court to appeal, a process that follows the same legal path as a zoning violation or animal control citations. according to county attorney Roscoe Leslie.

County Commissioner Eric Fiori suggested to Baker that his staff draft a procedural manual, so all the spot-checks end up literally being done by the book.

Worcester County's law is clear: it says no solid waste collected outside of Worcester County shall be deposited in any public landfill.

That means non-local trash haulers have been knowingly violating county law if their routes took them to the Worcester County landfill, according to

He told the commissioners at Tuesday's meeting in Snow Hill that the problem started when neighboring Wicomico County saw its landfill reach capacity faster than projected.

Wicomico then instituted its own set of escalating fines and suspensions to deter illegal dumping. But Wicomico's crackdown has spilled over into Worcester County, Baker said, based on early spot checks.

It matters because there's only so much room available in the current collection area, or cell, at the landfill.

'We have a very tight timeframe between when Cell 5 was going to get filled up, and when we're going to get Cell 6 designed, built, and opened," Baker told the commissioners. "If we start adding in Wicomico waste on top of that, we're likely going to have Cell 5 filled up before we have Cell 6 ready.'

Leading hotspots for trash-dumping violators include Chincoteague, Virgina, as well as The Centre at Salisbury shopping mall, based on computer tracking software that uses cell phone data, County Administrator Weston Young said.

With the commissioners' approval, fines for first-time violators are now \$500. A second offense is a \$1,000 fine and a one-week suspension. A third time gets you another \$1,000 fine but a month's suspension. A fourth suspension means you're banned for a year.

All suspensions would require at least 30 days' notice to the hauler and an opportunity for a hearing before the county commissioners, officials said.

Legally, Worcester County is capped at a \$500 fine because it's a "home rule" county, which is less autonomous, instead of a charter county, which has more legislative power.

Wicomico, a charter county, is able to suspend violators for two years, or even permanently, and can levy fines in the thousands of dollars.

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## Salisbury airport now offers Orlando flights

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Oct. 16, 2025) Buckle your seatbelts and put your tray tables in the upright position – a new airline has finally touched down for a landing on Maryland's Eastern

Breeze Airways is now flying nonstop from Salisbury Regional Airport to Orlando, Florida. Flanked by shiny lettershaped balloons with the airport codes "MCO" and "SBY," representing both destinations, Wicomico County Executive Julie Giordano welcomed the low-cost carrier to the airport's kickoff event on Oct. 1.

"We are thrilled to have you here, and we know that the community will embrace you with open arms. Let's celebrate new partnership ...," she said.

After years of planning by the airport and months of preparation to open the route, Breeze officially launched twice-

weekly flights to Orlando International Airport. The up-and-coming airline has also invested in a fleet of 40 brand-new Airbus A220 planes, featuring spacious legroom, big windows, and Wi-Fi capability.

Elected officials and stakeholders said they hope Breeze's new route, the carrier's first in Maryland, will prove a game changer for regional air travel. The sheer popularity of the Maryland-to-Florida route is one reason that Salisbury airport officials decided to partner with Breeze.

But when airport officials learned they'd been losing Orlando-bound travelers to airports in Baltimore, Washington, and Philadelphia, they decided to start operating direct flights to Florida themselves, according to airport director Tony Rudy.

The airport sweetened the deal for Breeze by offering a hedge against early losses, Rudy said, with a \$1 million safety net held in escrow that the airline can dip into, if need be, during its first two years of operation.

That "comprehensive revenue guarantee" was mostly sourced from a \$800,000 grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Another \$217,000 in pledges came from local businesses and government, including \$50,000 each from Worcester and Wicomico counties.

Rudy himself was among the 50 or so passengers taking the inaugural flight from Orlando, touching down in Salisbury just before lunchtime on Oct. 1. The midday Wednesday flight was a one-off, however, as Breeze will be running flights to Orlando on just Mondays and Fridays for now.

Florida fights aren't just for families on a Disney vacation. The route also opens the door to lure new bookings to Ocean City's convention center, and offers more direct access for NASA contractors headed to Wallops Island Flight Facility, according to Melanie Pursel, Worcester County's Director of Tourism and Economic Development.

There were regular folks flying into Salisbury, too, on the inaugural flight.

Wavne Gribble of Salisbury stood outside waiting on the tarmac for his sister Colleen Hendershot to arrive. She makes her home in Winter Haven, Florida, and booked a ticket to Salisbury for a month-long visit.

"She was coming in anyways," he said. "So we said, why don't you just wait until October 1, and fly in on the new airline, Breeze? It's gonna be cheaper and it's a straight flight. No stayovers.

Chris and Mary Layman of Ocean City were headed back to the Shore after a Las Vegas excursion. They'd originally planned to fly through Charlotte - a hub for the Salisbury airport's other regional carrier, Piedmont.



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## Judge denies Mailloux early release request

#### By Bethany Hooper

Associate Editor

(Oct. 16, 2025) Tyler Mailloux, a Berlin man serving 18 months for a traffic offense in the hit-and-run accident that killed 14-year-old Gavin Knupp, was denied parole.

Following a hearing Oct. 2, the Maryland Parole Commission denied Mailloux's request for an early release. Mailloux's eligibility for parole was met after serving six months in the Worcester County Detention Center.

Mailloux, 25, has been incarcerated since Feb. 25, when he entered a guilty plea to a felony count in Knupp's death. As part of a plea deal, the Worcester County State's Attorney's Office agreed it would not prosecute the remaining 16 traffic charges in the case.

In March, a Worcester County Circuit Court judge sentenced Mailloux to 10 years, with all but 18 months suspended, for leaving the scene of a hit-and-run accident that resulted in Knupp's death. Upon release, he will serve three years of supervised probation.

With his request for parole denied last week, Mailloux could spend the remainder of his 18-month sentence in jail, barring any credits that could earn him an earlier release.

#### Administrative case ongoing

In the meantime, a case connected to Mailloux's housing status at the detention center continues to move through the court system.

Earlier this year, Mailloux sought the jail's permission to be moved out of a more confined unit – where he was placed in at his own request - and back into the general population, which his attorney argued will give him an opportunity to earn diminution credits for an earlier release.

When those requests were denied, Mailloux's attorney filed a petition seeking a judicial review of the jail's actions, arguing they were "an abuse of discretion" and a violation of his client's rights as an inmate.

He also alleged Worcester County State's Attorney Kris Heiser had a private conversation with the warden regarding Mailloux's housing status, and that he had been advised he could not share the conversations he had with jail staff with the state's attorney. It was on these allegations that Psoras filed a motion to permit discovery in the case, which a circuit court judge granted earlier this year.

While mandamus cases, like the one filed on Mailloux's behalf, are typically based on the records of administrative proceedings, the court can permit addi-

tional evidence if there's a "strong showing" of fraud or extreme circumstances outside the scope of record.

The county has since appealed the judge's decision, which was dismissed by the Appellate Court of Maryland this summer. A hearing on a motion to dismiss the case in Worcester County Circuit Court is scheduled for Dec. 9.

The county attorney has argued the case should be dismissed, as Mailloux has since been moved to a new housing unit that would allow him to earn diminution credits. He said Mailloux's request for relief has already been granted.

## Collision leads to fugitive's arrest

Matthew

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Further investiga-

as

(Oct. 16, 2025) A fugitive was arrested last week following an accident in Ocean

On Oct. 8, at about 9:50 a.m., officers from the Ocean Pines Police Department responded to a reported motor vehicle collision on the north side of Ocean Parkway just inside the North Gate bridge.

Upon arrival, the officers located a red Ford F150 lying on its driver's side that appeared to have run over the US. Post Office mailbox that was mounted in the median strip.

The officers met with the driver, iden-

tified Crawford, Willards, and determined that he had been driving too fast on the wet roadway and lost control of the truck.

tion of Crawford revealed that he did not have a driver's license and there was also an outstanding warrant for theft from the state of Missouri that was extraditable from the state of Maryland.

Crawford was taken into custody and transported to the Ocean Pines Police Station where he was processed and then taken in front of the District Court Commissioner.

Following that initial appearance, Crawford was detained in the Worcester County Detention Center without bond pending extradition back to Missouri.

Crawford faces charges of speed greater than reasonable, failure to control speed to avoid a collision, driving without a driver's license, and fugitive from the state of Missouri.









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#### PAVER INSTALLED

**Members of Knights of Columbus Assembly** #2454, Council #9053, Ocean City installed a paver at the Worcester **County Veterans Memo**rial at Ocean Pines. The payer is placed to honor all who have served THE country. A joint color guard from Knights of **Columbus Assembly** #2454 and members of **American Legion Post** 166, Ocean City, participated in the ceremony as members of the community and Assembly #2454 honored our veterans.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS/



# **'Keep Berlin Cool' initiative will recognize Joan Maloof**

(Oct. 16, 2025) The "Keep Berlin Cool" tree planting initiative, supported by the Berlin Horticultural Advisory Committee and funded by a grant from Maryland Coastal Bays Program, will plant their first trees in late October.

The campaign aims to enhance urban tree canopy coverage and mitigate stormwater runoff in the town. Plantings will be done on private and public properties, including a church, a business, and eight residences.

The tree planting begins at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 21, when the Mayor and Council will attend the planting of a grove of small bald cypress trees in Stephen Decatur Park. All are welcome to participate in the event.

The trees being planted were grown from the oldest tree in the eastern US – a 2,630-year-old bald cypress living

in the Three Sisters Swamp along the Black River in North Carolina. The importance of these ancient bald cypress trees was recognized by outdoor guide and explorer Charles Robbins, who collected the seeds, grew the trees, and donated them to the Old-Growth Forest Network in honor of its founder, Dr. Joan Maloof. Maloof, who lives in Berlin, donated her special trees to the "Keep Berlin Cool" initiative. The grove will be dedicated to her forest-saving efforts.

On Tuesday, Oct. 28, at noon, a planting of four native trees will take place on the front lawn of the Buckingham Presbyterian Church (20 S. Main Street in Berlin).

The public is welcome to join in planting trees and learning about proper tree planting techniques.

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## **Book festival set for Saturday at Museum**

Salt Water Media partners with Taylor House for third annual event from noon-4

#### **By Tara Fischer**

Staff Writer

(Oct. 16, 2025) Preserving the history of Berlin and sharing the town's stories remain priorities for the Calvin B. Taylor House Museum, with its annual events and exciting new initiatives planned for 2026.

Engaging the public and sharing Berlin's culture is the museum's mission, and they plan to do just that this weekend at the facility's third annual Berlin Book Festival. Scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 18, from noon to 4 p.m., the same time as the town's well-attended Oktoberfest, the fair will feature local publishers, authors, and their books on the house's lawn.

According to Melissa Reid, the Taylor House's president, the museum is partnering for the second time with regional publishing company Salt Water Media to bring an even wider array of fiction and nonfiction stories to the festival. The organization collaborates with local publishing groups. As such, in addition to Salt Water Media having a table set up on the lawn, other vendors will include Secant Publishing

and Byzantium Sky Press.

"[Salt Water Media] has brought a whole different level to the festival for us," Reid said.

Regional bookstores will also be in attendance. These include Ocean City's The Buzzed Word, Berlin's The Greyhound, and Ocean Pines' Caprichos Books. Reid added that Michael Day, the town's former economic and community development director, will be present, selling books on local history and architecture.

As an exciting addition, this year, the museum is partnering with the nonprofit Maryland Humanities for their One Maryland One Book (OMOB) program, Reid said. OMOB is a project that promotes reading and literacy by encouraging individuals across the state to read the same book and come together for discus-

The book selected for the Maryland Humanities initiative this year was "Kin: Rooted in Hope" by Carole Boston Weatherford with art by Carole's son, Jeffery Boston Weatherford. As described on the publisher's website, Simon and Schuster, the work is "an imaginative and moving portrait of a Black family tree shaped by enslavement and freedom, rendered in searing poems."

Reid noted that the Taylor House's



An example of the marketing materials being used by the Calvin B. Taylor House Museum for this weekend's event is pictured. SUBMITTED PHOTO/

partnership with Maryland Humanities OMOB program is fitting, as 2025's selected author, Weatherford, has connections to the Town of Berlin. In 2020, the writer, with Simon and Schuster, released a children's story, "By and By," about Charles Albert Tindley, known as the 'father of gospel music,' who was born in Berlin in the 1850s.

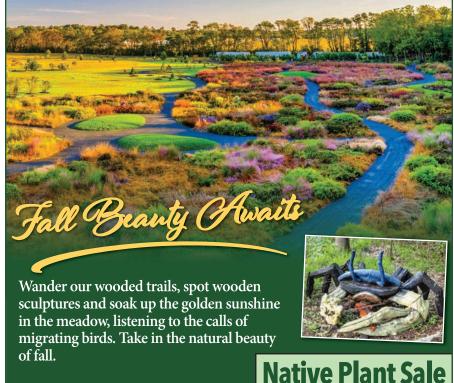
Reid added that Weatherford spoke to students at Buckingham Elementary School around five years ago on "what it's like to be an author and what she knew about Reverend Tindley." Weatherford will also be at this weekend's Berlin Book Festival, where she will be doing a reading and

The Taylor House resident noted that the museum was given 60 copies of "Kin," which they plan to use as an incentive to individuals to share oral histories about Berlin. For anyone who would like to offer a brief account of the town, whether that be the perspective of a young visitor or a resident who was around for the revitalization efforts in the 1970s, they can head to a designated table, tell their tales to a camera, and will be given a free copy of the OMOB book in return. The tapes will be stored as part of the museum's oral history collection.

'You don't have to have lived in Berlin, you can just be visiting Berlin and tell a story about what it's like to walk down Main Street," Reid said. "...We're really excited about that. It could be five to 10 minutes or shorter. We're really hoping for people of all ages. A lot of our oral histories are from older people, but we're trying to do a greater push to get younger people's impressions of Berlin.'

For the second year, the Berlin Book Award will be given out. Local publishers have submitted works in categories like adult fiction, adult nonfiction, young adult fiction, and young adult nonfiction. The Taylor House president said that authors and book sellers from throughout the area are currently reading these stories and will decide the winners.

In addition to the books at the See BERLIN Page 15



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Thursday, October 23, 5 PM **Purchase Tickets on Website** 



## **Berlin Book Awards part of event**

Continued from Page 14

Berlin Book Festival, residents can expect some treats and tea vendors. Reid added that wine will also be for sale.

Just like the annual bookish event's spirit of town culture, the local museum is gearing up for a new 2026 exhibit and festivity lineup that will reorient the facility as a hotspot for Berlin history.

Next year will mark America's 250th birthday. To get in on the action, the Taylor House will delve into the creation of one of the country's "coolest small towns" and the restoration efforts that transformed Berlin from dreary and weathered to thriving and welcoming.

Part of that effort will include the installation of a new exhibit in the facility's upstairs gallery space. Viewable at the display will be photographs and quotes from past and present town residents and officials.

"Berlin in the 1970s looks nothing like Berlin now," Reid said. "People don't really see that ... so we have some great photographs and quotes from people that we're putting together so that people understand how the community came together to restore Berlin to what it looks like now."

Gee Williams, the former mayor who was in office when Berlin was named "America's Coolest Small Town" in 2014 by the magazine Budget Travel, will have quotes in the planned installation. Reid said that many notable lines from his

book, "Turn Your Town Around," which was published in 2022, will be show-cased.

"[Williams] has been instrumental in gathering the stories of what happened and how to make Berlin successful," Reid said. "His book has some great quotes."

Additional quotes will include those by Ed Hammond, who Reid said, "was one of the first people in the late 1970s who recognized the importance of the intact historic exteriors that we had that were just being covered over."

"There are some quotes from him, talking about what Berlin was like when he was a kid, and then talking about really the importance of the restoration of the town," she continued.

Quotes from a privately published book about the refurbishment of Berlin's iconic Atlantic Hotel are also planned for the 2026 exhibit.

That brand-new installation is set to open on April 1. An official kickoff event is scheduled for April 3, which will be called Museum Comes Alive. More information will become available as the project gets closer.

"We're trying to put up some exhibits that people will be interested in, both people that live here and those that visit," Reid said. "I think a lot of people who live here who have moved here even in the last 30 years haven't really seen what the town looked like in the 1970s. It's pretty dramatic, the difference."

# **Two locations will host Wild, Scenic Film Festival**

(Oct. 16, 2025) For the 15th consecutive year, Assateague Coastal Trust, Inc. (ACT) and the Assateague COASTKEEPER will bring the internationally recognized Wild & Scenic Film Festival (WSFF) to the Eastern Shore.

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival tour showcases thought-provoking, visually stunning short films that celebrate the beauty of our planet while addressing the critical environmental challenges it faces. Each year, this festival inspires audiences toward environmental action, awareness, and a deeper love for the natural world through the power of storytelling and film.

This year's program will feature 12 short films, including Surf and Turf, which explores the deep connection between land and water within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The film takes viewers on a journey from the mountain headwaters to the wide, salty expanse of the Bay, weaving a powerful narrative of nature's resilience, hope, and collaboration between seemingly different worlds united for a shared cause.

ACT is thrilled to host the fes-

tival at two exciting locations this year for the first time:

Salisbury University: Wednesday, Oct. 29

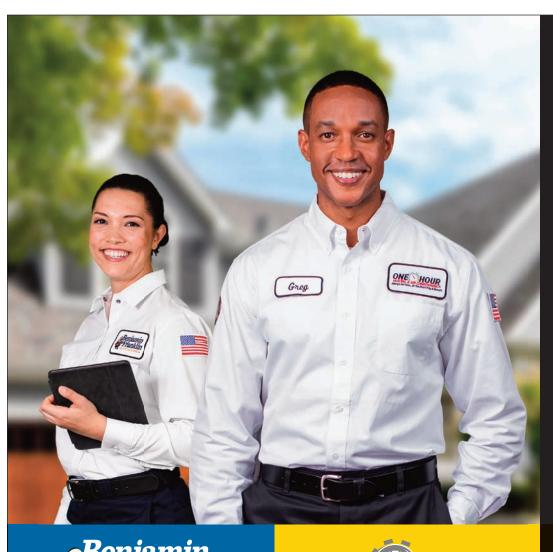
Seacrets, Morley Hall, Ocean City: Thursday, Nov. 6

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. for both events, giving guests the opportunity to browse an exciting selection of raffle items, silent and live auctions, and enjoy delicious food and drink specials before the films begin. The film screening takes place from 7-9 p.m.

"This festival is a natural extension of Assateague Coastal Trust's mission to inspire people to act on behalf of the environment," said Executive Director and Assateague COASTKEEPER Taylor Swanson. "Through film, we can connect audiences emotionally to the work we do every day to protect clean water, wildlife, and the unique beauty of our coastal region."

Tickets are \$30, per person or purchase a bundle of four for \$100

For tickets and more information, visit www.actforbays.org/wsff.







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## **Snapshots**



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

#### ROTARY CLUB DINE AND DONATE

Don's Seafood & Chophouse sponsored a Dine & Donate with the proceeds going to the Ocean City Berlin Rotary Club. Pictured, from left, are Gina Shaffer, past president; Tom Sweeney, president-elect; Margaret Mudron, co-president and treasurer; Brandy Castaneda, Don's general manager; and Cluff Berg, co-president. The club meets the first and third Wednesday of the month, at 6 p.m. at Don's.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

#### **OP LIBRARY FEATURED ARTIST**

Sherry Gamble, Ocean Pines resident, former owner of The Enchanted Tea Room in Berlin and talented multimedia artist, will have her works on display at the Ocean Pines Library thru October. She has spent over 50 years combing thrift and collectible stores searching for unusual items she combines to create eccentric, humorous assemblages. Children of all ages enjoy finding Peacock Barbie transformed to a Las Vegas Showgirl, the old lady's 16 cats hiding and others.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETT

#### **KIWANIS GAVEL PASS**

On Oct. 3, the Kiwanis Club of Greater Ocean Pines-Ocean City held its annual Installation Dinner. Outgoing President Tom Southwell was thanked by the lieutenant governor before turning over the gavel, pictured, to new President Sarah Walker.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

#### **ANGLERS CLUB SPEAKERS**

Executive Officer Lino Cressotti, left, and Fred Stiehl, Commander Ocean City Power Squadron, receive a welcome from Ocean Pines Anglers Club Moderator Frank Fiori Jr. at October's meeting. They spoke on the Power Squadron's mission, boater safety, vessel inspection and community service.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

#### **DUFFIE BOATWORKS TOUR**

On Tuesday, October 7, a group of Upper School students from Worcester Prep visited Duffie Boatworks in West Ocean City as part of the WORX (Work, Observe, Research, Experience) program. The WORX program aims to introduce students to a wide range of opportunities within our community and beyond. By integrating academic preparation with real-world experiences, the program enhances learning and provides valuable career exposure. Key elements of the WORX program include a speaker series, site visits to local businesses, and opportunities to shadow professionals across various industries. During their visit, students gained a comprehensive understanding of the boat-building industry, from carpentry and interior design to mechanical and electrical systems and everything in between. Pictured, front from left, are WPS Athletic Trainer Drew Oxenrieder, Duffie Boatworks President and Owner Jon Duffie and students John Lynch, Gavin Sutherland, Justin McGovern, Luke Pitarra, Gavin Mann, Karrigan Russell-Wood, Chase Burbage, Blake Curdie, Michael Hall, Luke Mize, Beau Brittingham and Max Lev.





#### PARSONS ASSISTED LIVING HOSTS BENEFIT

The competition was spicy, and the cause was heartfelt as senior living communities in the local area came together for a "Chili Cookoff For A Cure" supporting the Alzheimer's Association. After an evening filled with flavor and friendly competition, Bay Harbor Post Acute was crowned "Best Chili Champion" for their crowd-pleasing recipe. The event was hosted by John B. Parsons Assisted Living and participants included Bay Harbor Post Acute, Commonwealth Senior Living and Delmar Nursing & Rehabilitation. The event brought together residents, staff, and community members to sample, judge, and celebrate a variety of homemade chili creations. The event raised over \$500 for the Alzheimer's Association, helping raise awareness and support for families affected by Alheimer's disease.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WORCESTER COUNTY

#### CHARLIE KIRK DAY PROCLAIMED

A group of students from Stephen Decatur High School were recognized last Tuesday by the Worcester County Commissioners for launching a new chapter of Turning Point USA.

Commissioner Caryn Abbott (District 1, Southern) read aloud a commissioners' proclamation recognizing the students, as well as marking Sept. 10 as Charlie Kirk Day in honor of the slain political commentator and free speech advocate who was the founder of Turning Point.

SDHS junior Wyatt Amsel, who accepted the recognition on behalf of his classmates, said the student group hopes to encourage students to voice their opinions and talk to people.

"We just want to honor Charlie," said Amsel, 16, of West Ocean City. "The things he said about living your life for God, living your life for yourself and having your own opinions and being able to fend for yourself really got to me. It made me want to be better, and so we want to push people to be themselves, to get out there."

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\*\*SEASON STARTS\*\* NOVEMBER 10TH, 2025

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ADVANCED: 7:00-8:30PM ( 2 OR MORE YEARS EXPERIENCE)

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# **Opinion**

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

# Housing crisis really? Well, that's a surprise

No one really needed a \$49,900, 127-page study to advise officials and residents of Worcester County that this area is experiencing a housing affordability crisis.

While such an undertaking does provide a factual underpinning of such an assertion, the survey conducted by Matrix Design Group at the state's expense via a grant merely confirms what most people already knew: the gap between personal income and home sale prices grows ever wider.

In July 2024, RisMedia, publishers of Real Estate Magazine, reported that representatives of the National League of Cities, the American Planning Association and the National Association of Realtors had been meeting to determine what might be done to help the public and private sectors meet residents' housing needs.

The result was Housing Supply Accelerator Playbook, a compendium of many steps that could be taken if a community, or government, was inclined to get serious about the situation and work toward alleviating at least some of the problem.

To be sure, there isn't much government can do about raising wages for the under-employed, or at least those who wish to remain here even though job opportunities are limited. It also can't do much to limit the sale of affordable properties to people who live here and barely have enough money to cover the monthly, as they say.

But it can get creative with zoning and other regulations, it can reduce the upfront costs the small developer must pay before even breaking ground, and it can experiment with financial arrangements.

Here's what the Playbook says: "The playbook does not offer stand-alone solutions to the nation's housing crisis. Rather, it offers a way forward for communities to address their pressing housing supply needs as identified by leaders and stakeholders in the communities themselves."

And here's the thing: It's free and can be downloaded at //realtorparty.realtor/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Sup-ply-Accelerator-Playbookv2.pdf

## BAYSIDE W GAZETTE

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

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SUBMITTED PHOTOS/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

**GOLF TOURNEY FUN** 

Participants are pictured participating in the annual Pink Lady Golf Tournament fundraiser.

## **Golf tourney supports local hospital**

Annual Pink Lady event names division and contest winners

(Oct. 16, 2025) Despite rainy conditions, last Wednesday's annual Pink Lady Golf Tournament was a huge success, the Ocean Pines Association reports.

The event is hosted by the Ocean Pines Ladies Golf Association (OPLGA) and supports the AGH Foundation, which helps pay for and provide mammograms for local women who are unable to afford these services.

The winners of the tournament are as follows:

Ladies Teams: first place, Donna McElroy, Helen Johnson, Lara Spaid and Sherrie Clifford; second place, Donna Kelly, Lisa McNamara, Catie Sostak and Bev Brannon; and third place, Stacie Swanstrom, Roberta Bragunier, Sandy Mattes and Angie Dixon.

Men's Teams: first place, Omar Kassem, George Nairn, Doug Bragunier and Billy Bridgett; second place, PJ Welch, Paul Fohner, Scott Bartholomew and Doug Delwater; and third place, Steve Kelly, Mickey Lobb, Don Brannon and Shannon McNamara.

Mixed Teams: first place, Patty Curtin, Art Henshaw, Terri Stuiber and Darin Stuiber; second place, Carolyn Neal, Steve Neal, Mike Neal and Daniel Neal; and third place, Gina Morris, Kristen Jenkins, Danielle Shaw and Frank Ruggiere.

Closest to the Pin for Ladies: No. 5 – Geri Fasulo, No. 13 – Tracy Jones

Closest to the Pin for Men: No. 7 – Bill Bridgett, No. 16 – Frank Sallese

**Closest to the Line for** 

**Ladies:** No. 4 – Patty Curtin, No. 10 – Bev Brannon

Closest to the Line for Men: No. 4 – Carl Hedde, No. 10 – Don Bramer

Terri Stuiber and Sonny Cocholla won the putting contest, and Colette Horn was the winner of the 50/50.

OPLGA thanks Gold Sponsors Stace Swanstrom, Summit Exteriors, LLC, and Bloomfield Foundation. Many local businesses also provided gift cards and baskets that were auctioned off to support charity.

Additionally, "Sunny Dawn," aka Gina Nairn, not only provided amazing entertainment at the event, but donated her \$525 in tip money to the charity.

OPLGA additionally thanks their committee, Pro Shop, Starters, and Clubhouse staff for their continued support of the league.

## County housing study confirms major issues

Continued from Page 1

More than half (53%) of renters are said to be "cost burdened" – spending a third or more of income on rent. One in four are "severely" burdened, spending at least half. Another 41% of respondents reported having to cut back on food, medicine, or basic goods to afford housing.

When asked to name their top concerns, those surveyed cited unaffordable rents and the inability for a young person to afford a home as their two biggest concerns, with the cost of utility services falling closely behind. Vacancies have all but vanished, the report also says.

While rental vacancy rates fell from 20% in 2018 to 11% in 2023, today, rental availability is "near zero" in most areas. That means year-round residents, mostly younger families and workers, are competing for a fraction of the total housing stock.

That's compounded by Worcester County's immediate shortage of about 1,500 single-family homes and 550 rentals. To keep pace with expected growth, the county will need another 2,200 units in the next 25 years, the report warns.

It also warns that the housing pipeline is too narrow: 95% of all new homes built in 2024 were single-family homes, not apartments or mixed-income projects.

It also concludes that the county's year-round housing supply is really about half the size it appears on paper, especially for Ocean City, where year-round properties for seasonal workers appear in census data as vacant and for rent.

Short-term rentals, or STRs, are also a growing concern. Concentrated mainly in and around Ocean City, they "reduce housing availability, ultimately driving up housing prices and making it harder for residents to find affordable homes," the report says. It recommends minimum stay requirements, strict compliance on noise and occupancy standards, and dedicating STR revenue to affordable housing initiatives.

The issue is Ocean City's latest political hot potato. In July, resort voters narrowly rejected a proposal to impose a five-night minimum stay, 834-800.

While some areas like Pocomoke City remain comparatively affordable, countywide home values continue to surge, the report also says.

The average single-family home in Worcester County is valued at \$428,000, up sharply from pre-pandemic levels, requiring an income of \$140,000 annually. The study says middle-class buyers, especially in service and tourism jobs, "remain at risk of being priced out" of the market.

At the same time, it also says the overall housing market is seizing up as elevated interest rates are discouraging homeowners from listing or selling.

Income disparities reflect deep divides within the county. Berlin homeowners typically earned \$115,347, while median renter incomes in Snow Hill, Pocomoke City, and Berlin were all below \$37,000.

Ocean Pines was the lone community where renter incomes (\$64,100) approached those of homeowners (\$95,230), a difference attributed to a more affluent, retirement-oriented population.

The public will get a chance to comment on the report during a Nov. 4 hearing before the County Commissioners. The study cost \$49,900 and was funded through a state housing grant, according to Public Information Officer Kim Moses

## Grant to help replace breathing equipment

Continued from Page 1

plied for the same FEMA grant in 2023, but was ultimately not chosen to receive the funding. However, this time around, due to the efforts of the OPVFD Board of Directors, firefighter leadership, and the grant writers, including Jason Faryniak of the Pennsylvania-based FireMed Grant Solutions, LLC, the Ocean Pines first responders secured the money required to replace their aging breathing equipment.

The new SCBA units will go into service in late 2025 or early 2026. The devices must first be procured, and then the firefighters will undergo utilization training.

The updated technology is just one way that the OPVFD continues to prioritize the safety of its team and the community it serves. Currently, the department is gearing up for the construction of a new fire station at 911 Ocean Parkway. Crews are expected to break ground in winter of 2026.

The upgraded facility will replace a deteriorating building. The original South Station Fire House was built in 1981. Since 1987, only minor improvements have been made to the structure, and as such, it is no longer adequate to house modern

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firefighter equipment and personnel.

For instance, mold, leaks, and drainage issues are present in the current fire station, vital amenities like a proper decontamination station are missing, and the bunk rooms and engine bay doors can no longer meet the demands of the department and its apparatuses.

Once shovels go into the ground, the actual construction of the brand-new facility is expected to take about 65 weeks.

In addition to grant funding, the OPVFD is always looking for ways to secure the necessary finances to maintain an up-to-date department, equipped with essential firefighting hardware. An

upcoming fundraising opportunity includes a Dine 2 Donate event at Abi's Diner on Wednesday, Oct. 22 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Supporters can head to the restaurant, order dine in or carry out, and mention the OPVFD, for a portion of the sale to be donated to the emergency organization.



22

70

75

## **Puzzles**

#### **ALL TOO WISE** BY JOHN KUGELMAN / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

John Kugelman, of Gainesville, Va., is a software engineer specializing in cybersecurity. This is his 14th crossword for The Times since 2023. One of the things I like about John's puzzles is the time and effort he puts into his clues. They're lively, varied, carefully worded, sometimes playful and always on target. Some of my favorites here are 43A, 51A (interesting fact), 112A and 39D. — W.S.

- 1 Classic target of a troll
- 10 Prized steed
- 14 Little hellions
- 18 Hard to understand
- 20 Latvian capital
- 21 Kindle competitor
- 22 Sailor who drinks only
- the finest grog? 24 Knockoff version of a
- sweet treat? 26 ID on a credit check
- 27 End-of-level showdown
- human events ..." 29 "When in the
- 30 Bridges 32 Vote for
- 33 Paint carelessly
- 34 Alternative to kale
- 35 Projectionist's item 75 Bewildered
- 38 "If you ask me nicely
- 42 Game with players
- known as "shooters" **43** Convenient spot for α
- cat nap? 45 Singer Rita
- 46 Official hand gesture of Hawaii
- 47 "Darn it!"
- 48 1950s political
- nickname
- 51 The 4,765-year-old "Methuselah" is one
- 52 Zilch

49 Wild

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

- 53 Prominent feature of 102 "How sad. You dubstep music
- 55 Wrap up tight
- 56 Press coverage
- 57 Scorching
- 59 Agent's good news
- 60 Cryptographers' needs
- 62 Suitable for the middle-aged?
- 65 "Oh, dear!"
- 66 Flies the coop
- 68 Pain-relieving drug 69 The Chiffons' "
- So Fine'
- 70 Knitted cap
- 71 Pop icon with a Best Actress award
- 73 Huff and puff?
- 74 "Look what I did!"
- 76 Polynesian staple
- 77 Twisted do
- 78 Global currency market, for short
- 79 Martial artist Bruce
- 80 Suspicious absence from school?
- 84 Taps on the snoot 85 Places
- 87 Snuggle
- 88 Stooge who said "Soitenly!"
- 89 Poses
- 91 "What's up,
- 92 Wise guys
- 93 Crudely built shack 96 Purple fruit with a
- distinctive inner
- 99 Barista or barrister

- actually think you can win," e.g.?
- 104 A locksmith getting stuck in bedroom handcuffs, say?
- 107 Present opener?
- 109 Something parents may try to limit for their kids
- 110 See 95-Down
- 111 Creole staple
- 112 In which actors barely go through the motions?

#### DOWN

- 1 Surreptitiously loops in, for short
- 2 Troubles
- 3 Low-fat
- \_\_ Américas
- 5 Many, many mos.
- 6 Venues like New York City's Stonewall Inn
- 7 Donny or Marie
- 8 Stockpile 9 Light rebukes
- 10 "For crying out loud!" 11 Hoot
- 12 Before
- 13 Referee's mistake
- 14 Nighttime demons
- 15 "Wuthering Heights" setting
- 16 Is visually striking
- 17 Portree is the capital of this isle
- 23 Triangular sign
- 19 Death-

- 25 Whom Uncle Sam wants for the U.S. Army
- 28 Like wild meat. sometimes
- 30 Manage to lose, as a tail
- 108 Unlike a cover: Abbr. 31 He was a "rollin" stone," in a Motown classic
  - 33 Proofreader's mark
  - 34 Actor Affleck when he
  - needs a nap? 35 Some nonlicensed
  - tributes 36 Sluggers' stats
  - 37 Startled cries
  - 39 Half-woman, half-bird, all attitude?
  - 40 "Eureka!" shouter
  - 41 Benny Hill theme song
  - 42 Oolong or lapsang souchong
  - 43 Actor Bill of "Barry" 44 Twists side to side
  - 46 Hybrid sport played with a trampolinelike net
  - 47 Swiss locale of the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum
  - 50 Old-fashioned term of address
  - 52 Gratis
  - 53 Garden shelter
  - 54 Discovery of chemist John Dalton
  - 55' 'You're cramping my
  - 58 Evil alter ego of literature
- 59 Waffle House alternatives
- 61 Sound

107

110

- 63 Not follow suit, in bridge
- 64 Frequent on-screen partner of Hepburn
- "La Vie en Rose" singer
- 71 Sports journalist Linda

screwdrivers

- 72 " \_, Silver!" 74 Gimlets and
- 76 Ad Council spots, for short 77 Some memes of the
- 2000s 78 Driver's warning
- 81 Disgusting, in
- totspeak 82 TV journalist Kotb
- 83 What wavy lines in comic strips
- represent 84 "I can't believe what I'm seeing!" facial reaction
- 86 Became real, as bad 88 Southwestern
- culinary fusion 90 Pigpen
- 92 Extra
- 93 Macbeth or Macduff
- 94 Bygone iPhone button 95 Common 110-Across
- stressor 96 Move around and around
- 97 Rapper with a felinesounding name 98 Chest muscles, for
- short 99 Knit
- 100 "This round's \_
- 101 Effortless ways to
- 103 Vex
- 105 Close of business?
- 106 66, for example: Abbr.

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## su|do|ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

**HARD - 64** 

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.

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

#### **Answers to last** week's puzzles

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

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October 16, 2025 Bayside Gazette Page 21

## **Obituaries**

#### ROBERT ALAN MILLER

Ocean City

Robert Alan Miller, affectionately known to his family and friends as Bobby/Bob, passed away October 9, 2025.

He was 75 years old.



**Robert Miller** 

Bobby was the baby of the family who always made us laugh. He embraced life with joy and enthusiasm. Baltimore native, Bobby was known for his radiant smile and warm, lively greetings

that brightened any room.

Bobby graduated from Edmondson
High School in Baltimore where he was
a member of the swim team. After attending West Virginia University Bobby
moved to his beloved beach at Ocean
City where he was a true "beach boy" operating a beach chair and umbrella
rental concession.

He later became a partner on The Original Jackson, a red crab fishing boat, and eventually obtained his realtor's license. Bobby loved to cook, preparing many great dishes while enjoying the beautiful view from his flat on Isle of Wight

Bay. He loved his pets, his dog Hogan, cats Lucky and Micah, nurturing his plants and enjoying sunsets and full moons over the bay.

Bobby is preceded in death by his parents, John and Frances Miller and

survived by his brother John and sister Janet (Arthur) Howard and several nieces and nephews. Following cremation, a service will be held in the spring.

Visit www.boundsfuneralhome.com to share stories and memories with the family.

#### MARIE ELAINE VASILIOU

Berlin

Marie Elaine Vasiliou, age 83, passed away peacefully on Thursday, October 9, 2025, in Berlin.

Born on February 4,1942, in Clarksburg, West Virginia, she is survived by



**Marie Vasiliou** 

her husband, Anthony Earnest Vasiliou, son, Christopher Anthony Vasiliou, daughter in law Sarah Anne Candeloro, grandson, Andrew C. Duley and fiancé, River Riley Schneeman, granddaughter Sarah Gabrielle

Wasem, husband Kyle Wasem, and great grandchildren Nikolai, Dominik, and Issac Wasem, sister, Kay Ann Bowen, brother-in-law, Rodger Bowen, and sister, Carmon Anita Kulp.

Proceeded in death by her father, Carmen Rocco Bellotte, mother, Lena Insani-Bellotte, son Jason Earnest Vasiliou, and brother John Enrico Bellotte.

Marie is known by her family and friends as Elaine. Aloving wife of 60 years,

she wed Tony on March 17, 1965. They started a family and career in Wheeling, West Virginia. After many years of success in the hair salon and hospitality business, they moved to Ocean City, Maryland in the summer of 1985. Elaine and Tony found their second family at St. George Greek Orthodox Church. Where they served many roles in the church community over the years. Elaine's faith brought her guidance and comfort throughout her life. Described by those who know her as loving, funny, dedicated, and a no-nonsense approach to life. Elaine was dedicated to her work. She found great success as the E.R. registration manager at Atlantic General Hospital in Berlin, for over 25 years. Her dedication, leadership, and love for her staff are still felt after many years of retirement. After retirement Elaine dedicated her life to her husband and family and was also instrumental in the success of Seagull Disposal. Assisting her son and grandson in the daily operations of the business.

Elaine's love will always be cherished and never forgotten. Mom, we love and miss you. May you find eternal peace.

A Trisagion and Funeral Service will be held on Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 11 a.m., at St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Ocean City, Maryland. A public visitation will take place from 10 to 11 a.m. Interment will follow at Garden of the Pines Cemetery in Ocean Pines, Maryland. Letters of condolence can be sent to the family via www.burbagefuneralhome.com. Arrangements are in the care of The Burbage Funeral Home.

## **OP leaf collections announced**

(Oct. 16, 2025) Republic Services will be offering six curbside leaf collection days for community members during the months of November and December.

These events are free of charge and aim to help promote environmentally friendly disposal of seasonal leaf debris. This is in addition to the weekly pick up of yard debris by Republic Services.

Leaf collection days are scheduled as follows:

Nov. 8: Collection on the Northside Nov. 15: Collection on the Southside Nov. 22: Collection on the Northside Dec. 6: Collection on the Southside

**Dec. 12:** Collection on the Northside **Dec. 20:** Collection on the Southside

Leaves should be placed in paper bags weighing less than 35 pounds. No plastic bags please.

Ocean Pines Public Works will also be offering additional leaf collection dates. More information to follow.

#### **OPEN HOUSES** 金金金金金 Oct. 16 - 23 **STYLE PRICE** DAY/TIME **ADDRESS BR/BA** AGENT/AGENCY 1BR/2BR/3BR/4BR+ Fri-Mon 11am-4pm Heron Harbour, 120th St., Bayside Condos, Towns & SF Nanette Pavier/Holiday Real Estate 2BR/2BA Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm 12430 Old Bridge Rd., West OC Single Family from from \$284,750 Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community Friday 1:30-3:30pm 105 123rd Street #332B2, Ocean City 1BR/1BA Condo \$264,900 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty Saturday 10am-Noon 703 Loop Road, Ocean City 4BR/3BA Single Family \$1,199,900 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty 3BR/2BA Single Family \$369,900 Nikki Rose/Keller Williams Realty Saturday 10am-Noon 39 Seafarer Lane, Ocean Pines Saturday 11am-1pm 11900 Coastal Hwy. Unit 102, Ocean City 3BR/3BA Condo \$679,900 Katy Durham& Rick Meehan/Coldwell Banker Realty 1BR/1.5BA \$310,000 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty Saturday 11am-1pm 616 Salt Spray Rd #6, Ocean City Townhome Saturday 11am-2pm 11204 Coastal Hwy #3C HPS, Ocean City 2 BR/2 BA Condo \$674,900 Tim Meadowcroft/Long & Foster Real Estate 9500 Coastal Hwy Unit 1J, Ocean City 1BR/1.5BA \$395,000 Kevin Heselbach/Engel & Völkers Real Estate Saturday 11am-2pm Condo 2BR/2BA Sat & Sun 11am-3pm 12430 Old Bridge Rd, West OC Single Family from \$284,750 Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community 3BR/2BA Saturday Noon-2pm 13500 Coastal Hwy Unit 403, Ocean City Condo \$539,000 Kim McGuigan/Shore Results Realty Saturday 12:30-2:30pm 103 125th Street #208, Ocean City 3BR/2BA Condo \$469,000 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty Saturday 3-5pm 6305 Atlantic Ave #301, Ocean City 3BR/3.5BA Condo \$1,550,000 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty 745 Mooring Road Unit 202, Ocean City 2BR/2BA \$399,990 Katie Landon/Coldwell Banker Realty Sunday Noon-2pm Condo Gregg Holland/Coldwell Banker Realty Sunday Noon-2:30pm 105 Davis Court, Berlin 4BR/2.5BA Single Family \$624,900

# 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. 16

#### STORY TIME: ROOM ON THE BROOM

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, Berlin. 410-208-4014. 10:30 a.m.-11:59 p.m., Can a dog, a cat, a frog and a bird fit on a broom? With a little teamwork, they try to manage. For ages 2-5 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org.

#### STORY TIME; I AM WRIGGLY

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., Snow Hill. 410-632-3495. 10:30 a.m.-11:59 p.m., Stories, songs and rhymes. For ages 2-5 years. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org.

#### **OC CHESS CLUB**

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, Ocean City. 410-524-1818. 10:30 a.m.-11:59 p.m., Enjoy a relaxing game of chess every Thursday at the library. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org.

#### **CHAIR YOGA**

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., Pocomoke City. 410-957-0878. 2-11:59 p.m., This is an all-levels chair yoga program. Handouts with poses and stretches you can do at home will be provided. Registration required: 410-957-0878. www.worcesterlibrary.org.

#### **MUSIC LEGENDS MOVIE**

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, Berlin. 410-208-4014. 2-11:59 p.m., This film examines Bob Marley's departure from this homeland of Jamaica and his poignant return. Rated PG-13. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org.

#### **SILENT BOOK CLUB**

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, Ocean City. 410-524-1818. 3-11:59 p.m., Bring your current read or borrow one of the suggestions. First 50 minutes will be spent silently reading, the last 10 minutes can be used to mingle and discuss your read. 410-524-1818.

#### HAPPY HOUR COLORING CLUB

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., Snow Hill. 410-632-3495. 4-6 p.m., Join in for " Happy Hour" and enjoy light refreshments while exploring new coloring trends in a relaxing atmosphere. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org.

#### **LEGO MASTERS CHALLENGE**

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, Berlin. 410-208-4014. 4:30-11:59 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.

#### Fri. Oct. 17

#### **OC MAHJONG CLUB**

Oct 17 — Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, Ocean City. 410-524-1818. 10:30 a.m.-11:59 p.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.

#### **DISCOVERY DEN AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM**

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., Snow Hill. 410-632-3495. 3:30-4:30 p.m., Come enjoy a new topic every week. Week 3: STEAM Lab. Best of elementary and middle school students, but all are welcome. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org.

#### **FAMILY BEACH BONFIRE**

Ocean City Beach at 130th Street, 130th Street, Ocean City. 410-250-0125. 6-8 p.m., Smores, hot chocolate and water are included. Cost is \$3 for youth, \$5 for adults over 18 years with \$15 maximum per family. Pre-registration is encouraged. 410-250-0125.

#### **5TH ANNUAL 2025 TRAIL OF HORRORS**

White Horse Park Boat Ramp Trail, Ocean Pines. 410-641-7052. 7-10 p.m., Cost is \$8. (Actors and volunteers needed: Debbie Donahue, 410-641-7052, ddonahue@oceanpines.org) https://www.oceanpines.org.

#### FRIED FLOUNDER DINNER

4:30 p.m. Fried flounder dinner, green beans, Mac and Cheese, cornbread, dessert and beverage. Carryouts available. Cost, \$10. 410-208-8943.

#### **FAMILY BEACH BONFIRE**

130th Street, Ocean City, 6-8 p.m. S'-mores, hot chocolate and water included. Cost: \$3, youth; \$5, adults over 18 with \$15 max per family. Pre-registration required. 410-250-0125.

### Sat., Oct. 18

## 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

#### **LAST BBQ OF SEASON**

St. Paul United Methodist Church, Flower Street, Berlin. 11 a.m.-until sold out. Half BBQ chicken, roll and drink, \$12; Half BBQ chicken platter, two sides, roll and drink, \$15. Proceeds benefit men's ministry.

#### **OYSTER FRITTER SANDWICHES**

American Legion Post 123, Berlin, 2 p.m.until sold out. Cost is \$10 for dinein or carryout.

#### **OKTOBERFEST, FALL SIDEWALK SALE**

11 a.m.-4 p.m., downtown Berlin. Free to attend, two stages, food, beer, kids activities and downtown fall sidwalk sale.

Beer tickets, limited edition beer mugs online at berlinmaintstreet.com

#### **BERLIN BOOK FESTIVAL**

Noon-4 p.m., Taylor House Museum. Held during Oktoberfest, meet local publishers and the authors they represent as you browse book-inspired gifts and a glass of wine on the museum lawn.

#### COASTAL HOSPICE | COASTAL WALK & 5K RUN

Assateague State Park, 6915 Maryland 611, Berlin. 4107428732 515. 8 a.m.-noon, Tickets \$30. Arrive at 8 a.m. for registration, refreshments and music with a 9 a.m. start. Cost \$30. Benefiting the Macky & Dame Stansell House of Coastal Hospice.

www.coastalhospice.org/coastal-walk-run/.

#### HALLOWEEN-THEMED TIE DYE WORKSHOP

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, Ocean Pines. 410-641-7052. 1-2 p.m., Learn how to tie dye. Cost is \$10. Participants must bring their own pre-washed white T-shirt. All ages welcome. Registration: 410-641-7052.

#### 2ND ANNUAL CIGARFEST BENEFITING DIAKONIA

Oct 18 — Beach Bum W.-O, 12308 Old Bridge Road, Ocean City. 410-251-5914. 3-8 p.m., Bourbon, barbecue and cigars. Great food, many vendors, great giveaways including a drawing for 2 tickets to Florida to see J.C. Newman Cigar Co. Cost is \$100. Tickets: www.occigarfest.com.

#### **5TH ANNUAL 2025 TRAIL OF HORRORS**

White Horse Park Boat Ramp Trail, Ocean Pines. 410-641-7052. 7-10 p.m., Cost is \$8. (Actors and volunteers needed: Debbie Donahue, 410-641-7052, ddonahue@oceanpines.org) https://www.oceanpines.org.

#### **NO KINGS RALLY**

Ocean City Boardwalk rally, noon. Hosted by Indivisible, a non-partisan, non-violent group organizing peaceful protests. Indivisible Co-founder Ezra Levin planning nationwide protest to protect First Amendment rights. Local rally will begin on the Boardwalk at the tram station at noon. Marching to the firefighter's memorial. indivisibleworcestermd.org

#### **CHURCH RUMMAGE SALE**

Ocean City Presbyterian Church, 13th Street, 7 a.m.-1 p.m.

### Sun., Oct. 19

#### FRIED CHICKEN CARRYOUT

Bishopville Volunteer Fire Department, 1-4 p.m. Half chicken, ham, string beans, cole slaw, potato salad, roll and dessert. \$20. Baked goods available. Preorder, 443-880-4944.

#### **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. 20

#### **LOCALS WEEK - STATION 4 TOUR**

Ocean City Life-Saving Museum, 813 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City. 10 a.m.-11:59 p.m., Go on an exploration of the United States Life Saving Service by learning about the Storm Warriors and history of the Station. Free admission for Delmarva locals to both museums (Oct. 20-26).

#### FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP MEETING, TALK

Worcester County Library, Ocean Pines branch. Friends of the Ocean Pines Library invites members at 9:30 a.m. for a social followed by an open membership meeting at 10 a.m. Public welcome to join at 11 a.m. for some baseball talk and special guests. 410-208-4014.

#### STORY TIME: GHOSTS

Worcester Library, Ocean City branch. 10:30 a.m. Crafts, songs and stories for ages 5 and under. 410-524-1818.

#### T.O.P.S. OF BERLIN - GROUP #169

Mondays - Atlantic General Hospital,

## **Calendar**

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 5 oplus 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

#### Tues., Oct. 21

#### **LOCALS WEEK - CREATURES UP CLOSE**

Ocean City Life-Saving Museum, 813 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City. 10 a.m.-11:59 p.m., Learn about native aquatic wildlife while the aquarium fish are fed. Take a look at the museum's Commercial and Sport Fishing exhibit. Free admission for Delmarva locals to both museums (Oct. 20-26).

#### **COMMUNITY SUPPER**

Knights of Columbus, Community Supper, Oktoberfest Theme, \$15, 4:30-6:30 p.m. A brat filled dinner at St. Luke's, 9901 Coastal Highway. 410-524-7994

#### **OC KNITTING GROUP**

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, Ocean City. 410-524-1818. 10:30 a.m.-11:59 p.m., Do you love to knit or crochet? Bring whatever project you happen to be working on. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org.

#### **CARD PARTY, LUNCHEON**

St. Andrew's Catholic Church, 14401 Sinepuxent Ave., Ocean City. 10:30 a.m.-3 p..m. Ticket price \$30. 410-746-4759.

#### CROSS FARMS POP-UP FARMERS MAR-KET

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 pro-

vided. 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.

#### Weds., Oct 22

#### PUZZLE TIME

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., Berlin. 410-641-0650. 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.

#### **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.kiwaniso-fopoc.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**

#### TOWN OF BERLIN PUMPKIN SCAVENGER HUNT

Held thru Oct. 30. Pick up and return your entry form in the Berlin Welcome Center. Peek in the participating shop windows to find all of the painted pumpkins. Enter to win \$100. Drawing will be on Halloween.

#### **BUS TRIP TO NEW YORK**

Bus departs on Dec. 20 at 6 a.m. from Chuckie Cheese in Salisbury. Cost is \$97 and includes driver's tip. Arrive at Macy's in New York at 11 a.m. Bus will be leaving from Macy's at 6 p.m. Pay by Dec. 15 by check, money order or use the church's cash app (\$calvarychurch6607, to: Calvary Church, for: New York Bus Trip) Make payments to Calvary United Methodist Church, 8607 Ironshire Station Road, Berlin. Info: Rosie Dennis, 443-614-7518.

#### **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.

#### 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 larning. 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

#### **PUMPKIN SCAVENGER HUNT**

Ocean Pines library, 11107 Cathell Road, throughout October. Find all of the pumpkins and solve the riddle, then choose a pumpkin recipe and a prize from the treasure chest. For families. 410-208-4014

#### **PURNELL MUSEUM AT THE LIBRARY: TOYS**

Snow Hill library, 307 N. Washington St., throughout October. In partnership with the Purnell Museum, come see the history displays that will feature toys from the colonial era to the 20th century. 410-632-3495

#### **TEEN TIME**

Ocean Pines library, 11107 Cathell Road, throughout October, 3 p.m. to close. Craft a fabric covered pumpkin ad more pumpkin-inspired creation. All materials provided. For ages 12-18 years. 410-208-4014

#### **QUEEN OF HEARTS**

Weekly virtual drawings on Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. Winner receives 60 percent of jackpot. www.opvfd.com/queen-of-hearts. Sponsored by the Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department.

#### 2025 KIWANIS LOTTERY TICKETS ON SALE

On sale every Saturday morning at the Ocean Pines Farmers Market from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. One \$20 ticket is good for all 365 drawings in 2025. Benefits the youth of the community.

#### **OCEAN CITY-BERLIN ROTARY CLUB**

Meets the first and third Wednesday of each month at Don's Seafood & Chop House at the South Gate of Ocean Pines, 6 p.m. ocberlinrotary@gmail.com

### OCEAN CITY CHAPTER OF THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF ITALY

Meets every month (except July and August) at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 9901 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Membership is open to individuals of Italian descent and their spouses. www.sonsofitalyoceancity.com

#### POLISH AMERICAN CLUB OF DELMARVA

Meets the second Wednesday of each month (except July and August) at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 9901 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 2-4 p.m. A social organization of men and women of Polish or Slavic descent.

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worcesterprep.org/about/employment

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