GAZETTE BAYSIDE

NOVEMBER 27, 2025

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The Worcester County Bar Association recently provided Worcester County GOLD with 295 turkeys with sides to provide to local families in need of assistance during the holiday. The distribution takes place annually through a partnership with local organizations spear-

headed by the bar association.



County to explain new utility rates

Commissioners will answer questions about huge hikes at Tuesday, Dec. 2 session

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Nov. 27, 2025) Worcester County residents on public water and sewer will have a chance to ask the county commissioners about recent rate increases and the state of the county's sewerage infrastructure at the commissioners' next meeting on Tuesday.

Commissioners President Ted Elder (District 4, Western) said county officials have been getting many emails from residents asking why their third-quarter water and sewer bills have increased so dramat-

Because of that, they decided to hold a public hearing on Dec. 2 at the commissioners meeting in Snow Hill to let the public air their grievances, and to include department heads who could answer residents' questions.

"We feel the quickest way to get

their answers is to have a public hearing and be completely transparent," Elder said.

County officials last year realized that several of the 11 water/wastewater districts serving the county were financially upside-down, with expenses far outweighing the revenue being generated by user fees. The districts were intended to be self-funded by user rates, but they were underfunded for years.

Their solution was to raise rates See COUNTY Page 10

Boat slips at golf club questioned

Not everyone thinks adding this convenience will work or cover its \$14K cost

By Tara Fischer Staff Writer

(Nov. 27, 2025) A proposal in Ocean Pines to create two boat slips near the Clubhouse Bar and Grille on Clubhouse Drive has been met with resident opposition, with some citing safety concerns and arguing the project will fail to generate significant revenue.

Earlier this month, the Ocean Pines Association leadership announced its intention to look into the installation of two boat slips with enough room to accommodate two boats each, for a total of four possible vessels. These docks would be situated near the 10th tee of the Ocean Pines Golf Course and allow access to the property's Clubhouse Bar and Grille. The total cost of the endeavor is estimated at around \$14,000.

The slips would be for transient boats only and allow boat owners to travel by boat to the restaurant for a meal or an afternoon on the golf course.

OPA General Manager John Viola said a trail would be installed to steer boaters who park at these slips away from the links and nearby houses.

"We would have a stone pathway that would lead from the slips to the side of the patio at the Clubhouse," he said. "It'll be along the fence inside the golf course. It will not be utilizing the cart paths that are there."

The general manager added that, as at West Ocean City's Harborside See BOAT Page 8



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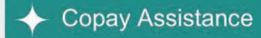
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GM provides updates on fire station, Pines beautification

Construction on new South Station to begin this winter, OPA general manager says

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Nov. 27, 2025) Ocean Pines Association's General Manager John Viola presented his monthly update during the community's board of directors meeting this week, outlining progress on upcoming capital projects, holiday beautification efforts, and early budget development.

Viola said the long-anticipated replacement of the association's outdated South Side fire station remains on track to break ground this winter, around January or February. After months of pre-construction steps, the association has received all contractor bids and is currently reviewing them to prepare a recommendation for the board at its December meet-

"That's a big one," Viola said. "We got all the bids. We are leveling them as we speak. We hope in the next week or two to have everything and an update on it."

Slides shared during the meeting confirmed that shovels are still expected to hit the ground sometime this winter, with Viola noting he is "thinking January" for a likely start, but no later than February. The work was initially scheduled to begin in fall 2025, but staff said at a September meeting that winter 2026 was a more realistic expectation.

The new South Station will replace the deteriorating facility at 911 Ocean Parkway, originally built in 1981 and now considered inadequate for modern needs. Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department President Joe Enste said during a public hearing this summer that the firehouse has not undergone structural improvements since the late 1980s, despite leaks, drainage issues, mold, and engine bay doors too narrow for today's larger fire trucks.

The future station will feature proper decontamination facilities, larger equipment bays, and genderseparate bunk rooms able to support overnight staffing. The improvements are intended to bring the department up to safety and service standards.

This [project] is a big one for

sonal efforts. The general manager announced that holiday beautification across Ocean Pines is well under-

"I drove around last night to see how it is," he said at Saturday's meeting. "We've said every year we will enhance beautification, especially for the holidays. We've done it, we've lit up almost every building so far. It looked pretty nice to me last night. We're going to continue to do more.'

This year's enhancements include sponsored illuminated decorations placed in roadway medians, along with expanded lighting on all buildings within Ocean Pines, to create a cheerful, seasonal aesthetic for community residents and visitors.

Viola's presentation during the meeting also highlighted progress on the fiscal year budget. All departments have already completed bottom-up proposed budgets. Viola added that increased public safety costs are expected to represent about 42% of the community assessment. That rise includes the costs associated with the creation of the new fire department facility.

Viola said that officials are awaiting the final reserve draft study, expected by the end of November, to finalize the budget. A budget and finance team meeting and a board review will be scheduled for separate dates in December upon receipt of the reserve information.

Swim with Santa Claus at Pines Sports Core Pool

(Nov. 27, 2025) The community is invited to enjoy an afternoon of fun and cheer with Santa Claus in the indoor, heated Sports Core Pool, on Saturday, Dec. 20.

The event, happening from noon to 3 p.m., will feature crafts, music, and games, with food available for

Entry is \$8 for swim members, \$10 for residents, \$12 for non-residents, and \$3 for non-swimmers.

All children ages 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult in the facility. Any children that cannot swim or wears a flotation device must be accompanied by an adult in the





New mobile app available to Pines residents

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Nov. 27, 2025) The Ocean Pines Association is encouraging members to download a new mobile application that will allow homeowners to pay their assessment fees, schedule tee times at the golf course, and receive communitywide announcements, all from their cellphones.

At the Board of Directors meeting on Saturday, Nov. 22, Keith Calabrese, the IT manager for OPA, presented a newly available mobile app that will make life in Ocean Pines just a little bit easier.

The program, simply called "Ocean Pines" on the Apple App Store and Google Play, lets homeowners access their membership accounts to make payments, review statements, receive information, and schedule time at the OPA amenities.

Calabrese said that the app is now live. Before its official release, the software was launched in a preliminary version for the golf course and racquet center, allowing members to reserve tee times, for example.

The application is now available to all Ocean Pines homeowners. Upon download, users can sign in with their membership numbers and personal passwords. Once logged in, residents can easily view their profiles, pay fees, or schedule a tee time at the golf course. Homeowners will also be able to update their email addresses directly in the program if their email addresses change,

ahead of election season.

Calabrese added that the app has a social feed similar to Instagram or Facebook that permits users to see recent community news. Furthermore, the software will be one of the channels OPA officials use to disseminate vital information.

"It also has the ability to send push notifications, so if there is ever an emergency or a situation where golf specifically wants to send their golf members a notification, like that there's a frost warning or something like that, it has the ability to do that as well," the IT manager said.

Board member Stuart Lakernick noted that he has found the program to be useful.

"I've had the app since it was first developed and released," he said. "You get updates on the conditions of the racquet center. You get updates on different things happening in the community. It's a really good tool to have."

Officials maintain that the Ocean Pines app will expand in its available functions. The software vendor, Calabrese, claimed it will provide OPA with an "updated, bigger, better" version next year.

The hope is that citizens get themselves acquainted with this iteration first, prior to the imminent upgrades. The program can be accessed by searching for "Ocean Pines" in the App Store for iPhones or Google Play for Androids.

Board OK's Viola's request to replace vehicle

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Nov. 27, 2025) The Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors this week approved a capital request to replace an aging Ford Escape used by the Compliance, Permits and Inspections (CPI) Department with a 2025 Ford Bronco for \$40,039. The new vehicle will be added to the community's non-police fleet carpool.

OPA General Manager John Viola emphasized that Ocean Pines' carpooling model continues to reduce fleet size and improve vehicle efficiency.

During the board's meeting on Saturday, Nov. 22, Viola said the six-plus-year-old Ford Escape had reached the end of its useful life, and thus needed replacing. The vehicle was originally slated to be exchanged as part of the next fiscal year's budget, but association staff opted to

bring the request forward slightly earlier than planned after receiving what Viola described as "a decent trade-in value."

Viola said while the Escape was commonly used by CPI staff, none of the association's vehicles are assigned exclusively to one department or employee. Since the implementation of the fleet-wide carpool system, Viola said, staff share all non-police cars based on daily operational needs.

"I want to reiterate: Nobody gets a specific car," he said. "Ever since I've been here, we carpool all the cars so that if somebody needs a pickup truck, they can use it. With the carpool, keep in mind, we have reduced the number of trucks, non-police, by six."

The request was unanimously approved by OPA's Board of Directors on Saturday, with Director Elaine Brady absent.



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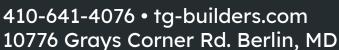


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Police chief announces retirement

(Nov. 27, 2025) Berlin Police Chief Arnold Downing has said he will be stepping down from his post after three decades of service to the Town of Berlin, with an official retirement date of March 1.

"Chief Arnold Downing has dedicated his career to protecting and uplifting the people of Berlin," said Mayor Zack Tyndall. "His commitment to community-centered policing, officer wellness, youth advocacy, and public safety has left a lasting mark on our town. We are a stronger, safer, and more connected community because of his leadership. On behalf of the Town of Berlin, I want to express our deepest appreciation for Chief Downing's decades of service and his unwavering dedication to our citizens and officers. We wish him the very best in his well-earned retire-

ment."

Downing began his career with the Berlin Police Department (BPD) on Aug. 26, 1991, and was appointed acting chief of police on Feb. 17, 2000. He was officially appointed chief of police on Dec. 1, 2002, becoming both the first African American administrator and the first African American chief of police in the department's history.

Throughout his career, Downing championed the development of specialized units within the BPD. Under his leadership, the department strengthened its operational capacity through SWAT, which assisted with the Baltimore riots in April 2015 and completed more than 50 successful missions.

In addition, during Chief Downing's tenure, the department added a

traffic reconstruction unit, five K9 units, a drone unit, a Defensive Tactics Instruction Team, a Firearms Training Unit, expanded peer support and wellness initiatives and implemented a speed camera program.

Downing also advocated for enhanced officer benefits, including enrollment in the Law Enforcement Officer Pension System (LEOPS), the Take-Home Car Program, specialized pay for technical and investigative roles, and additional pay incentives such as shift differential, inclement weather pay, special holiday pay, and compensation for fluency in Spanish.

One of the most significant accomplishments during his administration was the opening of the new Berlin Police Station in 2018, a major investment in modernizing public safety infrastructure and preparing the department for future growth.

In addition to his departmental leadership, Downing has been a tireless advocate for vulnerable children and families. He is a founding member of the Worcester County Child Advocacy Center (CAC), formerly known as the C.R.I.C.K.E.T. Center, which has achieved national accreditation and continues to serve as a vital resource for abused and neglected children.

His service with the CAC, including roles as president and vice president, earned him recognition as the 2009 Heroes of Child Protection Community Partner of the Year Award.

He has also served as a board member of the Lower Shore CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) and a board member of Worcester Youth and Family Counseling Services, including terms as president and treasurer, helping guide key initiatives that support youth and families across the county.



Arnold Downing

"I'm proud of the advocacy work for abused and neglected children in Worcester County that I have been allowed to assist in accomplishing," Downing said. "The development of a community policing approach that fostered partnerships and mutual respect was highlighted annually with the Tri-County's best National Night Out. I am also proud to have assisted with obtaining a crosswalk at US Route 113 and Bay Street and helping to change the light sequence to create a safer intersection."

During his tenure, Downing served on the Maryland Municipal League Municipal Police Executive Association in leadership roles including president, vice president, secretary, and sergeant-at-arms.

Additionally, he previously served on the Maryland Municipal League Board of Directors, Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission, Worcester County Bureau of Investigation, and Wor-Wic Community College Criminal Justice Program Advisory Committee.

Downing's distinguished service has been recognized with numerous awards, including the Alcohol and Other Drug Task Force Award in 1993, the "Charitable Soul" honor from The Dispatch's Shore Stars Awards in 2012, the Sun Award from Worcester Youth and Family Counseling Services in 2014, the Coastal Style Magazine Public Safety Official of the Year Award in 2020, and the Tri-County Martin Luther King Jr. See DOWNING Page 7



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Downing to step down next year

Continued from Page 6 Coalition Worcester County Award in 2023.

Downing has stated that his official retirement will begin March 1, 2026. However, the chief added that his actual last day in the office is yet to be determined.

After more than 30 years with the Berlin Police Department, Downing maintained that the relationships he formed throughout his career has been an indescribable, rewarding experience.

"Being a part of a lot of people's lives has enriched me," he said. "Being somewhere for 34 years, that itself is a great accomplishment. A lot of people work their whole career and go from one place to another. But to be accepted in a community for that long and be supported, that has added so much value. When I started this job, I never thought I would have the ability to touch so many people's lives, and have my life touched in such a way.

As for his post-career plans, Downing hopes to kick retirement off with a "reset."

"After 34 and a half years, I'm going to have to sit still somewhere and reset before I move anywhere else," he said.

OPA to install new HVAC at center

New unit to replace radiant heating system that caused damage to wood gym floor

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Nov. 27, 2025) Ocean Pines officials this week announced that the association is installing a new HVAC unit at the community center—the latest step in an effort to address waterdamage issues that occurred in the recreation building earlier this year.

OPA General Manager John Viola said the association's public works team is installing a replacement HVAC system at the center at a cost of about \$14,000. Slides presented at Saturday meeting of the Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors listed the total price tag at \$14,155.54.

We put in a new floor, everybody knows about that," Viola said. Before that, it was radiant heating, he said, and that led to so many problems that the decision was made to go with HVAC.

Earlier this year, water damaged the center's gym floor. The issue occurred when an O-ring in the community center's radiant heating system failed in February. The break occurred over a weekend, and because the building saw few visitors,

the leak went undetected for several days. Water spread across the hardwood gym floor, ultimately requiring a full replacement.

Due to the water damage, in March, the board unanimously approved spending \$62,300 to hire Dynamic Sports Construction to implement a new DynaForce System, a poured, padded multipurpose floor designed to resist water damage and provide better shock absorption for the body.

'It was a minor thing that, once in the wall, could not be detected until, unfortunately, the water was on the floor.' Debbie Donahue

The installation was completed over the summer and helpful when playing sports like basketball, OPA Recreation and Parks Director Debbie Donahue said at the time.

Donahue added that the DynaForce product is seamless and nonporous, making it easier to clean and less susceptible to damage from moisture or chairs dragging across the surface.

The recreation director maintained this spring that the leak did not come from outside the building or from beneath the flooring, as some initially believed, but rather from a failure inside the center's radiant heat piping.

"There has been some misunderstanding about what happened," she said during a March meeting of the board of directors. "It was an O-ring in the piping that runs the water to the radiant heat. It was a minor thing that, once in the wall, could not be detected until, unfortunately, the water was on the floor."

Now, the association is installing a replacement HVAC system, which officials hope will address the issues caused by the radiant heating.

In addition to the community center updates, Viola reported that paver installation at the Yacht Club's bocce courts is "almost complete."

The enhancement comes less than a year after the installation of two new bocce ball courts at the Yacht Club. The amenities were created last spring for a total project cost of \$50,692.

Upon the implementation of the new courts, residents joined the Ocean Pines Bocce Ball Club's summer and fall leagues, started by Michael Galello, the club's director. The leagues are expected to return in 2026.



Boat slips proposed next to golf clubhouse

Continued from Page 1

Bar and Grill, boaters, would tie up their crafts to pilings and cleats.

Some community members, however, have expressed concerns over the proposal. Despite reassurances from OPA officials that the canal's width of 94.4 feet is sufficient to accommodate watercraft navigation in both directions, residents have questioned whether this will be the case in practice.

Homeowner Eric Swanson, a sea captain for a container vessel, spoke during citizen comments at the Saturday, Nov. 22, meeting of the Ocean Pines Board of Directors. Swanson, whose house is about 60 feet from the space designated for one of the slips, said that boat traffic heading to the docks is at risk of jamming up, particularly on a nice summer day.

"During the summer months, when there is a lot of congestion with boats, it's going to be like a three-lane highway," Swanson said. "I'm a little concerned about that in the way of potential collisions."

The homeowner also argued that the added slips could have a negative environmental impact. Boaters, he said, would engage and disengage the vessels' engines, releasing exhaust fumes to the nearby trees and wildlife.

The effect on the golf course was

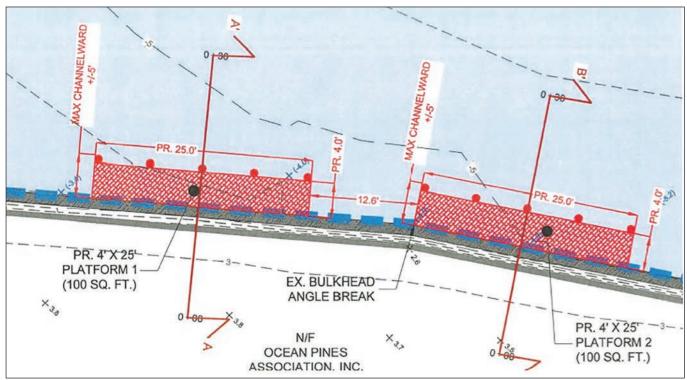


IMAGE COIURTESY OF OPAE

Concerns were heard at last Saturday's OPA Board of Directors meeting from residents about a proposed to add boat slips to provide access to the golf course's clubhouse.

another worry. Swanson said that with people parking near the tenth tee, they would be in the line of sight of golfers, disrupting play.

"You're going to be inviting people to walk on the golf course while golfers

are golfing," he said. "I just don't see the benefits of [the slips] at all."

Resident Jean Higgins, who lives near the tenth tee, also spoke at Saturday's meeting. She contended that the transient boat slips won't generate enough revenue to justify their implementation.

Higgins said, as a boater and a golfer, she could theoretically park her vessel for a full round of golf and invite a friend to do the same, taking up two spaces for multiple hours, limiting how much money could be spent at the course's eatery.

Ocean Pines homeowner Amy Peck echoed Higgins' money-creating concerns, or lack thereof.

"I'm very happy to see that the estimated cost is only \$14,000; I thought it was going to be much more. Regardless, for it to be a revenue-producing project, the clubhouse would have to sell \$215,385 more in food revenue," she claimed.

"That does not seem likely. This is a convenience project for boaters only. If golfers are playing 18 holes, I just can't imagine. My husband is a golfer; he walks the course. It's a four-hour, five-hour trip. You're going to have someone parking there for at least five hours. So that takes up at least one slip. I'm hoping the board will look at the realistic revenue this project will produce, and then also look at the safety concerns."

Another concern expressed by the community is that, because the hope is that the transient slips will encourage residents to enjoy an afternoon at the Clubhouse Bar and Grille, this could inadvertently invite boaters to consume alcohol and then take their boats back through the canal.

The transient slips are still in the preliminary stages, OPA officials maintained. The project has not yet been approved and is still undergoing research to determine its viability. Viola said that if the board decides to move forward with the endeavor, more information will be presented.





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Irrigation project underway at golf course

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Nov. 27, 2025) The Ocean Pines Association continues to work on improvements at the community's golf course, including an irrigation system project, and tee box and fairway enhancement.

At the OPA's Board of Directors meeting on Saturday, Nov. 22, Ocean Pines' General Manager John Viola updated the board and association members on the progress to replace the golf course's 50-year-old failing irrigation system.

The endeavor was officially begun last year. Phase one included work on hole one, the fourth tee, hole nine, the practice range, and the pump station, for a total cost of \$934,000.

Now, the second leg of that project is about to begin. This portion, with construction to start before the end of November, will include holes four, five, six, seven, and eight. The work will be finalized around March and will cost \$810,500.

Viola added that the golf maintenance team is preparing the 19th green to be opened for use during the time when the irrigation upgrades are taking place.

Furthermore, renovations are scheduled for tee boxes at holes one, two, seven, and eight. Staff will strip the existing sod in these areas and instead lay Iron Cutter Bermuda grass turf.

The general manager said the decision to move forward with this enhancement was because of increased stress on the tees due to "a lot of rounds, more rounds than any other year."

According to Viola, the golf team installed this type of turf on a tee box a few years ago and observed an improvement in its durability. As such, the association will continue to use this new sod on other areas throughout the course.

The tee boxes are not the only golf sections to receive the turf update.

Some issues on the golf course fairways arose at the end of August and early September, when excess rain produced puddles that boiled and killed the turf. Viola maintained that this is common on the Eastern Shore at the end of summer, and that the golf staff was proactive, aerating and seeding promptly to preserve the course's conditions.

To prevent the damage from occurring next season, the Iron cutter Bermuda grass turf will also be installed at some of the fairways, in addition to the tee boxes.

Also in an effort to keep the Ocean Pines links pristine, golfers should prepare for the course to close for a few days sometime in September next year, to give maintenance staff time to aerate and sand the green.

"It takes some time for that sand to get in the ground, especially if it doesn't rain," Viola said. "That adds to the golfer's unpleasantness. I think a couple of days there will help."

County to explain rates at hearing

Continued from Page 1

for users in all 11 sanitary sewer districts to cover operating and maintenance cost increases. If rates had not been raised, county officials said, then revenues would not cover actual expenses for the current fiscal year.

Customers will see in their bills that base fees per EDU have increased. Usage tiers were changed for residential and commercial customers. And the rates for West Ocean City customers changed from a "fixtures" basis to a "per EDU" basis.

Another new fee being charged is

for "accessibility" of undeveloped land. It means the county is now charging users for EDUs they've been sitting on but aren't using.

Budget issues have plagued the county's sewerage systems for nearly two years now. The county in late 2024 was forced to deal with a budget shortfall from the 7 of 11 sewer district totaling nearly \$2 million.

More than half the deficit was coming from the Mystic Harbor service area, which had been shut down for years with its sewage trucked to the Ocean Pines sewer plant for treatment. However, that facility just reopened, and officials say they're already seeing cost savings by not having to pump and haul.

Elder said another major reason that sewer district finances were troubled was the growing cost of chemicals used to treat wastewater, which he blamed on inflation. Also at issue were additional regulatory requirements to test for PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), sometimes called "forever chemicals."

"If your prices go sky high, you're going to normally complain," he said. "But some of those prices should have been raised years ago – at least, part of what they're going up now. It would have been a little easier to handle if it was done gradual, but it's beyond that now."

Elder added that he doesn't believe the sewer districts in financial distress will be fully self-sufficient this year, even with increasing operating revenue from rate hikes, but "once it's done, it's going to be a lot better situation for everybody involved," he said.

And, despite speculation, rate payers in the Ocean Pines district are not footing the bill for shortfalls in other areas, Commissioner Chip Bertino (District 5, Ocean Pines) said in a Facebook message to constituents on

Bertino also said customer invoices are usually higher this time of year because homeowners had been irrigating their land in summer months, and the bill comes due in fall

Higher maintenance costs and an enhanced regulatory environment "are realities that the County must manage," with its water/sewer districts, according to Bertino.

"You don't like the increases. I don't like the increases. But, it's imperative that the Ocean Pines Water/Wastewater facility and all our water facilities for that matter, be properly maintained and updated when necessary and operated efficiently in the best interests of all of us," he wrote.



Worcester County room tax hike approved

In exchange for the 1% tax increase, Ocean City offers more sewage capacity

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Nov. 27, 2025) In a legislative maneuver years in the making, Worcester County officials agreed last week to increase the county's tax on room rentals from 5% to 6% in a straight swap for more sewage capacity at Ocean City's wastewater plant.

Officials on both sides both described the quid pro quo as a win-win: Ocean City gets to generate millions in new tax revenue, and Worcester County gets to ease the burden on its beleaguered wastewater processing facilities in the West Ocean City area.

The resolution passed Tuesday by the county commissioners was written more like a contract than a standard government edict: it imposes a 1% room tax increase, but only if Ocean City amended an existing intergovernmental agreement to increase the county's allotted sewer capacity by 170,000 gallons.

"I'm not sure it needed to be in there, but if that made the commissioners feel more comfortable, I was fine with that," Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan told OC Today-Dispatch.



BRIAN SHANE/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Members of the Worcester County Commissioners are pictured listening to Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan testify during this week's public hearing in favor of the proposed room tax increase.

"The goal was to get everybody on the same page and increase the room tax and do it in a timely manner."

Meehan pushed for the deal to be done at the end of 2025 to please the resort's hospitality industry, which wanted the ability to lock in its 2026 room rates by Jan. 1.

Per an agreement struck in 1994, the county already reserves 1 million gallons of space at Ocean City's sewer plant, which can process up 12 million gallons a day.

The resolution mentions by name two county sewer facilities outside West Ocean City, The Landings and Assateague Point. The former plant has been deactivated for effluent disposal issues, and the latter needs expensive state-mandated upgrades.

While adding capacity will help both facilities, much of the county's aging wastewater treatment operation – which involves 11 independent sewer systems – is still in bad shape, officials say.

County leaders have warned they may need to invest \$30 to \$40 million in systemic upgrades and have already raised sewer rates this year to help cover operational and maintenance costs.

The deal also allows untreated county effluent to be used as spray irrigation at nearby Eagles Landing golf See ROOM Page 12



Room tax rate to create revenue countywide

Continued from Page 11 course, an Ocean City municipal property

On their end, members of the Ocean City Council on Monday agreed to the sewerage expansion and will have to finalize the deal in a second vote at their Dec. 1 meeting.

However, not all the commissioners had been privy to this arrangement

Commissioner Joe Mitrecic (District 7, Ocean City) said he wasn't told ahead of the vote that the tax increase resolution was amended to be contingent on the Ocean City sewer deal. He still voted "yes" because it was important to the resort and his constituents.

"I thought the resolution was changed on the say-so of a couple commissioners – it wasn't voted on by us," Mitrecic said in closing comments at Tuesday's meeting. "To tie the town of Ocean City's sewer 'gift,' I'll call it, to this resolution was wrong. We should trust in Ocean City to do the right thing – they offered it. I think it made us look bad, to be honest with vou."

When it takes effect Jan. 1, the amended room tax affects any Worcester County venue that charges a lodging fee, including hotels and motels, campgrounds and RVs, or online vacation rentals like AirBnB.

A bigger slice of tourism spending will be churned into much-anticipated new revenue for the county and its municipalities. Estimates project \$22,000 in new room tax revenue for Berlin, \$38,000 more for Pocomoke City, and \$360,000 more for the county itself.

But it's the Town of Ocean City, with its 10,000 hotel rooms and 5,000 more rental properties, that stands to benefit the most.

The resort could end up pocketing an estimated \$5 million in new revenue, based on fiscal 2025 data. As a matter of policy, Ocean City already earmarks 40% of room tax revenue for tourism and hospitality marketing and rolls the remaining 60% into the general fund.

More money is needed, resort leaders say, to absorb new public safety expenses, including a projected \$13 million increase in police salaries resulting from a new police union contract.

Ocean City's elected officials and tourism advocates lobbied behind the scenes for three years just to get the possibility of a room tax increase off the ground.

It started at the state level, where the General Assembly in 2024 passed its own law granting Worcester County permission to raise its ceiling on the room tax from 5% to 6%.

Asking a group of mostly Democratic lawmakers to agree to a tax hike – one not only affecting their vacationing constituents, but pitched by a Republican, no less – was a tough sell that cost a lot of political capital, according to Del. Wayne Hartman (R-38C), who sponsored the bill on behalf of Worcester County.

Next, the county commissioners had to take twofold action at Tuesday's meeting: first, they approved a new law to authorize the 1% tax increase – saying, effectively, we give ourselves permission to raise this tax, if we choose to. That took effect immediately as emergency legislation.

Then, the commissioners had to approve a separate resolution enacting the change – and, under stipulations laid out by the General Assembly, that vote had to be unanimous.

It was. When board President Ted Elder called for the final vote, all seven commissioners clearly called out "aye!" with a collective volume not typically heard on the dais. Mayor Meehan, seated in the gallery, nodded vigorously.

Two commissioners had been on the fence with their deciding votes: Chip Bertino and Jim Bunting. If either had voted no, the deal would have fallen through.

Bunting (District 6, Bishopville) said he changed his mind to vote yes after sitting down with county department heads, who convinced him that "maybe I was being a little too harsh."

"I'm not always right," he told OC Today-Dispatch, "and maybe I took too hard of a stance. I still didn't like it, but at the same time, it was going to benefit the people, residents of Worcester County, or even your municipalities with their sewer plants and such."

Bertino (District 5, Ocean Pines) initially had pushed for Ocean City to fork over another 1 million gallons of sewer capacity instead of just 170,000. Meehan in public statements equated that request to being "held hostage."

"You should never be in a hurry to make a mistake," Bertino told OC Today-Dispatch. "I took the time to do the due diligence that was necessary for me to vote yes. I'm very pleased with the outcome and I hope that everybody else is.

"Regardless of what some naysayers and radio personalities and the media thought," he added, "there was a lot going on behind the scenes that they were not privy to – nor should they be privy to. But I'm glad of the outcome today."



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Department of Social Services (DSS) staff gather to celebrate at their Halloween pizza party. This annual event is sponsored by the DSS Advisory **Board in keeping with** one of the board's goals to show staff appreciation for their commitment to strive to provide timely services to enhance the quality of life for individuals and families in Worcester County. SUBMITTED PHOTO/ BAYSIDE GAZETTE



Local prosecutor named district court judge

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Nov. 27, 2025) One longtime Worcester County attorney is making a move from the prosecutor's table to the judge's bench.

Gov. Wes Moore on Nov. 19 announced his appointment of Michael William Farlow as the county's newest District Court judge. In a statement, Moore called him "a dedicated public servant" whose career as a prosecutor and in private practices prepared him for a judgeship.



Michael Farlow

"His commitment to the people of Worcester County, both in the courtroom and through his extensive community service, is a testament to the integrity and fairness he will bring to the district

court," Moore said. "We are proud to see him serve in this new role."

Farlow, 50, will don a judge's robe in the same Snow Hill district courthouse where he's been an Assistant States Attorney since 2019. He expects to be sworn in next month.

"I am humbled by the opportunity to serve and I want to thank Governor Moore for appointing me to the bench," Farlow said in a statement.

Farlow worked part-time as a prosecutor under State's Attorney Joel Todd from 2003 to 2010. Then, in 2014, he ran for State's Attorney but lost to the incumbent Beau Oglesby – who's now a Worcester County judge himself, in the circuit court since 2018.

Prior to re-joining the prosecutor's of-

fice full time, Farlow was a solo practitioner in Ocean Pines with a practice focused on major traffic offenses, criminal law, asset forfeiture law, and estate planning.

He's a 1998 graduate of Salisbury University, where he later taught a political science course as an adjunct lecturer. He earned his law degree in 2001 from Widener University in Wilmington.

Worcester County State's Attorney Kris Heiser said she and her entire office are thrilled to see Farlow elevated to the bench.

"We know from working with him every day that Mike exercises excellent judgment and treats everyone with respect, and he will bring an even temperament to the bench," she said. "While we will certainly miss him as a colleague, we are grateful that he has chosen to continue his career of service in this new role and we wish him all the best."

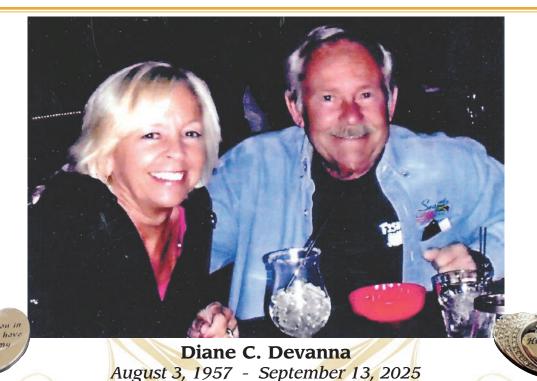
Notably, at age 19, Farlow won a seat on the town commission in his hometown of Pittsville, making him Maryland's youngest elected official at the time

He's also dedicated himself to the fire service, as a member of both the Snow Hill and Pittsville volunteer fire departments. The Maryland State Firemen's Association inducted him into its Hall of Fame in 2014.

This is Gov. Moore's second appointment of a Worcester County judge this year. In September, Moore named local attorney Kristina Watkowski to the Circuit Court bench, replacing the retired Peggy Kent.

Maryland's governor hasn't seated a District Court judge on the Eastern Shore since 2022. Gov. Larry Hogan's appointment of Cathi Coates made her the first woman named to the District Court bench in Worcester County.

Farlow's appointment fills a vacancy created last year when District Court Judge Gerald Purnell stepped down last summer after an 18-year judicial career. Purnell was already slated to retire later in 2024 when he was accused of misconduct in office; he settled the matter by paying a fine and accepting a guilty verdict



I want to thank everyone for their well wishes, friendship, support and sympathy cards acknowledging Diane's passing. I also want everyone to know how deeply appreciative she was, and how grateful I am, for the companionship and care shown to her throughout more than 14 years of living with cancer, enduring treatments, and their unbelievably harsh side effects.

I am thankful I had her as part of my life for almost 50 years. I will love her and miss her forever. A celebration of her life will be in the spring.

Thank You All, Gary

COLOR RUN BENEFIT HELD

The inaugural "Color Run for the Arts" took place on Saturday, Nov. 15, at Veteran's Memorial Park in Ocean Pines. The event included a 5K race, a children's run, a two-mile walk, artisans, and food trucks. The event was a fundraiser for the nonprofit Art League of Ocean City. Top left, Mackenzie Gordon tosses color on the runners. Top right, Tripp **Enste crossed the** finish line first in the children's race. Bottom left, Courtney Blackford finishes the first leg of the 5K race. Bottom middle, mother and daughter Jaidee and Jessica Vit received flowers after their completion. Bottom right, Kathy Crum was the winner of the raffle valued at more than \$700 in gift cards

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Sheriff's request for Internal Affairs post will have to wait

Crisafulli told mid-budget addition will not be funded at estimated \$167K cost

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Nov. 21, 2025) Who watches the watchmen? In Worcester County, it won't be anybody – at least, not until the next budget cycle.

Sheriff Matt Crisafulli's request to fund a new internal affairs investigator position was denied this week by the Worcester County Commissioners, who balked not just at the six-figure cost, but that his asking for it came outside the annual springtime budget window.

A full-time internal affairs super-

visor would review uses of force, complaints, employee misconduct, and policy violations, Crisafulli told the County Commissioners at Tuesday's meeting.

And, while not committing to a timetable, he implied it could take months to advertise, recruit, and hire for the job - even longer if they wait until 2026.

Reporting directly to him, the sheriff said an internal affairs investigator would need specialized training in administrative investigations, evidence documentation, and disciplinary procedures. They could idenof misconduct, patterns recommend corrective actions, and assist in policy development and training improvements, he added.

Crisafulli also stressed the position is a "critical necessity" to better comply with a suite of police reform laws enacted by state lawmakers in 2022, which demand more robust internal documentation and accountability responsibilities his more senior deputies have absorbed over the last three years, pulling them away from their core duties.

"This would enhance public trust by demonstrating our office's commitment to integrity, professionalism, and transparency. It also would protect our personnel rights by providing fair and consistent internal investigations that safeguard both our office and our employees," he said.

The commissioners didn't waste time poking holes in the sheriff's pitch.

Commissioner Joe Mitrecic (District 7, Ocean City) suggested a deputy hired for the role could split their time between multiple local law enforcement agencies. "It just seems like we could share with Ocean City," he said.

The sheriff protested. "I think for organizations to share these investigators is too cumbersome. An agency of our size ... '

... which grows every year," Mitrecic interrupted.

"Well, so do the services that our county expects." Crisafulli shot back. Officials also didn't love the price:





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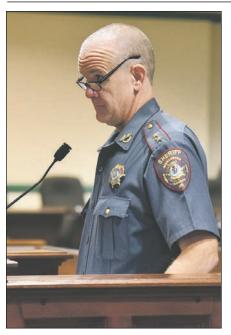
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Place That Does It All



BRIAN SHANE/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

County Sheriff Matt Crisafulli, pictured before the commissioners on Nov. 18, was denied a mid-year budget request to hire an Internal Affairs investigator.

Sheriff's request denied for now

an estimated \$167,538 for salary, benefits, and retirement costs. The sheriff later clarified the salary alone would be \$83,000 – an amount intended to target qualified, mid-to-late career applicants.

"This is not a little bit of money we're talking about. This is a lot," said Commissioner Diana Purnell (District 2, Central). "We need to know what every department is going to need. But this, you want us to add this in now? I start questioning asking to bring things like this to us now, before we start the budget process. I'm not comfortable with this.

Commissioner Chip Bertino (District 5, Ocean Pines) didn't disagree that the internal affairs position is needed but said Crisafulli should bring it back at budget time in spring 2026. "These mid-cycle requests make it very difficult when we get into the budget cycle in the next few months," he told the sheriff.

Mitrecic's motion to approve the funding, seconded by Commissioner Caryn Abbott, failed in a 3-4 vote. Commissioner Eric Fiori also voted yes. Purnell, Bertino, Commission President Ted Elder and Commissioner Jim Bunting opposed.

After the meeting, a frustrated Crisafulli emphasized that his agency is already severely shorthanded and filling the internal affairs job would take a lot off his supervisors' plates.

"They need to be focused on answering questions from deputies, being prepared to respond to emergency calls - you know, that's what commanders do," he told OC Today-Dispatch. "Managing law enforcement resources, having them do the duties of an IA investigator, we're just finding that that's not a collateral duty, that's a standalone duty that has to be undertaken."



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ROTARY DONATION

District Governor Dale Kerns (seated far right) recently visited the Ocean City-Berlin Rotary Club. Members learned about the district-led activities to address the rising food insecurity in the area and shared ideas on how individual clubs can host events locally. As a thank you to Kerns, the club made a donation in her name to Polio Plus. The club meets the first and third Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Ocean Pines Branch of the Worcester County Library on Cathell Road in Berlin. For more information, email ocberlinrotary@gmail.com.





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Snapshots



CARE PACKAGES DONATED

Last week, Worcester Preparatory School (WPS) students collected donations in support of the local non-profit organization, Operation We Care. Items collected are to be wrapped into care packages and sent to deployed military and first responders. Students collected a wide range of items, including granola bars, canned pasta, powdered drink mixes, playing cards, baby wipes, toothpaste, and more. Operation We Care was founded in 2007 by Jeff and Diana Merritt. Jeff and Diana own Minuteman Press in Salisbury and are assisted by many volunteers. They pack over 2,000 care packages a year that are sent to deployed troops. Operation We Care strives to support active duty and veteran military through care packages, events, and various assistance outlets. Pictured, from left, are WPS Athletic Trainer Mr. Drew Oxenreider, students Giuliana Frabizzio, Harper Hertrich, Rani Yonker, Bella Forman, Genia Fedarkevich, Darren Lockard, Brock Phillips, Wes Wisniewski, Emerson Bofinger, Caleb Walston, USMC LCpl. **Brock Grosso, and Assistant Head of School** and Director of Campus Operations and Athletics Mike Grosso.

SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE



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LOCAL TROOP HELPS COMMUNITY

Local Boy Scout #225 packaged over 300 pairs of eyeglasses that were donated to Berlin Lions Club. The glasses will be distributed to those in need locally and regionally. If anyone needs assistance with obtaining a pair, please contact the Berlin Lions Club.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

LINCOLN DAY DINNER HELD

Worcester County Republican Central Committee's Lincoln Day Dinner hosted China expert Gordon Chang at the Embers Restaurant. Pictured, from left with Chang, third from left, are members Linda Moran, Bev Bigler, Harry Wimbrow, Tom Babcock, Carl Smith and, Susan Ostrowski, Chair.



GUEST SPEAKER

Captain Tom Ottenwaelder (retired **U.S. Coast Guard)** and owner of **Guardian Marine** Services, an NSBC **Certified Instructor** and Marine Surveyor spoke at Novembers Ocean **Pines Anglers Club** meeting. Ottenwaelder, left, was thanked by meeting administrator Rick Kuhar. SUBMITTED PHOTO/

BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Worcester tables request to increase deputies' pay scale

Citing difficulties in hiring, sheriff's office seeks bump in hourly rate, lateral pay

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Nov. 21, 2025) Worcester County officials last week iced a request by the Sheriff Matt Crisafulli to increase salaries to lure recruits from other police agencies to his office.

Citing challenges in recruitment and retention, Crisafulli last Tuesday asked the county commissioners to approve a 5% bump in deputies' pay scale, for the entry level rank of deputy sheriff up to sergeant. The commissioners voted unanimously to table the conversation until the next board meeting on Dec. 2.

According to wage data provided by the county, based on years of experience, sheriff's deputies are paid hourly at a rate of \$31.07 to \$57.81 and are overtime eligible. Lieutenants and captains are salaried, as are the sheriff and his chief deputy, and don't get overtime.

Pay grades increase sequentially by 5%. If approved, the increase would bump a deputy's starting annualized pay (based on 2,080 hours worked) from \$63,132 to \$66,210, or \$31.83 hourly.

However, the sheriff's office is specifically asking for a salary scale increase to help them poach veterans of other law enforcement agencies, who would then expect a competitive salary based on years of experience.

Crisafulli wants to offer people who make a lateral move to his office a 2.5% pay increase for each year of service – a change that would mean existing deputies on his roster would get a pay bump, too, in the name of fairness. For now, lateral hires are capped at the same salary offered to a deputy with five years' experience; Crisafulli wants that cap lifted to nine.

Salaries available to lateral hires haven't proven competitive enough for prospects to jump ship to Worcester County. This year, "a number of highly qualified applicants" have walked away over salary, according to a Nov. 3 internal memo from the sheriff's office to county administration.

A source in the sheriff's office told OC Today-Dispatch that they lost two prospective hires to the Ocean City Police Department because OCPD is hiring laterals at a Step 9 pay grade. Ocean City also offers lateral hires a bonus of \$5,000 to \$15,000; Worcester doesn't.

Overall, the pay bump proposal would cost Worcester County an estimated \$354,281, including salaries, benefits, and steps for current deputies, according to the sheriff's of-

But before Crisafulli could say a word as he approached the lectern at last Tuesday's meeting, Commissioner Caryn Abbott asked to postpone the request outright, saying she needed more information.

"What myself would like is more of a breakdown on the laterals and the current officers that work for Worcester County, what the cost would be, detailed for us at the next meeting," said Abbott (District 1, Southern).

The sherrif replied, "I can give you a number now if you're interested."

Without responding to that, Abbott then asked if Crisafulli had run his numbers by county finance and human resources officials. "I just want to make sure we're getting accurate information as best as possible. I'm not saying it's not. Did you come up with all the figures on your own?" she said.

Crisafulli said his team had, in fact, collaborated already with county staffers on the figures.

After the meeting, Crisafulli expressed surprise and disappointment that his proposal was tabled but looks forward to continuing the conversa-

See CRISAFULLI Page 23



OC Today-Dispatch

BAYSIDE W GAZETTE

11934 Ocean Gateway, Suite 6, Ocean City, MD 21842



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Opinion

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

Don't guess on rates, attend county hearing

Rather than resorting to speculation based on suppositions that are backed by surmises, residents who are angry about the major increases in their county water and sewer bills this quarter should make a point to attend the county commissioners' Tuesday, Dec. 2 session in Snow Hill.

The commissioners, who preside over the 11 sanitary districts the county owns and operates, say they and department heads will answer questions from the public and clarify how rates are set for these independent districts and why they charge them.

The first thing members of the public should know going into this hearing is that all districts are not created equal. Some, such as the Ocean Pines district, are much larger than the others. But they are equal under the law in that they must be financially self-supporting and independent of each other. Past mistakes notwithstanding, they cannot use their revenues to support each other.

That's how this mess became so confusing: past managers of the districts' revenues — held in what are known as "enterprise funds — used money from financially stable districts to subsidize operations in money-losing districts, even though that practice is prohibited. That led to speculation that higher rates in successful districts would be used to cover deficits in under-performing districts.

Consequently, when bills were higher this quarter, some people assumed that was the reason for it. It was not, as the commissioners and department heads will explain next Tuesday.

As Commissioner President Ted Elder said of the upcoming hearing, "If your prices go sky high, you're going to normally complain. But some of those prices should have been raised years ago – at least, part of what they're going up now. It would have been a little easier to handle if it was done gradual, but it's beyond that now ..."

... as the commissioners intend to make clear next Tuesday.

BAYSIDE W GAZETTE

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

EDITOR	Stewart Dobson
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Giving Tuesday event features singer

Fundraiser supports work of Big Brothers Big Sisters charity

(Nov. 28, 2025) Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Eastern Shore is celebrating the warmth of the season with a Giving Tuesday event that will feature Callum Toner, the 18-year-old local singer that appeared on American Idol.

It will be held Dec. 2 at Burley Oak Brewing Company in Berlin starting at 6 p.m. It will raise funds for local youth and collect gift cards for older teens in the program.

Toner appeared on American Idol last year. She has been accepted into Berkley College of Music in Boston and has won national awards.

At the event, guests can enjoy Burley Oak's distinctive beers and the delectable offerings from food trucks Grateful Grubs and Seaside Sweets.

A key highlight of the evening is the "Empower a Teen's Wish" gift card drive, aimed at providing holiday cheer for older "Littles" (teens) in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program.

Guests are encouraged to bring \$25 gift cards to ensure older teens get the holiday gifts they truly want. For each \$25 gift card donated, guests will receive one entry into a prize drawing.

"We are thrilled to partner with Burley Oak to host a relaxed and festive gathering this Giving Tuesday," said Executive Director Jessica Mimms. "Not only will 10% of food and drink sales directly support our crucial Youth Success Plans, but the gift card drive provides dignity and choice for our teens during the holidays. It's truly an empowering way to celebrate community."

Through customized development plans for each child served, Big Brothers Big Sisters is seeing local youth grow in remarkable ways. Children are building confidence as they discover their strengths, developing competence through new skills and supportive guidance, and strengthening their sense of caring as they form meaningful, positive relationships. Together, these qualities empower youth to believe in themselves, make healthy choices, and contribute to their community with pride.

By attending the event, guests are helping ensure local youth have the stability, support, and encouragement they need to grow emotionally, academically, and socially.

Guests can RSVP at www.shorebiglittle.org/frien dsgiving

Holiday activities planned for Dec. 6

Santa Breakfast, gift shop, vendor fair on tap for next Saturday

(Nov. 27, 2025) Join Ocean Pines Recreation & Parks for several fun holiday events at the Ocean Pines Community Center on Saturday, Dec. 6.

From 8 to 11 a.m., bring the entire family to enjoy Breakfast with Santa. Santa will arrive at approximately 8:30 a.m. and will be available for photos until 11 a.m. The cost is \$6 for ages 4-10, \$10 for ages 11 & over, and free for ages 3 and under and includes pancakes, sausage, juice, milk, coffee, pastries, and fruit. Attendees are encouraged to bring an unwrapped gift to be do-

nated to local charities in Worcester County, or nonperishable food to be donated to Ocean Pines families in need.

The Reindeer Lane Gift Shop will take place in the East Room from 8 a.m. – 11 a.m. This special holiday shop gives children ages 12 and under the opportunity to purchase gifts for their loved ones. All items are sold to kids for \$5 or less, with many items to choose from for both kids and adults. Admission is free, but donations of new or slightly worn items are greatly appreciated.

New this year is the Holiday Vendor Fair, happening from 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. in the Community Center Gym. Browse a variety of vendors

offering great items for Christmas gifts, including products from Pampered Chef, paper crafts, jewelry, custom art, tumbler cups, candles, and more. Admission is free and open to the public.

Additionally, Santa's Red Mailbox is now at the Community Center for local children to send letters to Santa. The elves have supplied us with special paper just for Santa's letters. Each envelope will come with a little something special and sparkly for each child. Santa's mailbox will be available until Dec. 20.

For more information on any of these events, contact Katie Goetzinger at 410-641-7052 or kgoetzinger@oceanpines.org.

Have an opinion?

We invite you to share it, but all letters are subject to verification, so please include your name and phone number. All letters are subject to editing for space and to protect the author and this newspaper from legal action. Email letters to editor@baysidegazette.com. For questions, call 410-723-6397.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The Pine Tones Chorus, pictured above, perform before a crowd at the 2024 concert. This year's event will be held Dec. 12 at the Community Church in Ocean Pines.

Pines Tones Chorus to hold Christmas concert

(Nov. 27, 2025) The Pine Tones Chorus is bubbling with excitement for this fall's family-friendly concert, The JOY of Christmas, which will take place at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 12, at the Community Church at Ocean Pines.

As an annual holiday gift to the community, admission is free to all, though the group will gratefully accept a goodwill offering to help defray expenses. Doors will open at 6:45, and seating for the concert is first-come, first-served. The 2024 concert was so popular that seating overflowed into the lobby.

Though officially an amateur com-

munity chorale, under the expert direction of Jenny Anderson, the 55 talented and dedicated singers strike a perfect balance between professional quality and light-hearted enjoyment. This uplifting approach has kept audiences coming back for more than 40 years.

The fall concert features a mix of full chorus and ensemble performances accompanied by live musicians and will include both sacred and secular music of the season.

In addition to traditional favorites, such as It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year, Let it Snow, and the Hallelujah Chorus, listeners will be treated to some beautiful new pieces as well as some familiar songs done in surprising and delightful new ways. The audience will be invited to join in singing Joy to the World, Angels We Have Heard on High, and Silent Night.

As a local, all-volunteer non-profit arts organization, the Pine Tones Chorus presents both Spring and Fall concerts every year and each season they also travel to several area senior centers to share the joy of music with those who are not able to come to the shows.

This season is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, through the Maryland State Arts Council and the Worcester County Arts Council, as well as the Choptank Foundation and the E. Bowen and Frances H. Quillin Foundation.

Crisafulli seeks police recruits

Continued from Page 21

tion with county leaders "in good faith."

"I remain committed to working collaboratively with our county leadership," he told OC Today-Dispatch. "My focus always has been, and will continue to be, ensuring that our deputies have the support, resources, and professional structure they need

to serve Worcester County at the highest level – and that includes equitable compensation."

Earlier this year, the commissioners approved a fiscal 2026 budget allocation for the Worcester County Sheriff's Office that included pay grade increases for active deputies and an entry-level pay increase from \$55,037 to \$62,132.



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25

Puzzles

MISQUOTING SHAKESPEARE BY RANDOLPH ROSS / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Randolph Ross, of Manhattan, is a retired high school principal. When he started constructing crosswords for The Times in 1991, he worked, as nearly everyone did then, by hand on graph paper. Nowadays crossword software helps him fill the grid. "Coming up with an original theme still gives me the most satisfaction," Randy says. "Writing an original clue also makes me happy."— W.S.

- 1 They're charged for long trips
- 7 Tool with a point
- 10 No longer in as good a place
- 18 Here
- 20 Early smartphone model of the 2000s
- 21 Conflict that ended with the Treaty of Nanking
- 22 King's assessment of his son the Crusader?
- 25 Parisian possessive
- 26 D.O.J. branch that deals with trafficking
- 27 Nickname heard in 8-Down 28 Harder to grasp, in
- a way
- 29 Done deal
- 30 "Swan Lake" role
- 32 Disney World souvenir
- 35 Davis of old Hollywood
- 36 The possibility of losing one's job, e.g.
- 38 Radiate
- 40 Santa's view on loyalty for those who help him?
- 46 "I didn't expect that!" 87 Schnozz, honker or
- 47 Corner key
- 48 Platt who starred in Broadway's "Dear Evan Hansen'
- 49 Marine menace

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

- 51 With 61-Down and 78-Across, "Food at this restaurant stinks, but the duck seems
- 56 Nail salon brand

fine"?

- 58 Gal from Israel
- 59 Something athletes strive to break
- 60 Dots on faces
- 61 Gam show purchas from Ryan S_acr_st
- 62 Customarily
- 64 Frequent question about the spelling of "Caribbean"?
- 68 Team transports
- 71 Inserted, as into a printer 72 It's over your head
- 73 Capture
- 76 No Mr. Nice Guy
- 77 Scratch the surface of, say
- 78 See 51-Across
- 81 Fly in the ointment
- 82 Weed killer
- 84 Where the C.D.C. is headquartered: Abbr.
- 86 Shake off
- beak?
- 94 Broke down
- 95 Castle fortifications
- 96 Leave red-faced
- 100 Sign of a smashing success
- 101 Right-leaning?
- 102 Olympian queen
- 106 Sunni or Shiite

- 108 One wearing a striped shirt, informally
- Arts, school in Santa Clarita
- 111 Pool equipment
- 112 Warning to a beachgoer on St. Patrick's Day?
- 118 Very quickly
- 119 Getting warm
- 120 "The Godfather" weapon
- 121 Movable parts of record players
- 122 "Might I _ 123 Competes for, as a contract

DOWN

- 1 Costume garments made from bedsheets
- Holmes, 2020s role for Millie Bobby Brown
- 3 Hub for K-pop
- 4 Many a casual fitted top
- 5 Flood protection?
- 6 Depot: Abbr.
- 7 Specialized skill
- 8 Wayne's world? 9 Rob of "The West
- Wing" 10 Tribulation
- 11 Get off the fence
- 12 Like dark green
- avocados 13 No-lose situation
- 14 Microphone inventor Berliner
- 15 Take full responsibility for something

- 16 Aspect
- 17 " Jacques'
- 19 Like some cameras and agendas
- 20 "Really?" 23 Honkers
- 24 Stand out
- 30 "... _quit!" 31 Spa handout
- 33 Formerly with law enforcement,
- informally 34 Garage job
- 37 What a detail-oriented person might "dot"
- 39 Animal house
- 40 Cuisine with boat noodles
- 41 No Mr. Nice Guy
- 42 Prefix suggesting low cost 43 Nature calls
- 44 Language that's the source of the word "khaki"
- 45 Earth Day subi.
- 46 Many a time
- 50 Absorbed, as a cost
- 52 Difficult position
- 53 Little untruths
- 54 Special
- 55 Uncle Sam's land, informally 57 Lead-in to dollar
- or chemical
- 58 Talk at length
- 61 See 51-Across 62 Gone wrong, for short?
- 63 L.A.'s _ Stadium, of the opening ceremony of the 2028 Olympics
- 64 "Scent of a Woman" dance 65 Twisted

112

118

121

- 66 Tried for a second term, sav
- 67 AAA job
- 68 Meditation sounds
- 69 TV role for Lucy Lawless
- 70 James of "Misery"
- 73 Author who coined "munchkin"
- 74 Campaign worker

- 75 Coll. senior's test 77 Selina
- on "Veep" 78 Parade attraction
- 79 On its way
- 80 Memorization tool _ Honor (honorific
- a judge)
- 83 Eastern ties
- 85 Represented
- 88 Wally , astronaut who commanded Apollo 7
- 89 Find charming 90 Lost shipment inquiry

122

- 91 "Papa Bear" of the
- N.F.L.
- 92 Final words 93 Partner of parks, for
- short
- 96 Scope 97 Spanish for "good"
- 98 Dam on the Nile 99 List of candidates
- 103 Mozart can be seen on some of them
- 104 Odd-numbered page 105 Ghost-faced
- 107 Israeli P.M. before
- Rabin 109 Europe's tallest active volcano
- 113 Channel for
- cinephiles "___ All That" (2021 rom-com)
- 115 Family man
- 116 "Marvy!"
- 117 Doctor's order, for short



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su do ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom **HARD - 58**

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.

Answers to last week's puzzles

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





OPTIMIST VISIT

The Ocean City-**Berlin Optimist** Club volunteers visited Pocomoke Elementary School to fingerprint five kindergarten classes for the Youth ID/Fingerprinting Program to further maintain the safety of local children. Pictured, from left, are Kevin O'Rourke, Lt. Governor and Treasurer Cynthia Malament, Mitch Frances, Larry Campbell, Paul Cook, Amanda **Koontz, Secretary** Jodi Seibenberg and Membership **Chairman Roger** Pacella.

SUBMITTED PHOTO/ BAYSIDE GAZETTE



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SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

WPS FUNDRAISER On Worcester Wednesday, Sept. 29, students and faculty at Worcester Preparatory School (WPS) came together to support Breast Cancer Awareness Month with a pink dress-down day fundraiser. Participants donated \$5 to benefit the Beebe Medical Foundation and its program offering free and reduced-cost women's health services. Each month, WPS students nominate charitable organizations for the school's Worcester Wednesday fundraiser. Student Olivia Soares sparked the effort to support Beebe Women's Health Services. Pictured, from left are girls varsity soccer players Addy Wisniewski, team captains Cora McClanahan and Olivia Soares and Coach Carol Hartnett.







SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

REPUBLICAN WOMEN CONVENTION

The Maryland Federation of Republican Women held their Fall Convention at the Ashore Resort and Beach Club in Ocean City on Saturday, Oct. 25. About 110 women from across the state attended and had a full day of business meetings, guest speakers and sharing friendship. The Republican Women of Worcester County was the host club with 16 members attending.

血血血	OPEN HOU	JSES	Nov. 27 - Dec. 4		金金金金
DAY/TIME	ADDRESS	BR/BA	STYLE	PRICE	AGENT/AGENCY
Fri-Mon 11am-4pm	Heron Harbour, 120th St., Bayside	1BR/2BR/3BR/4BR+	Condos, Towns & SF	-	Nanette Pavier/Holiday Real Estate
Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm	12430 Old Bridge Rd., West OC	2BR/2BA	Single Family from	from \$284,750	Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community
Friday Noon-2pm	608B Salt Spray Road Unit B, Ocean City	4BR/3.5BA	Townhome	\$749,900	Ann Holtz/Coldwell Banker Realty
Friday Noon-3pm	111 76th Street Unit 401, Ocean City	4BR/4.5BA	Condo \$	1,150,000	Candi Noyes/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	104 125th Street #106, Ocean City	3BR/2.5BA	Condo	\$575,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	6305 Atlantic Ave #301, Ocean City	3BR/3.5BA	Condo	\$1,550,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 2-4pm	14401 Tunnel Ave #263, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$249,900	Rob & Anne-Marie Bouse/ReMax/Advantage Realt
Saturday 11am-1pm	12401 Jamaica Ave #26001, Ocean City	1BR/1BA	Condo	\$304,900	Rob & Anne-Marie Bouse/ReMax/Advantage Realt
Saturday 11am-1pm	8 89th St #402 Xanadu, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$549,900	Katy Durham/Rick Meehan Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am-2pm	111 76th Street Unit 401, Ocean City	4BR/4.5BA	Condo	\$1,150,000	Candi Noyes/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am-2pm	11900 Coastal Hwy #102, Ocean City	3BR/3BA	Condo	\$659,900	Katy Durham/Rick Meehan Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am-3pm	12430 Old Bridge Rd, West OC	2BR/2BA	Single Family	from \$284,750	Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community
Saturday 11am-1pm	12300 Jamaica Ave #103, Ocean City	1BR/1BA	Condo	\$254,900	Rob & Anne-Marie Bouse/ReMax/Advantage Realty
Saturday Noon-2pm	13000 Marina View Lane #27, West OC	4BR/4BA	Townhome	\$1,385,000	Joan Buchanan/Holiday Real Estate
Saturday Noon-3pm	11204 Coastal Hwy #3C HPS, Ocean City	2 BR/2 BA	Condo	\$674,900	Tim Meadowcroft/Long & Foster Real Estate
Saturday Noon-3pm	36304 Royal Tern Drive, Selbyville, DE	4BR/2.5BA	Townhome	\$484,000	Tim Meadowcroft/Long & Foster Real Estate
Saturday 11:30am-1:3	30pm 6 60th Street Unit 102, Ocean City	3BR/3BA	Condo	\$1,400,000	Shawn Kotwica/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 2-4pm	301 Atlantic Ave #205 Polynesian, Ocean Ci	ty 1BR/1BA	Condo	\$395,000	Katy Durham/Rick Meehan Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	204 S Heron Drive #202G, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$575,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	6305 Atlantic Ave #301, Ocean City	3BR/3.5BA	Condo	\$1,550,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 2-4pm	11877 Man O War Lane, Berlin	3BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$699,000	Lauren Bunting/Keller Williams Realty
Sunday Noon-2pm	111 76th Street Unit 401, Ocean City	4BR/4.5BA	Condo	\$1,150,000	Candi Noyes/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday Noon-2 pm	27450 Covered Bridge Trail, Harbeson, DE	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$550,000	Katie Landon/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday Noon-3pm	2 80th St. Unit 212 Diamond Head, Ocean C	ity 3BR/2BA	Condo	\$519,000	Tim Meadowcroft/Long & Foster Real Estate

Calendar

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

Fri., Nov. 28

43RD ANNUAL HOLIDAY SHOPPERS FAIR

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. More than 120 exhibitors, door prizes, children's activities, Santa Claus, Non-Shoppers Lounge. Admission cost is \$5 for the weekend. https://www.ococean.com/event/holiday-shoppers-fair/2447/, 410-723-8605

ICE ICE BERLIN & TREE LIGHTING

Downtown Berlin, 5-8 p.m. Featuring 45 Holiday themed carved ice sculptures, tree lighting at 6 p.m. and greet Santa at Kringle Kottage on Artisan's Green. The Calvin B. Taylor House Museum will be selling hot chocolate and Ocean City Pipes and Drums performance. Berlin shops will be open late. https://berlinmainstreet.com/tree-lighting-celebra-

CANDLELIGHT TOURS

Calvin B. Taylor House, 208 N. Main St., Berlin, 5-7 p.m. Held during the Ice Ice Berlin event. www.taylorhousemuseum.org

JOLLY ROGER WORLD FAMOUS BLACK FRIDAY SALE!

SpeedWorld Building at Jolly Roger Amusement Park, 2001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. All 2026 Jolly Roger passes are 50% off. Music and live local coverage from Froggy 99.9 and free hot chocolate and Christmas cookies and pastries. https://jollyrogerpark.com/black-friday/, 410-289-8617

2025 ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CARNIVAL & **BLACK FRIDAY SALE**

Trimper Rides of Ocean City, 700 S. Atlantic Ave., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Indoor rides, Santa's Cocoa & Cookies Station, Snowball Fight Area, Santa's mailbox, Black Friday sale on season and mega passes. Passes must be purchased at Guest Services. https://trimperrides.com, 410-289-8617

KIGHTS OF COLUMBUS BINGO

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

Sat., Nov. 29

43RD ANNUAL HOLIDAY SHOPPERS FAIR

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. More than 120 exhibitors, door prizes, children's activities, Santa Claus, Non-Shoppers Lounge. Admission cost is \$5 for the weekend.

https://www.ococean.com/event/holiday-shoppers-fair/2447/, 410-723-8605

CHARACTER BREAKFAST

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 9-11 a.m. Kids can wear PJs and enjoy a festive breakfast and crafts surrounded by some of the most beloved characters (Mickey, Stitch, etc.). Tickets: https://www.ococean.com/event/character-breakfast/2501/.

FREE CARRIAGE RIDES

Downtown Berlin, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Take a horse-drawn drive around town. https://berlinmainstreet.com/berlinholiday-events/

MEET SANTA

Kringle Kottage located on Artisans Green, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. https://berlinmainstreet.com/berlin-holiday-events/

15TH ANNUAL HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS WITH SANTA IN THE PARK

White Horse Park, 239 Ocean Parkway, Ocean Pines, 6:30-8 p.m. Tree Lighting Ceremony at 6:30 p.m. Light up the trees sponsored by Ocean Pines social clubs, local businesses and families. Also, the announcement of the 2026 Pup of the Pines winner. 410-641-7052

BERLIN'S MERRY MARKETPLACE

Berlin Main St. & Maryland Welcome Center, 14 S. Main St., 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Holiday market. ocberlinrotary@gmail.com

ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BREAKFAST BUFFET

Whalevsville United Methodist, 11716 Sheppards Crossing Road, 7-10 a.m. Buffet will include pancakes, bacon, sausage, scrapple, scrambled eggs, chipped beef, hash brown potatoes, toast, fruit and assorted beverages. Cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children.

2025 ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CARNIVAL & BLACK FRIDAY SALE

Trimper Rides of Ocean City, 700 S. Atlantic Ave., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Indoor rides, Santa's Cocoa & Cookies Station, Snowball Fight Area, Santa's mailbox. Black Friday sale on season and mega passes. Passes must be purchased at Guest Services. https://trimperrides.com, 410-289-8617

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-

https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages /farmers-artisans-market

Sun., Nov. 30

43RD ANNUAL HOLIDAY SHOPPERS FAIR

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. More than 120 exhibitors, door prizes, children's activities, Santa Claus, Non-Shoppers Lounge. Admission cost is \$5 for the weekend. https://www.ococean.com/event/holiday-shoppers-fair/2447/, 410-723-8605

MEET SANTA

Kringle Kottage located on Artisans Green, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. https://berlinmainstreet.com/berlin-holiday-events/

SEWING FOR A CAUSE

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

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

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

Mon., Dec. 1

WINTERFEST ENCHANTED EVENINGS

Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City, 5-8:30 p.m. Hop aboard a buggy for a horse-drawn carriage ride through the Winterfest of Lights. Reserve 2 or 6 person carriages or individual seats on the 12 seat carriage. https://www.ococean.com/winterfest/

STORY TIME: BUNNIES

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

AFTERSCHOOL ART

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 4:30 p.m. This month's theme is mixed media art. Learn about it, then create and construct it during the program. For ages 6-11 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

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

Mondays - Atlantic General Hospital, Conference Room 1, 9733 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 5-6:30 p.m. Take Off Pounds Sensibly is a weekly support and educational group promoting weight loss and living a healthy lifestyle. Rose Campion, 410-641-0157

BRIDGE

Mondays - Ocean City 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., Dec. 2

GIVING TUESDAY

Art League of Ocean City, 502 94th St., Ocean City. Donate at the Art League: ocart.org/donate or donate on the Shore Gives 365 page: https://www.shoregives365.org/story/ocart-givingtuesday. Help to support the Art League's free programs and more.

WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN'S 5TH ANNUAL DELICIOUS DESSERT AUCTION

Online desserts auction fundraiser for Women Supporting Women. Check out the auction and register to bid at: https://auction.biddingforgood.com/au ction/341820722. 410-548-7880

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

PLAY TIME

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 10:30 a.m. Join in for a variety of activities and toys. Play and socialize with other families. For ages 0-5 years. 410-957-0878. www.worcesterlibrary.org

OC KNITTING GROUP

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

STORY TIME

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

MASTER GARDENERS PLANT CLINIC

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

Continued on Page 28

Calendar

Continued from Page 27 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

COLLAGE ORNAMENTS

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 2 p.m. Make a collage ornament using modern art post card images. Registration required: 410-524-1818. www.worcesterlibrary.org

CROSS FARMS POP-UP FARMERS MARKET

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

BEACH HEROES-OC

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

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

Tuesdays - Berlin Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, 212 West St., Berlin, 7

p.m. www.jw.org

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY

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

OC KNITTING CLUB

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

ARGENTINE TANGO PRACTICE

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

ZUMBA TONING TUESDAYS

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

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT AND WELLNESS GROUP

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

Wed., Dec. 3

GRACE PARKER BREAKFAST

First Presbyterian Church of Ocean City, 1301 Philadelphia Ave., 7-11 a.m.

WINE CORK CRAFT

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 11 a.m. Join in for this winter-themed crafting session. Limit 10. Registration necessary: 410-957-0878. www.worcesterlibrary.org

PUZZLE SWAP

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

PETER FLETCHER IN CONCERT

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 2 p.m. Classical guitarist Peter Fletcher performs a solo recital of holiday music. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

FAMILY FUN NIGHTS

Wednesdays (through Aug. 20) - Ocean Pines Yacht Club Pool, 1 Mumford's Landing Road, 6-8 p.m. DJ, games and prizes. Food available for purchase. Ad-

mission is \$3 for OP swim members, \$5 for OP residents, \$7 for non-residents and free for non-swimmers. Cash only. 410-641-7052, oceanpines.org

KIWANIS CLUB MEETING

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

CASH BINGO

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

ONGOING EVENTS

SEND LETTERS TO SANTA

Drop off letters to Santa at the red mailbox in the Ocean Pines Community Center, Nov. 25 to Dec. 20. Include child's name and address so Santa can respond.

LETTERS TO SANTA

Drop off letters to Santa at the Berlin Welcome Center, 14 S. Main Street. Receive a letter back with a coupon for a free treat. BerlinMainStreet.com

PRESS



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