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DECEMBER 25, 2025

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Inside: The Year in Pictures



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YEAR IN PHOTOS

In keeping with our annual end-of-year tradition, the final issue the Bay-side Gazette will feature photos depicting many of the news and fea-tures that dominated Ocean Pines, Berlin and Worcester County in 2025. The pages contain a mixture of submitted, courtesy, file and staff photos with descriptions reminding viewers why they ran in the first place.

Next week, for the first issue of 2026, we will return to our regular news coverage.

From our family to yours, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



PHOTO COURTESY OF SARA GORFINKEL AND CHAMBER

BERLIN AWARD

Dr. Melissa Reid, president of the Berlin Heritage Foundation as well as art teacher at Buckingham Elementary, was surprised in January with the Berlin Award at the annual awards banquet put on by the Berlin Chamber of Commerce. Pictured, from left, are last year's recipient Normie Bunting, Councilman Steve Green, award co-presenter Cam Bunting, Reid, Mayor Zack Tyndall and Council members Jay Knerr and Dean Burrell.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

TOUCH OF ITALY

Touch of Italy representatives Robert Ciprietti and Rick Lawrence, center back, are pictured with OPA Board members and staff in mid-January. It was announced back then the Ocean Pines Asso-ciation has secured a five-year deal with Touch of Italy Group as the community's new food and beverage contractor for their three service locations — the Ocean Pines Yacht Club, the Ocean Pines Beach Club in Ocean City and the Clubhouse Bar and Grille.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WCPS

SCHOOL BOARD SWEARING IN

At the January meeting, recently re-elected members of the Worcester County Board of Education were administered the oath of office for their next terms. Pictured with Clerk of Court Susan Braniecki are Board members Donald C. Smack, Sr., Elena McComas and Jon Andes. At this week's meeting, Board President Todd Ferrante was nominated and motioned to remain as president for the next two years. Board member Bill Buchanan was also motioned to remain as vice president.

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YEAR IN PHOTOS



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

THE ADKINS COMPANY FIRE

A devastating fire gutted one of Berlin's oldest businesses early Jan. 29, The Adkins Company hardware store, founded in 1908, and lumber yard on Harrison Avenue. Nobody was hurt. Fire companies from Berlin, Ocean City, Newark, Snow Hill, Powellville, and Willards responded. They contained the flames to their point of origin, and brought the two-alarm fire under control within an hour. Some firefighters remained on the scene for several hours more.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

PENNEWELL REMEMBRANCE

Members and leadership of the Berlin Fire Company each February attend the Sunday service at Stevenson United United Methodist to recognize the memory of former church and BFC member Franklin Pennewell. Feb. 8, 2025 marked the 90th year on the first Sunday in February that Pennewell's passing was observed in his memory. Pennewell's granddaughter was in attendance. The church gathered with the BFC after the service for a meal and fellowship.

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PHOTOS BY ERIK DOWELL

OCEAN PINES SNOWFALL

Ocean Pines is pictured in early February with an elevated perspective when about seven inches of snow fell over the region.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

EDUCATIONAL RECOGNITION

Phil Cropper and Nick Zlotorzynski were recognized in early January at Worcester Tech for being named the Maryland ProStart Teacher of the Year and Maryland ProStart Student of the Year, respectively.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

GOOD OPA NEIGHBORS

OPA Board President Stuart Lakernick recognized the Teal Bay Mitzvah Team with a Good Neighbor Award at the February Board meeting.



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YEAR IN PHOTOS



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

AGH BENEFITS FROM BREAD SALE

On Wednesday, March 5, Worcester Preparatory School (WPS) teachers Annie Seipp and Cynthia Phillips and their students presented members of the Atlantic General Hospital Foundation with a donation raised from the annual 3rd Grade Bread Sale. The annual sale is part of a hands-on learning lesson combining English, Science, Social Studies (civics and community), Mathematics, and Philanthropy. The project is modeled like a small business, with the young entrepreneurs baking bread, selling it to Lower School classmates in a “caf  ”, and donating the proceeds to charity. The third grade class is pictured with their teachers as well as Head of Lower School Dr. Sara Timmons (second row, far left); and, back from left, Steve Green, AGH Foundation Board past chair; Michael Cylc, AGH Foundation Board treasurer; Hillary Mozeik, AGH Foundation assistant; Ryan Kirby, AGH Foundation Board vice chair; Laura Powell, AGH Foundation community relations officer; and Jessica Jersey, AGH Foundation donor relations officer.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

DR. ANDES AT OCES

Ocean City Elementary School on March 17 welcomed Worcester County Board of Education member Dr. Jon Andes as a guest reader for Read Across America Day. Fourth grade students had the honor of hearing Dr. Andes read his very own published book, "The Legacy of Billy Lee: An American Hero." He also presented Mrs. Moeller's class with a copy of the book for their classroom library.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

STUDENTS TESTIFY

Two Stephen Decatur High School student-athletes testified March 5 in Annapolis in support of Senate Bill 588, also known as the Fairness in Girls Sports Act that requires only biological females participate in girls athletics. Above, Decatur student April Bondurant testifies alongside James Crawford, 36-year volleyball and soccer referee; Senator Mary Beth Carozza; and Decatur student Brook Berquist.

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YEAR IN PHOTOS



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

BULL DONATES TO AGH

The Bull on the Beach presented a check for \$25,000 to the Atlantic General Hospital Foundation in March. The donation was made as part of the Bull on the Beach's sponsorship of the foundation's annual Penguin Swim event, in which they have been the Legacy Sponsor for 31 consecutive years. To date, Bull on the Beach and their fundraising initiatives have raised over \$450,000 for Atlantic General Hospital. Pictured, front from left, are Steven Weisenberg, Bull on the Beach; Toni Keiser, AGH vice president of public relations; Laura Powell, AGH Foundation community relations officer; Michele Knopp, Bull on the Beach; and Thomas Knopp, Bull on the Beach; and, back, Matthew Saloney, Bull on the Beach; Michael Cylc, AGH Foundation treasurer; Jessica Jersey, AGH Foundation donor relations officer; and Hillary Mozeik, AGH Foundation assistant.

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YEAR IN PHOTOS



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

NEW HOME FOR RESIDENT

Habitat for Humanity of Worcester announced in April it broke ground on a new home build project in Bishopville that will provide local resident Deonhya Purnell the opportunity to become a home-owner. Purnell is pictured with her sons, Adarein Manual and Amarian Manuel, during last fall's football season at Stephen Decatur High School.

FEE OUTRAGE

Worcester County Commissioner Chip Bertino attended a public Ocean Pines Board of Directors meeting in late March to inform residents of a proposed water/waste-water fee structure that could spike rates. Bertino and Commissioner Jim Bunting told board members that one budget plan could raise water and wastewater quarterly bills by an estimated \$32 for the 18,000 ratepayers within 11 Worcester County service areas.

TARA FISCHER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE



TARA FISCHER / BAYSIDE GAZETTE

SKATE PARK PROGRESS

We Heart Berlin representatives Tony Weeg and Jeff Smith and Berlin Public Works Director Jimmy Charles conducted a walkthrough in late April at the site of a future skate park, Heron Park, and noted the structure's dimensions. Officials said the step is vital to ensure that the public works department, which is also in the process of designing a new building in Heron Park, does not overlap with the skate park area.



BERLIN KINDNESS RIVER

Featuring more than 1,000 hand painted rocks by students from local schools, the new Community River of Kindness opened April 12 in Berlin at Stephen Decatur Park. Students who painted rocks were from Pocomoke Elementary School, Worcester Youth & Family, Stephen Decatur High School, Most Blessed Sacrament Catholic School, Snow Hill Middle School, Stephen Decatur Middle School, St. Francis de Sales Catholic School, Willards Elementary School, Worcester Recreation Center Afterschool and Cedar Chapel Special School. The Stephen Decatur Middle School's Kiwanis Builders Club helped built it. The path was sponsored by the Town of Berlin and Humphreys Foundation and spearheaded by the Jesse Klump Memorial Fund.

SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

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YEAR IN PHOTOS



BRIAN SHANE/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

AGH, TIDAL HEALTH MERGE

The landmark merger between Atlantic General Hospital and TidalHealth was finalized May 1 at AGH by, from left, Doug Cook, AGH Board of Trustees chairman; Don Owrey, president of AGH; Steve Leonard, president/CEO of TidalHealth, and Memo Diriker, board chair at TidalHealth.



BRIAN SHANE/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

SCHOOL BUDGET

Advocates gathered ahead of a public budget hearing in May to show their support for a fully funded Worcester County Board of Education budget.



PHOTO COURTESY DANA MARIE PHOTOGRAPHY

SDHS GRADUATION

Fireworks set off and caps went flying in late May at the end of Stephen Decatur High School's graduation ceremony, pictured above.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

WPS GRADUATION

Members of Worcester Preparatory School's Class of 2025 include, front from left, Aurora Holland, Mikayla Towns, Nazli Unal, Danielle Carr, Emma Zajdel, Angeline Todorov, Avery Roselle, Lydia Schwartz, Alicia Walker and Savannah Palmisano; second row, from left, Frank Miller, Michael De-Palma, Lindsay Bruner, Abigail Ament, Sydney Tingle, Jayden Scopp, Jennifer Kimbrew, Edward Martikyan, Nathan Montague and Aleksey Klimins; third row, from left, Travis Netting, William Wells, Briar Parsons, Landon Schul, Ryan Lenox, Ryan Mann, Ben McGovern, Lucas Nicastro and Jack Lynch; and, back, Dillon Scopp, Andrew McCormick, Allen Zhang, James Haley, Owen West and Jackson Fernley. The outdoor graduation was held in late May.



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YEAR IN PHOTOS



TARA FISCHER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

WWII VET HONORED

In June, George Kerchner, a decorated World War II hero with connections to the Maryland Eastern Shore, was honored with a brick dedication at the Worcester County Veterans Memorial Park at Ocean Pines, 81 years after the veteran's valiant wartime actions. Kerchner, who passed away on Feb. 17, 2012, just days before his 94th birthday, was recognized with a paver at the remembrance site for his heroic behavior on D-Day.



PHOTO COURTESY BUCKINGHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

TORCH RUN

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics was held June 2. The event kicked off on the Ocean City Boardwalk and made a stop at area schools before ending in Berlin.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

BATH TUB RACES

The Berlin Chamber of Commerce's 35th annual Berlin Bathtub Races were held on Main Street in June. There were 16 teams competing for bragging rights with Pohanka in the end repeating as champions. The husband-and-wife team, right, from Pohanka went undefeated in their heats during the night. In the finals, Pohanka defeated the team of Seaside Plumbing.

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YEAR IN PHOTOS



STEVE GREEN/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

3RD OF JULY IN BERLIN

Berlin kicked off the holiday weekend early with fireworks on Thursday, July 3. The fireworks were set off from Heron Park off Old Ocean City Boulevard.



TARA FISCHER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

NEW LOT ACHIEVING HOPES

The new Berlin parking lot on West Street is pictured in July for the Hot Summer Swing and on Sunday for the weekly farmers market. Town officials estimated more than 110 vehicles utilized the new lot. The parking lot has been leased by the town to provide overflow parking during periods of high demand. The lot is free to use but officials are evaluating payment options for the future.

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YEAR IN PHOTOS



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVE DODSON

SDHS RAINBOW

A rainbow is pictured in early July after a quick downpour over the Robert G. Knox Field at Louis H. Taylor Stadium at Stephen Decatur High School.

STREET PERFORMER

Bubbles from a performer entertained young attendees at July's Hot Summer Swing and Taylor Bank Cheers to 150 Years event.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GOOD BOY MANUFACTURING



YOUNG ANGLERS

Over 40 kids plus their parents and grandparents attended the Ocean Pines Anglers Club Teach A Kid To Fish day at the South Pond in Ocean Pines in July. Young aspiring anglers were introduced to tackle, bait selection, regulations, casting and safe environmental practices. Many young anglers tried out their newly acquired skills and were rewarded with several nice catches.

SUBMITTED PHOTO/ BAYSIDE GAZETTE



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BAYSIDE  GAZETTE

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YEAR IN PHOTOS



BRIAN SHANE/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

BLESSING OF THE COMBINES

The Blessing of the Combines was held in Snow Hill in August, attracting approximately 8,000 people to celebrate local farmers.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

DECATUR PARK FLAG POLES

The Town of Berlin hosted a dedication ceremony for the new flag poles at Stephen Decatur Park in August. The flag poles were gifted to the town by U.S. Navy veteran Jack Gillen, who is well known in the area for his radio background as well as his family's hospitality background. Gillen dedicated the flag poles to Commodore Stephen Decatur, a distinguished naval hero who was born near what is today Berlin. A memorial plaque recognizing Decatur is located along the park's walking path near the new flag poles. Town officials and other dignitaries are pictured with Gillen and his family.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

HOUSE OF HOPE

Officials in August celebrated the groundbreaking of a new House of Hope supportive living campus, which will feature transitional housing, an expanded thrift store, a larger food pantry and administrative offices.



TARA FISCHER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

PEACH FESTIVAL

Thousands attended the Berlin Peach Festival in August to celebrate the fruit once grown and harvested in the historic town.

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YEAR IN PHOTOS



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BERLIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BERLIN PEPPER FESTIVAL

Berlin turned into a spice lovers paradise in August for the first-ever Chili Peppers Festival, hosted by the Berlin Chamber of Commerce. Hot Sauce Band, pictured, kicked off the live entertainment on Main Street followed by competitions and the Mariachi Los Mensajeros band.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

OPA BOARD ELECTION

Re-elected Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors members Stuart Lakernick, Monica Rakowski and Steve Jacobs are pictured at the August annual meeting.



STEVE GREEN/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

TOP CHEF

Five Berlin chefs showed off their skills on North Main Street in Berlin during the town's farmers market in August. The event was timed and attracted hundreds to Berlin to observe the chefs prepare their dishes, which had to include products found at the market. The dishes were judged by a panel and announced at noon. The winner was Blacksmith owner/chef Justine Zegna, who received a "golden ticket" to participate in the World Food Championships in Indiana.

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YEAR IN PHOTOS

BUCKINGHAM BACKPACKS

The Worcester Preparatory School (WPS) Girls Soccer team collected new backpacks this fall and filled them with essential school supplies to donate to Buckingham Elementary School in Berlin. This tradition began more than 10 years ago, started by alumna and former teammate Marissa Grosso ('18). Head Coach Carol Hartnett proudly continues the legacy each season, coordinating the effort in partnership with the WPS Volunteer Club. Hartnett said, "This project has always been about more than soccer. It's about teaching our players the value of giving back and supporting younger students in our community." Pictured are captains Olivia Soares and Cora McClanahan with Hartnett and backpacks filled with school supplies before delivering them to Buckingham Elementary School.

SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE



PHOTO COURTESY GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

DEPUTIES HONORED

Worcester County Sheriff's Deputies Mark Shayne and Earl Buffa (center, with ribbons) were honored this fall in Ocean City by (from left) Malik Aziz, president of the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association, Maryland Governor Wes Moore, Worcester County Sheriff Matt Crisafulli, and Sheriff Jim DeWees of Carroll County, who heads the Maryland Sheriff's Association.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

PINES CELL TOWER PLANNED

Pictured is what a cell phone tower in Ocean Pines could like look, blending in with the surrounding community to resemble a tree. The structure will be placed near the maintenance building at the Ocean Pines golf course.

SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE



PUPPY SWIM

The Mumford's Landing Pool in Ocean Pines hosted in September its annual doggie swim benefitting the Worcester County Humane Society. The event is held each year before the pool is closed for the season. The event serves as a fundraiser for the shelter with supply and monetary donations welcomed.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NICK DENNY PHOTOGRAPHY



OCES DONATION

The members of Ocean City Firefighters & Paramedics - IAFF Local 4269 donated school supplies to Ocean City Elementary School in September. The donation included backpacks, pencil cases, markers, lunch boxes, and headphones, all aimed at helping students start the school year with the tools they need to succeed. This initiative is part of Local 4269's ongoing commitment to supporting the Ocean City community both in and out of uniform.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WCPS

DECATUR MURAL

Morgan's Message founder Dona Rodgers was joined by Worcester County Superintendent of Schools Annette Wallace and administrators, teachers and student-athletes at Stephen Decatur High School in September to celebrate the grand opening of the dedication wall behind the stadium. Rodgers was the mom of Morgan, a former Division I lacrosse player who died by suicide after a mental health battle linked to a devastating knee injury she suffered.



CAR FOR CROPPER

Worcester County Teacher of the Year Phil Cropper was presented on the first day of school in September with a Jeep vehicle to use this school year, courtesy of the Hertrich dealership. Cropper is pictured being surprised with his new ride outside Worcester Tech, where he leads the culinary arts program.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WCPS

BAYSIDE GAZETTE

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YEAR IN PHOTOS



PHOTO COURTESY OFFICE OF ANDY HARRIS.

WIND FARM MEETING

Congressman Andy Harris arranged the Sept. 24 meeting at Sunset Grille in West Ocean City for stakeholders to discuss proposed offshore wind farm projects in the Atlantic Ocean.



TARA FISCHER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

KEEP BERLIN COOL

A tree grown from seeds of an over 2,000-year-old bald cypress in North Carolina, the oldest of its kind in the Eastern United States, found its way to the Town of Berlin's Stephen Decatur Park this fall. On Tuesday, Oct. 21, Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall, with help from environmental activists and professionals, planted a tree at Stephen Decatur Park as part of the "Keep Berlin Cool" initiative, led by the municipality's Horticultural Advisory Committee. That planting was in honor of Joan Maloof for her efforts in securing the prehistoric seeds.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

BERLIN MURAL

In November, the Berlin Historic District Commission voted to approve a mural proposed for a building in town. The mural, to be painted by local artist Evan Fitzgerald, is planned for the exterior side of the Poole Building at 10 South Main Street. The wall decoration would conceal the structure's unattractive cinder block and further the town's mission to highlight native talent and prioritize artistry, creating a colorful and attractive place to live and visit.



STEVE GREEN/BAYSIDE GAZETTE.

OCTOBERFEST

Beautiful fall weather and a full slate of entertainment and brew options combined for a memorable Octoberfest in downtown Berlin in mid-October.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

WORCESTER PREP DONATION

On Worcester Wednesday, Sept. 24, students and faculty at Worcester Preparatory School (WPS) joined together to celebrate National Literacy Month by collecting children's books for local organizations and libraries. Thanks to the generosity of the WPS community, the effort brought in more than 1,200 books. This month's Worcester Wednesday initiative was held in partnership with WPS alum Riley Schoch and his literacy nonprofit, Words for Winners. Each month, WPS students nominate charitable organizations for the school's Worcester Wednesday fundraiser. To launch this year's program, seniors Catherine Cullen and Emily Patrowicz volunteered as student sponsors, raising awareness and rallying support across campus. In exchange for donating books, students and staff enjoyed a casual dress day while showing their commitment to literacy. Above, Cullen and Patrowicz stand with a portion of the nearly 1,200 children's books collected on Worcester Wednesday in support of National Literacy Month, in partnership with alum Riley Schoch and Words for Winners.

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Puzzles

CHANGE LOCATIONS

BY ZACHARY EDWARD-BROWN AND JOHN KUGELMAN / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Zachary Edward-Brown is a 16-year-old high school junior in Highland Park, Ill. John Kugelman, of Gainesville, Va., is a software engineer and veteran crossword maker. Zachary reached out to John for help in developing this puzzle's theme. They did everything jointly — brainstorming examples, constructing the grid and writing clues. “Zachary is a natural-born constructor,” John says. “I didn't find out he's a teenager until we were done.” — W.S.

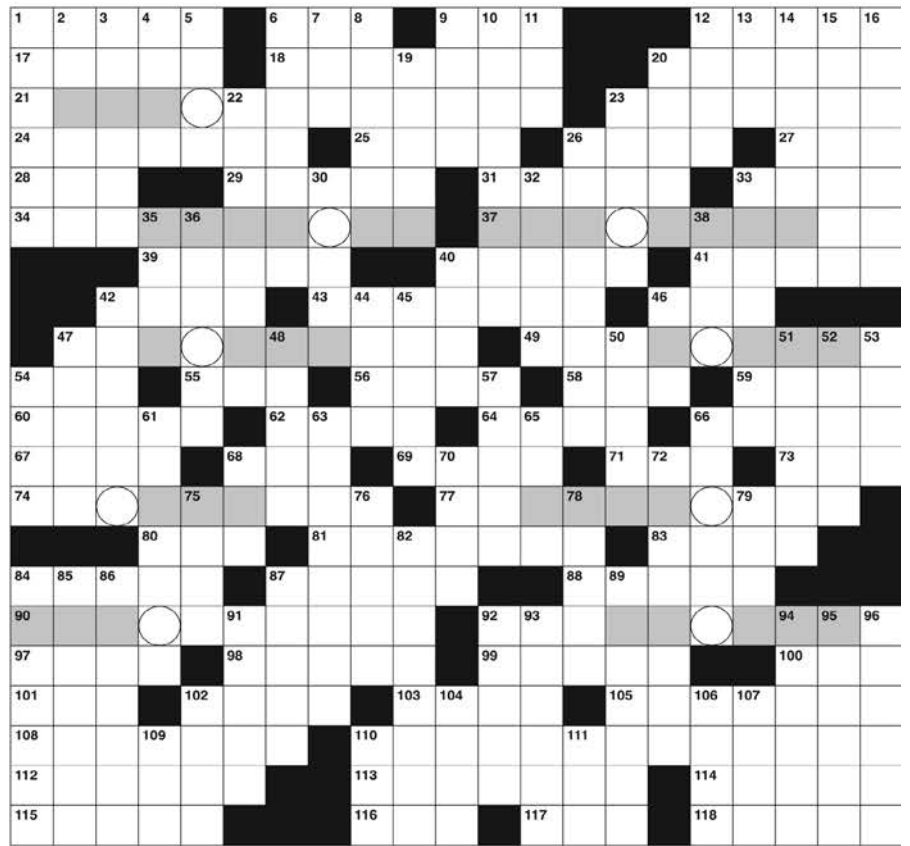
ACROSS
1 Marvel superhero who can manipulate weather patterns
6 Something fun to take out for a spin
9 Shaquille O'Neal's alma mater, for short
12 Parts of a hand
17 Irritate
18 Recaps
20 Paul whose house is one of the 16 historic sites of Boston's Freedom Trail
21 False alarm announcement?
23 Jedi in training
24 Sensible
25 TV host Brzezinski
26 No. 1 choice, in slang
27 “No ____, ands or butts!”
28 Pollution-fighting org.
29 “Game of Thrones” actor Gillen
31 River that borders the Black Forest
33 “Render ____ Caesar ...”
34 Major coin producer
37 Viking I or II
39 Astronaut Ochoa, the first Hispanic woman in space
40 Nickname for Mark's unsevered best friend in “Severance”
41 They turn red litmus paper blue
42 First chimpanzee to orbit Earth
43 Football blocker?
46 Hair-raising stuff

DOWN
47 Remodel and resell some real estate
49 Marching band tempo setters
54 Who said “It's hard to be humble when you're as great as I am”
55 Season to enjoy une glace
56 Ruler before 1917
58 “Black-ish” ailer
59 It's a numbers game
60 Clothing for SWAT teams
62 “The Simpsons” character who becomes obsessed with crossword puzzles
64 Puff piece?
66 Like the number of Oscars vis-à-vis the number of Emmys
67 Plant watcher, for short
68 Camera type, in brief
69 Site of some Santa sightings
71 Longtime record label of Elvis Presley
73 911 responder
74 “Hilarious!”
77 “I mean, kind of ...”
80 “Don't give up!”
81 ~ or ~, in logic
83 Beat poet ____ Cassidy
84 Like some milk, idiomatically
87 ____ on the past
88 Indication of bad service
90 “Much obliged”
92 Crossed the International Date Line from east to west, or west to east (depending on how you look at it)
97 Bundled up

ACROSS
98 Articles are written in this
99 Brand name for naproxen
100 ____ Miss
101 Doll that comes in multiple body types, skin tones, eye colors and hair colors
102 Drink known also as “honey wine”
103 Frosty
105 Subject of Newton's first law
108 Enjoying a soak
110 1980 horror film starring William Hurt ... or what the shaded squares contain?
112 Fundamental rules of math
113 Loopy writing
114 Star pitcher?
115 “Fiddler on the Roof” matchmaker
116 Letters for an unscheduled event
117 Prefix with natal
118 Like a bubble bath

DOWN
1 Relinquish
13 Director DuVernay
14 Turns back the clock, maybe?
15 Opposite of volunteer
16 Parts of many robots in robot-sumo
19 Area inside the free-throw line, in basketball slang
20 “Gaspard de la Nuit” composer
22 Addresses angrily
23 Variety of violet
26 Urban safety hazard
30 Australia's largest carnivorous mammal
32 Word used 10 times in Roger Ebert's review of “North” (1994)
33 Dissimilar
35 Part of a legendary boast
36 Skips all the ceremony?
38 The brother in “Am I my brother's keeper?”
40 What might be made while clasping one's hands
42 Engineer Gray who, arguably, invented the telephone — and battled Alexander Graham Bell over it in court for years
44 Ballpark figure
45 Kind of tea
46 Sierra automaker
47 Shylock's security
48 Adele song with the lyric “I must have called a thousand times”
50 Nonpremium option in a rideshare app
51 Gaming mogul Gabe
52 Ernst Stavro Blofeld, to James Bond

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



ACROSS
53 Put into piles, perhaps
54 Swear
57 Parking space for an Airstream, say, in brief
61 Did some school reporting?
63 Exceptionally hard timber
65 Amy Winehouse, e.g.
66 Thumbprint alternative on iPhones
68 Reluctant to ask out one's crush, maybe
70 Particularly particular

DOWN
72 Cafeterias
75 Like many indie films
76 Many characters in the 2007 comedy “Superbad”
78 He had a Billboard Hot 100 hit with “Rubber Duckie”
79 Tortilla de patatas, por ejemplo
82 Where high schoolers work on their numbers?
84 Starship's medical facility
85 Ren faire prop akin to a halberd

ACROSS
86 “Sign me up!”
87 Hair-care item associated with Black culture
89 Like YouTube offerings
91 Commences
92 Rough drafts?
93 Interview guest whom Ali G calls “my man Buzz Lightyear here”
94 Like lowercase i's and j's

DOWN
95 Sci-fi sequel of 1986
96 Like soft rolls
102 Wordless entertainment
104 Other, to Octavio
106 Brief announcements from a pilot
107 ____ alla bolognese (slow-cooked sauce)
109 Like hell!
110 Play a part, or part of a play
111 Part of N.Y.E.

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HARD - 54

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

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

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

C	O	I	F	S		I	P	A	S	S		A	H	A	B		A	L	P	O		
U	B	O	L	T		W	A	S	A	T		P	A	C	E		P	O	O	H		
P	O	W	E	R		C	O	U	P	L	E		B	I	R	D	B	R	A	I	N	
S	E	A	A	I	R		L	I	A	R	S		R	E	E	L		N	N	E		
						V	A	R		C	A	N	O	E			L	I	O	T	T	A
C	A	B	L	E		G	U	Y		M	O	U	N	T	A	I	N	G	O	A	T	
H	U	R	O	N		N	I	B		P	R	E	V	A	I	L						
O	T	I	C		A	S	P	E	N	S		O	R	E		S	A	S	S	Y		
M	O	T	I	O	N	D	E	T	E	C	T	O	R				L	O	W	S		
P	T	A		M	O	E	S			G	A	I	T	E	R		G	A	V	E	L	
U	N	M	A	D	E		P	A	R	E	S		O	N	E	S	I	E				
A	N	N	A		P	A	R	T	E	D		O	M	E	N		E	T	C			
N	E	I	N		S	E	E	D	Y		C	H	A	R	A	C	T	E	R			
T	R	A	C	E		O	K	S		Y	E	S	A	N	D		L	E	N	A		
					A	M	O	R	O	S	O		A	R	T		C	U	R	E	S	
D	R	I	V	I	N	G	F	O	R	C	E		A	I	R		H	E	A	D	S	
R	E	M	E	N	D		N	E	E	D	S		C	O	E							
U	G	H		E	A	R	L		O	R	I	N	G		T	W	I	S	T	S		
D	R	E	A	M	T	E	A	M		S	T	A	R	W	I	T	N	E	S	S		
G	E	R	M		E	A	V	E		E	E	R	I	E		O	R	G	A	N		
E	T	E	S		S	L	A	T		I	D	E	S	T		Y	E	A	R	S		

YEAR IN PHOTOS



PHOTO COURTESY OF WORCESTER GOLD

295 TURKEYS DISTRIBUTED

The Worcester County Bar Association provided Worcester County GOLD with 295 turkeys with sides to provide to local families in need of assistance during the Thanksgiving holiday. The distribution takes part annually as a result of a partnership with local organizations spearheaded by the bar association.



VETERANS DAY
The Worcester County Veterans Memorial at Ocean Pines hosted a cold, but well attended Veterans Day ceremony in November.
SUBMITTED PHOTO/ BAYSIDE GAZETTE



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

CHIEF'S RETIREMENT

With retiring Police Chief Arnold Downing, center, at his final Mayor and Council meeting in December were Council members Steve Green, Jack Orris and Dean Burrell, Mayor Zack Tyndall, Council member Jay Knerr and Town Administrator Mary Bohlen.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

NEW MURAL CELEBRATED

The Germantown School Community Center hosted a ribbon cutting and holiday reception in December to mark the installation of Patrick Henry's historic mural depicting a scene at the former school. The mural was installed on the outside of the former school located at 10223 Trappe Rd in Berlin.

OPEN HOUSES

Dec. 25 - Jan. 1

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	11500 Coastal Hwy #1614, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$579,900	Lauren Bunting/Keller Williams Realty
Saturday Noon-2pm	11500 Coastal Hwy #1614, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$579,900	Lauren Bunting/Keller Williams Realty
Saturday 1-3pm	6305 Atlantic Avenue #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	\$669,900	Lauren Bunting/Keller Williams Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	204 S Heron Drive #202 G, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$575,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Tuesday Noon-2pm	11500 Coastal Hwy #1614, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$579,900	Lauren Bunting/Keller Williams Realty
Wednesday Noon-2pm	11500 Coastal Hwy #1614, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$579,900	Lauren Bunting/Keller Williams Realty

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Calendar

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

Sat., Dec. 27

THE DOO WOP PROJECT
Ocean City Performing Arts Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, 7 p.m. Featuring their brand new 90-minute show, “Echoes of the Street.” Tickets: <https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/80991968/the-doo-wop-project-ocean-city-oc-performing-arts-center>.

AUCE BREAKFAST BUFFET
Whaleyville United Methodist Church, 11716 Sheppards Crossing Road, 7-10 a.m. 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.

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

OCEAN PINES FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET
Saturdays - White Horse Park, 239 Ocean Parkway, 9 a.m. to noon. Shop for everything from fresh local produce to unique handmade artisan goods. Also featuring family-friendly activities, music and unique shopping experiences. Open to the public, year round. 410-641-7052, <https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/farmers-artisans-market>

Sun., Dec. 28

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. 29

STORY TIME: GIFT GIVING
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

GAME DAY
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 12 p.m. Play everything from Mario Kart to Monopoly. Bring the family and have fun. 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 50plus Center, 104 41st Street, Ocean City, 12:30-3:30 p.m. Reserve a spot: Tish, 410-804-3971. www.Worcoa.org/oceancity

DELMARVA WOMEN’S A CAPELLA CHORUS
Mondays - Ocean Pines Community Center, 239 Ocean Parkway, 6:00-8:00 p.m. All ladies who love to sing invited. Elissa, 410-641-8050; on social media; or delmarvachorus.org.

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

Tues., Dec. 30

NEW YEAR’S PRE-EVE KID’S CRAFT DAY
Art League of Ocean City, 502 94th St., 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Ages 6-13 years will be making festive crafts to celebrate the new year. Bring a lunch. Cost is \$45 for residents and \$54 for non-residents. Register: www.oceancitymd.gov/rec-Program206120. 410-254-9433

PAINT & SIP
Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 6-8 p.m. Wine and crackers included. Cost is \$27. For ages 18 years and older. Register: 410-641-7052.

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

CLAY-N-PLAY
Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., Pocomoke City. 10:30 a.m. Mold, sculpt, squeeze and stamp with play dough. For ages 0-5 years. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

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

SENSORY STORY TIME
Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10:30 a.m.

Stories, songs and sensory play for kids of all abilities. For ages 2-5 years. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

NEW YEARS VISION AND CAKE POPS
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 12:30 p.m. Join in on New Years cake pops then create a vision board using magazines, stickers and markers. For ages 12-18 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

MEDIA EXPO INFORMATION SESSION
Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 1 p.m. Get information about the WCPS’s Media Expo. While there, students can use the resources and activities available to work on their projects. For families. 410-641-0650, 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/activities.

Wed., Dec. 31

NEW YEAR’S EVE FIREWORKS - OCEAN CITY
Fireworks held at Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City and also downtown Ocean City on the beach near Dorchester Street. Celebrate the conclusion of Ocean City’s 150th year. <https://www.ococean.com/event/new-years-eve-fireworks/2551/>

NEW YEAR’S EVE - BERLIN
Downtown Berlin, 2 S. Main St. Family friendly event with music and fun with ball drop at 6pm. Why, 6 p.m.? Because that’s when it’s midnight in Berlin, Germany. <https://berlinmainstreet.com/new-years-eve-celebrations/>

NOON YEARS COUNTDOWN
Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 11 a.m. Countdown to 12 Noon and say goodbye to 2025. Activities for all age groups will be included. For families. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

Thursday, Jan. 1

32ND ANNUAL AGH PENGUIN SWIM
Princess Royale Oceanfront Resort, 9100 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 12 p.m. Annual event supporting Atlantic General Hospital. Cost is \$30 until Dec. 30 and \$35 Dec. 31 and Jan. 1. 410-641-9858, <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/penguin-swim2026/>

ONGOING EVENTS

3RD ANNUAL TRAIN DISPLAY
Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department, North Station, 249 Ocean Parkway, Nov. 23 to Jan. 5. Free entry; donations appreciated. Hours are Fridays, 6-9 p.m.; Saturdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 6-9 p.m.; and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. www.OPVFD.com

TRAIN GARDEN SCAVENGER HUNT
Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, Dec. 1 through Jan. 3. Stop by the Ocean City branch to admire the holiday magic and help complete a very special scavenger hunt. For families. 410-524-1818

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