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## ALPACA LUNCH

The animals at Marshall Creek Farm in Newark have received about 250 Christmas trees from the Town of Berlin as well as Schellville in Delaware. About 150 trees were donated by Berlin for the goats, alpacas and sheep to enjoy.

## State's firefighters to parade downtown

Firefighters' Association says event to feature units from 150-160 companies

By Tara Fischer  
Staff Writer

(Jan. 15, 2026) The Maryland State Firefighters' Association (MSFA) is relocating its annual parade from Ocean City to downtown Berlin this summer, citing a consistent decline in participation over the past few years.

With Councilmember Shaneka Nichols and Vice President Dean Burrell absent, the Berlin Council unanimously approved a special event request this week to allow the MSFA to bring its yearly parade to Berlin on Saturday, June 20, marking

the first time the statewide event will be held in the town.

The request was presented during Monday night's council meeting by MSFA Convention and Conference Chair Robbie Blackiston, who said the association has been exploring new venues amid a decrease in firefighters and agencies statewide choosing to participate in the procession in recent years.

Traditionally held on a Wednesday in Ocean City, the parade has seen reduced turnout as it has become harder for firefighters to take time off during the workweek.

Blackiston said that last year, the parade had 114 participants and lasted 50 minutes. In the past, the event has typically extended about

See FIREFIGHTERS Page 3

## Auxer's winning idea takes competition and big check

Glass cremation keepsake wins grant to help company expand with new enterprise

By Tara Fischer  
Staff Writer

(Jan. 15, 2025) A new branch of Berlin-based business Jeffrey Auxer Designs will continue to provide memorial glass in remembrance of pets and loved ones to its customers, and, as the winner of a \$35,000 competition, advance the brand.

About two years ago, Jeffery Auxer of Jeffery Auxer Designs, a glassblow-

ing establishment in downtown Berlin, launched Remember Me Glass. The new side of Auxer's company provides grieving pet owners and family members with a custom-blown glass cremation keepsake.

In late October of last year, the memorial business entered Salisbury University's Shore Hatchery Competition and won the top prize, securing a \$35,000 grant.

Auxer said he intends to use the money to build an online platform in partnership with veterinarians, where the vets will come on board

See JEFFREY Page 10

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# Firefighters will parade June 20

Continued from Page 1  
four hours.

After noting the decline, the association initially sought to reschedule the parade from the midweek timeslot to a weekend, while maintaining the Ocean City location. However, logistical issues arose as June is Ocean City's peak tourist season. As such, a Saturday parade would create challenges not easily manageable for the resort destination.

Alternative venues were scouted, and Berlin was selected as the ideal spot. Upon the municipality's approval this week, the association's goal is now to be realized this summer.

"This is something new for Berlin," Mayor Zack Tyndall said. "We certainly know how to throw a party and a parade and look forward to...welcoming the Maryland Firefighters' Association to Berlin for the parade."

The parade is scheduled for 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 20, and will take place rain or shine. Blackiston said he expects this year's procession to feature between 150 and 160 fire companies and public safety units from across Maryland. Blackiston added that this will be the first year the association encourages participants to pre-register, but anyone who shows up unannounced will be welcome to participate.

Berlin officials hope the parade will bring additional business to downtown shops and restaurants. The MSFA is on the same page.

Blackiston said the association conducted a walkthrough of Main Street businesses in December and distributed informational flyers, and noted that no concerns had been raised to

date. He said the group is working behind the scenes with the Berlin Chamber of Commerce to encourage spectators and participants to arrive early and patronize local establishments.

Part of this effort is exploring a morning Touch-A-Truck event. This would likely begin around 10 a.m. and allow kids to further interact with the fire apparatuses. Association members noted that the idea is for families to arrive in downtown Berlin early, attend the Touch-A-Truck, and then do some shopping or grab lunch before the parade's 2 p.m. start time.

A shuttle may also be available to transport participants arriving early from the staging areas to downtown, where they can grab a bite to eat or browse the stores.

A letter from the MSFA to Berlin on the matter includes a summary of events. Per the document, the procession would consist of fire apparatus, fire prevention floats, association officers, local elected officials, and possibly a few marching bands.

Staging has been approved at Worcester Preparatory School, and the association has discussed with Worcester County Parks and Recreation the possibility of using their in-town athletic fields. Stephen Decatur Park could also be used as a setup location if additional space is needed. MSFA maintained that trucks and floats would remain in the parking lot to avoid disrupting the park interior or its grass.

As it stands, the parade route will travel northbound on Main Street in

See FIREFIGHTERS Page 11

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# Berlin to host Restaurant Week, Jan. 19-26

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Jan. 15, 2026) Nearly every establishment in Berlin will welcome patrons with delicious eats and great deals during the town's tenth annual Restaurant Week. This year's multiday event will run from Jan. 19 to Jan. 26.

Starting this Monday, the town's eateries will curate reimagined menus and discounts—with the intention of not breaking the bank for guests.

Berlin's Economic and Community Development Director Ivy Wells said that Restaurant Week was launched in 2016 as a way to give residents of Berlin and nearby Eastern Shore municipalities a reason to visit the downtown during the chilly offseason.

"Restaurant Week gives people a reason to come downtown in the winter, try new places, and support our local restaurants," she said. "It spotlights our dining scene and brings good foot traffic during a slower time of year."

In addition to the yummy flavors to be prepared by the town's chefs, patrons will have the opportunity to participate in a raffle for the chance to win gift certificates to the participating establishments.

According to Wells, diners may pick up a card at the Berlin Welcome Center and throughout the week, have it stamped at three different restaurants taking part in the event. Completed forms are to be re-

turned to the box at the Welcome Center.

The individual whose card is selected will receive a gift card from each participating eatery, plus a \$100 gift card to a downtown shop or restaurant of their choice.

Wells said that almost every dining establishment within the Town of Berlin is taking part in Restaurant Week this year. Menus are posted on the Welcome Center's window and on the town's Facebook event page.

410 Social, for instance, will offer its customers a two-for-\$22 deal. Guests may choose one starter and one entrée.

The available appetizers are: 1. A balsamic berry salad that has field greens, strawberries, blueberries, red onion, candied walnuts, feta, and balsamic vinaigrette. 2. Scampi crostini made with extra large shrimp, scampi sauce, and toasted ciabatta. 3. Southwest empanadas with chicken, poblano peppers, corn, onions, cheddar jack cheese, and avocado ranch on the side. 4. Thai curry clams with coconut curry, lemongrass, ginger, cilantro, and toasted ciabatta.

Entrée options for 410 Social's week-long special are: 1. A tuna express wrap with sesame encrusted ahi tuna, cabbage slaw, sriracha aioli, shaved cucumber, wasabi mayo, avocado, and a flour tortilla. 2. A tequila lime chicken BLT made with tequila lime marinated grilled chicken, bacon, lettuce, tomato, pepper jack cheese, and chipotle mayo on a po-

tato roll. 3. A 410-style smashed burger consisting of lettuce, tomato, American cheese, grilled onions, pickles, and 410 sauce on a potato roll. 4. Shrimp pasta primavera with seared shrimp, penne pasta, house primavera sauce, seasonal veggies, and parmesan.

Oaked at the Globe is offering a three-for-\$33 special. Starter options include a side Caesar salad, brisket croquettes with a BBQ ranch drizzle, or crispy Brussels sprouts in fig jam and bacon.

Diners can then select a main course of four-ounce Southern sirloin over risotto with corn and tomatoes, brisket mac and cheese, or creamy caprese pasta with blackened shrimp. Desserts available include a churro donut or a New York-style cheesecake with a chocolate drizzle.

CounterClix will offer guests one starter, one main, and one dessert for \$36. Appetizer options are either cream of crab soup or French onion soup.

Entrées included in the deal are glazed seared salmon, chicken parmesan, shrimp and grits, or a build-your-own pizza. An apple empanada, a turtle cheesecake, or a dessert pizza is available for dessert.

Berlin Beer Company is offering a soup of the day and grilled cheese for \$14, chicken or beef pot pie for \$18, a pot roast dinner for \$20, a shrimp po boy and Old Bay Fries for \$18, shrimp and grits for \$20, a rockfish sandwich and

fries for \$21, two fried rockfish tacos for \$17, a winter harvest salad for \$17, a chicken or steak cheese steak sandwich for \$18, or a veggie burger with hand cut fries for \$15.

The Atlantic Hotel plans to provide a free lemon-lust dessert with each order of fish and chips during Restaurant Week.

Coffee shops will also be getting in on the action, with Cafe Berlin offering \$1 off all featured drinks.

Furthermore, 2nd Wave Coffee will have specialty options. These include a Neapolitan latte with chocolate, vanilla, and espresso topped with strawberry foam; a cookie butter latte made with real cookie butter, brown sugar, cinnamon, and vanilla; a cardamom bun latte with butter, brown sugar, cardamom pods, and a pinch of salt; and a brown sugar banana latte made of fresh bananas, brown sugar, Vermont Maple Syrup, cinnamon, and a pinch of salt.

Additionally, 2nd Wave's holiday-themed peppermint mocha and dirty Earl Grey latte are sticking around through Jan. 26.

Officials hope that Berlin's Restaurant Week will further the town's mission of highlighting local establishments.

"[This week] boosts business during a traditionally slow period, and introduces people to restaurants they haven't tried before," Wells said.

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# Property taxes to rise for some in Worcester

New home assessments for the county's southern end may generate \$10.6 million

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Jan. 9, 2025) Property taxes will rise this year for many homeowners in West Ocean City and in southern Worcester County after the latest round of statewide tax assessments showed a rise in values for more than 90% of affected properties.

The state mailed assessments Dec. 30 to 15,300 residential and commercial accounts in the areas of Newark, Snow Hill, Girdletree, Stockton, Pocomoke City, as well as West Ocean City and the South Point area. This year's reassessment area is known as Group 2.

According to the state's Department of Assessments and Taxation, or SDAT, more than 90% of residential properties in Group 2 will see higher assessments, along with about 76% of commercial parcels. Any increases will be phased in over the next three years. Property owners may appeal their new values at the county level.

SDAT divides Worcester County into three different areas, with each reassessed once every three years.

The most recent residential Group 2 assessment data from January 2023 showed a total property value of \$3.46 billion. For 2025, the new residential total is \$3.82 billion, a 10.5% increase. Commercial assessments rose about 8.5% over the same period.

Group 2 generally covers the

southern end of Worcester. On a map, it can roughly be traced by drawing a line from the narrowest part of the county at the Pocomoke River across to Newport Bay and including everything south of it.

Last year, Group 1 homeowners in Berlin, Bishopville, Ocean Pines, and Showell got a 27% tax increase. Group 3 is for Ocean City properties and will be reassessed in 2027.

Worcester County contains about 55,000 total residential properties, including condos and single-family homes. Apartments are considered commercial property. Statewide, SDAT mailed about 790,000 notices from its Baltimore headquarters.

Average tax assessments statewide increased by about 12%, compared with Worcester's roughly 10% increase, according to Amy Smith, SDAT's supervisor of assessments for Worcester County.

Residential assessments are based on market value, drawing from three years of sales data. Commercial values are based either on the market price or the amount of income a business generates, Smith said.

A decade ago, Group 2 statewide assessments in Worcester increased by 4.7% before leveling off for most of the 2010s. Values rose sharply again in 2023-24, in some cases by more than 20%, generating estimated millions in new revenue for the county.

Worcester County still has not released a final budget surplus figure for fiscal 2025. Officials attribute the delay to the transition of hiring a new auditing firm.

This is also the first year that the county's new zeroed-out Homestead Tax Credit takes effect. State law allows counties to set their own cap on a homestead tax credit from 0 to 10%, and the County Commissioners last year voted to lower that cap to

zero.

While it's unclear exactly how much revenue the latest round of assessments will generate for Worcester County, preliminary estimates from county budget officials and SDAT put that figure around \$10.6 million, according to Commissioner Chip Bertino.

"This does take into account the adoption of the lower property tax rate and homestead credit cap of zero percent," Bertino (District 5, Ocean Pines) said at the commissioners' Dec. 16 meeting. "I only mention it because we are going into the budget season and I know there are a lot of expectations from the public and agencies."

Commissioner President Ted Elder and Chief Administrative Officer Weston Young both said the expected revenue would not account for any actions taken from the state during the upcoming 90-day legislative session, which opens Wednesday in Annapolis.

"That number assumes a variety of things," Young said, "and it does not include any unfunded mandates passed down."

Elsewhere in Maryland, Montgomery County recorded the highest total residential value for Group 2 properties at \$71.8 billion, a 12.6% increase. Washington County posted the highest Group 2 percentage increase, at 22.8%.

On the Lower Shore, Wicomico County saw a 17.7% increase for its 11,286 Group 2 property accounts, from \$2.45 billion to \$2.88 billion.

Somerset County — the only county where total residential value was measured in millions, not billions — rose from \$461 million to \$510 million, a 10.5% increase. It also had the smallest Group 2 tally statewide, at just 3,060 residential accounts.

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# Berlin's tattoo shop ban extended to 2027

Town moratorium extended, for a year, citing lack of required health inspections

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Jan. 15, 2026) The operation of tattoo parlors in the Town of Berlin will remain banned through 2026, per a vote by the municipality's Town Council this week.

At a Berlin mayor and council meeting on Monday, Jan. 12, officials opted to extend the town's moratorium on tattoo establishments through Jan. 31, 2027. The group cited ongoing challenges with county-level health regulations and a lack of response from Worcester County officials as the reason for the decision.

The issue, as discussed earlier this

week, is the absence of required, regular health inspections for body art shops in Worcester County.

Mayor Zack Tyndall said Berlin's stance on tattoo establishment standards differs from that of surrounding localities, such as Wicomico County, which operates on a complaint-driven system. This means that only when a customer observes a violation and reports it to health officials will the business undergo an evaluation. Berlin would like to take a more proactive approach and mandate that ink parlors be subjected to annual examinations to ensure they maintain cleanliness and safety.

For Berlin to get its way, the Worcester County Commissioners, which serves as the Board of Public Health for the county, would need to adopt the town's desired regulations

and add consistent health inspections of tattoo shops to the Worcester Health Department's list of responsibilities. That has not occurred at this point.

"With that, it takes buy-in from the Worcester County Health Department and the Worcester County Board of Health, which is the commissioners, to add that scope of work to the Worcester County Health Department's purview," Tyndall said. "It's not that different, it's very similar to what is already done for piercing studios. However, there's not a pathway for tattoos in Worcester County as far as proactive health inspections."

Council members noted that town officials previously sent a letter to the county commissioners requesting a meeting to discuss the issue, but did not receive a response. Councilmember Jack Orris asked that the group reach out again.

"I was wondering if we can try that angle again," Orris said. "Let's try that again and see where we land."

Tyndall confirmed the original request was submitted roughly two years ago and reiterated that Berlin has already met with health department staff and county representatives, but cannot move forward without formal action by the commissioners.

Monday night's discussion also addressed whether the moratorium is necessary at all. Councilmember Steve Green asked what would happen if the moratorium were lifted.

Town Attorney David Gaskill responded that, without a moratorium,

a tattoo parlor could legally open in town. Still, the county has its own regulations that would likely make it more difficult for an owner to launch a body ink shop.

One of Worcester's guidelines requires a physician to be on-site at all tattoo establishments.

"It's a barrier to entry," Tyndall said. "The commissioners have set a very high barrier to entry, and other municipalities in Worcester County have adopted that same language to make it so that...if you're a physician, are you going to be a tattoo artist also? Where's the money?"

Tyndall said Berlin will continue working with other Maryland municipalities facing similar challenges to advocate for statewide tattoo guidelines.

"Other counties in Maryland are experiencing a similar situation," he said. "They are working on ways to help advocate at the state level for some change, and potentially some state guidelines like other states in the area have. So, we are trying to partner with them in the process, but in the meantime, we have to have something that covers us on our end, so that is why we want to extend the moratorium through 2026."

Ultimately, Orris moved to extend the moratorium through Jan. 31, 2027, and granted the mayor permission to contact the county commissioners again to request a meeting.

The motion passed unanimously, with Councilmember Shaneka Nichols and Vice President Dean Burrell absent.

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# Jeffrey Auxer Designs captures major award

Continued from Page 1

with Remember Me Glass, each receiving a subdomain to operate as their own personalized storefront.

Under the program, at the time of a pet's euthanasia, veterinarians would provide the animal's owner with Remember Me Glass' information. The customer could then order their keepsake through the vet's personalized storefront, but the request would be received directly by Auxer and his team. The vets would get a commission on each sale they helped facilitate.

Once an order is received, Remember Me Glass would send the buyer a kit or collection box containing a jar for ashes, a prepaid return label, and directions. The customer would return the finalized kit to the business for the memorial piece to be created, and upon completion, the item would be mailed directly to the purchaser.

The partnership terms would also stipulate that the vets have an in-office display with sample items and information packets containing a QR code that directs customers to the vet's personalized storefront. From here, the grieving pet owner can begin the process of obtaining their keepsake.

"For the vet, it's just a premium product that they would be offering to their customers," Auxer said. "It's no risk to them; it's no cost to them. We

do everything through us."

Currently, Remember Me Glass partners with a few local pet crematoriums and funeral homes. With the funds won through SU's Shore Hatchery contest, the company will not only build a new online platform but also attend a week-long veterinary expo in Orlando to secure the additional partnerships. Auxer said that a booth at the Florida conference costs about \$6,500.

"We want to try to work with vets because it's something new and innovative," he added.

The Shore Hatchery Competition is a bi-annual Mid-Atlantic business showdown open to start-ups and recently developed companies. The most recent event occurred in October of 2025.

Auxer said he applied to the contest six months ago, competing against about 50 entries, and that the initial stage required submitting a business plan. The program officials then selected the top 10 to compete at the Shark Tank-like live finals, which took place on Halloween.

Here, all the finalists set up booths and spoke with the judges as they assessed the competitors. Auxer said he was then required to deliver a 60-second business pitch, followed by a six-minute Q&A session.

Ultimately, Remember Me Glass



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Jeff Auxer and Hilari Ashton are pictured at the Shore Hatchery business competition event.

won the contest, bringing home \$35,000. Other businesses walked away with prizes ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000.

The Ratcliffe Foundation has partnered with SU since 2013 to make the biannual competition possible. The foundation donates \$100,000 per semester, allowing the start-ups to vie for a share of the funds to launch and further their brands.

According to the Ratcliffe Founda-

tion's website, "Since the inception of the Shore Hatchery competition in 2013, SU has awarded more than \$2,190,000 in grant funds to Mid-Atlantic area startups.

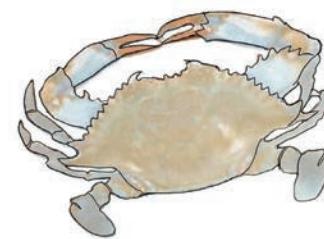
They have successfully helped more than 57 businesses launch and grow their new ventures, generating \$22,181,242 in annual revenue in 2024 and creating hundreds of jobs in the region."

See AWARD Page 11

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# Award will allow business to grow

Continued from Page 10

Auxer hopes that the money he obtained through the contest will allow him to support his mission of offering remembrance glass designs to those grieving a loved one. Remember Me Glass was kickstarted two years ago, the founder said. In its first year, the business created about 70 keepsakes. That number rose to around 200 in 2025.

Orders can be made at Remember Me Glass' online platform at [www.remembermeglass.art](http://www.remembermeglass.art) or by heading directly to the Jeffery Auxer Designs gallery in downtown Berlin.

Available items include touchstones customers can carry in their pockets, along with other memorial pieces.

Remember Me Glass focuses on family members and pets. "Each piece of glass art is infused with your loved one's cremains with colors woven throughout the glass, allowing you to cherish their memory for years to come," their website reads.

"Remember Me Glass allows family members to collaborate with the artist by choosing colors and shapes that resonate with your loved one's personality and honor the individuality of the person you have lost."

Auxer said that adding the cremation glass to his business has been "the most satisfying thing" his team and he have done.

"When people order online, we don't get to speak to the customers, but we also do it out of the gallery here, and it's like, people are so emotional," he said. "It's just crazy what a piece of glass can do for somebody. Just the emotions we see here are unbelievable. Just looking at something colorful and happy is better than looking at an urn sitting on the shelf."

## Firefighters will roll downtown

Continued from Page 3

the lane of travel until it approaches Jefferson Street, at which point the procession will move to the centerline. The units will continue northbound to Powellton Avenue, then return to the lane of travel.

Even with increased participation, council members estimated the Berlin parade would likely last no more than two hours.

Both the Town of Berlin and the MSFA are excited about the downtown summer event. According to the association, MSFA is the only state firefighters' association on the East Coast that still hosts a parade. Its members hope to keep the tradition alive.

Berlin officials also noted that the procession aligns with the town's mission.

"This is a great way to celebrate our first responders," Councilmember Jay Knerr said.

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# Decatur basketball coach faces allegations

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Jan. 15, 2026) Stephen Decatur High School's head basketball coach Bryon Johnson was taken into custody last week on charges related to an alleged sexual assault of a minor.

Johnson, known in the community as BJ, was arrested on Thursday, Jan. 8 on charges including a felony sex offense in the 3rd degree with a child under 14; a misdemeanor offense for sex offense in the 4th degree, sexual contact; and a misdemeanor assault in the 2nd degree.

A preliminary hearing is scheduled for Jan. 30 at the Worcester County District Court in Snow Hill. Johnson has denied all allegations.

According to police records, Ocean Pines Police responded to a call on Tuesday, Jan. 6 on reports of a sexual assault. The alleged incident took place between the hours of 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. on Jan. 5, 2026, at a residence in Ocean Pines. Police records allege that Johnson entered the home of his ex-girlfriend while she was at work and that her minor children were present.

Police documentation alleges that Johnson went into the bedroom of his ex-girlfriend, where one of the children was located and had inappropriate contact with the minor.

Following the alleged incident, the child was taken to Atlantic General Hospital and later participated in a

forensic interview at the Worcester County Child Advocacy Center. Police records also indicate that on Jan. 7, the child's siblings were interviewed by law enforcement, where they reported seeing Johnson inside the residence.

Ocean Pines Police interviewed Johnson on Jan. 7. According to police, Johnson denied being at his ex-girlfriend's home on the date in question. He also denied that he had any inappropriate contact with the minor.

Court records show a restraining order was taken out against the ex-girlfriend on Jan. 6 but documents do not state who filed the request.

Johnson is employed at SDHS as an educational assistant and the head

coach of the men's basketball program. He was hired by Worcester County Public Schools in 2000.

Carrie Sterrs, the coordinator of public relations and special programs for WCPS, confirmed that 60-year-old Johnson is currently on administrative leave.

"WCPS cannot comment on personnel matters; however, the school system took all necessary steps to ensure the safety of our students as soon as school system staff was notified of the allegations," a statement from Sterrs reads. "WCPS has also made sure that support is available to any student or staff member should they need it through our school counseling office."

## Obituaries

### PHIL SCRUGGS

Ocean City

Family and friends are devastated to announce the passing of our adored Phil Scruggs at the age of 53.

Phil was one of the kindest, good-hearted souls you could ever meet. He loved his books, his dream car/Firebird, and his grandfather's "Pristine Lincoln." Few people on the planet knew more about music, par-



Phil Scruggs

ticularly Rock and Roll than Phil, and he read every biography ever written about any band member (ever born) several times.

Phil (aka OC Stone) was Ocean City's biggest fan and was proud of the time he spent writing about & re-

viewing local bands for several OC papers even though he used big words none of us understood! Some of his favorites were Lower Class Blues, Jah Works and Lower Class Citizens, and he was a staple at all their gigs. He worshiped the beach and would sit for hours on end reading, and he absolutely loved going to Cruisin weekends with his brother Danny, showing off their cars cruis-

ing down the Boardwalk. He frequented all the local establishments, promoting their "specials" (written on the smallest piece of paper known to mankind), and one of his favorite pastimes was feeding the ducks at the old BJs. He truly loved his family and spending time laughing and busting through doors with his huge "heloooooo" in his goofy outfits that

Continued on Page 13

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## Obituaries

Continued from Page 12

ALWAYS matched the nearest holiday. We will forever have Phil's endless cartoon and movie quotes embedded in our brains.

Although life will never be the same without him, we will always remember him for his love and appreciation of the little things.

He is survived by his devoted mother, Cindy Ciresi (Wheeler-Scruggs); his loving brother Danny Scruggs; nieces Gabbie and Emmie; his late father Michael Scruggs; Aunt Ellen Scruggs; his Grandfather Jerry Wheeler (who was no doubt his biggest fan); and his late Mom Mom, Grace Wheeler, whom he is surely with critiquing a TCM movie right now as they watch over us all.

He will also be forever missed by his beloved Aunt Tracey Wheeler Flora, her husband Gary Flora and cousins Megan Flora Quinn (David) their boys (Mac and Jay), and Matt and Brad Flora. RIP Stone, we love you and will be forever grateful for all the fun times you gave us. We know Phil would not want any type of sad memorial so our family is grieving in private although we appreciate

thoughts and prayers.

If you care to donate in his name, the OC Library was one of his favorite places.

### PATRICIA FARRY STEWART

Berlin

Patricia Farry Stewart, 89, affectionately known as "Patsy," passed away on Tuesday Dec. 23 in Berlin.

Patsy was born and raised in Wilmington, Delaware, daughter of the late George J. Farry and May Farry.

Patsy was a graduate of Ursuline Academy in Wilmington. She was a popular student known not only for her beauty and kindness, but also for her love of tennis. From the time her father put a racquet in her hand, there was no letting go of it. Patsy went on to become a top junior player in Delaware and along with her sister, the top junior doubles team. She qualified for the U.S. Girls National Championships, became the Dupont Country Club singles champion three times and many other vic-

tories soon followed. Her tennis career continued over the next 50 years. She worked and trained hard for every tournament, and her devotion to the sport remained steady and focused and above all she loved everything about tennis.

Aside from tennis, Patsy was a lover of all animals. From the stray cats that found their way to her yard, the dogs that needed a safe place to land, or her German Shepherd show dog Roemer, she loved them all the same and no animal was too broken to love.

Patsy is survived by her daughters Lisa Reed (Roger) and Michelle Sawyer (Rick) and granddaughter Erica Sawyer. In addition to her parents, she is preceded in death by her husband Charles W. Stewart, her partner in later years Richard B. Taylor and her sister Sarah F. Hoffmann.

A private celebration of life will be held by the family later this month. Her daughter Lisa and husband Roger would like to sincerely thank the staff at Berlin Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Berlin. They are forever grateful for the care, compassion and respect shown to Patsy and her family. There would have been no getting through these last 6-plus years without the support they all provided as Patsy battled Parkinson's Disease.



Patricia Stewart

### OBITUARY NOTICES

Obituary Notices cost \$50 per week for Print and Online Publications.

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## Berlin starts talks on how to meet state's ADU law

New act requires towns to allow accessory dwellings

**By Tara Fischer**

Staff Writer

(Jan. 15, 2026) The Berlin mayor and Town Council began early discussions this week on how the town will comply with a new state mandate requiring local governments to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs), noting that months of work and public comment are ahead.

Mayor Zack Tyndall placed the item on Monday night's meeting agenda to notify council members of Senate Bill 891 and House Bill 1466, passed by the Maryland General Assembly during its 2025 session.

The act requires every county and municipality to adopt a local law authorizing the development of ADUs on properties with single-family detached homes. This requirement will take effect on Oct. 1, 2026.

Tyndall said he would like to get the ball rolling on drafting an ordinance that meets the state mandate to authorize ADUs while developing regulations and standards that fit Berlin's needs. The mayor added that

See BERLIN Page 15

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**GARDEN CLUB**

On Thursday, Jan. 8, the Ocean Pines Garden Club held its 50th anniversary kick-off luncheon and installation of officers at The Atlantic Hotel. The 2026 officers are, from left, Maria Brown, Treasurer; Laura Stearman, Corresponding Secretary; Joan Guerreiro, Recording Secretary; Shawn Lees, Co-Vice President; Susan Costanzo, Co-Vice President; Nancy Mulligan, Co-President; and Ann Shockley, Co-President.

SUBMITTED PHOTO/  
BAYSIDE GAZETTE



## Building fee schedule amended to flat rate

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Jan. 15, 2026) The Berlin Town Council approved an amendment to the town's building fee schedule this week that would lower permit costs for homeowners making basic repairs to residential structures.

During the Berlin mayor and council meeting on Monday night, town staff requested authorization to amend the town's current building fee schedule to establish a flat \$60 permit fee for "like-to-like" residential repair projects.

The reduced rate applies to roof, window, siding, and door replacements, provided the work does not change the structure's size, footprint, or design.

Under the town's existing fee structure, those types of repairs were assessed based on total construction

cost, the same method used for major renovations or additions, which often results in significantly higher permit fees.

Berlin Planning Director Ryan Hardesty said the current system can create an unnecessary financial burden for residents who are simply trying to maintain their homes and remain code compliant.

"These types of permits also require significantly less review time by staff," Hardesty said. "So, we are requesting that these permits have a flat rate fee of \$60, which is the same flat rate used for other permits."

Mayor Zack Tyndall said he thinks the change is a "very good idea," and noted the rising cost of construction materials.

"We know that building costs aren't going down, so it definitely helps those who are trying to make re-

pairs and keep things in order," he said.

Council members agreed the amendment would provide meaningful savings for homeowners. Councilmember Steve Green said that under the former building fee schedule, a \$20,000 roof replacement could result in an unnecessary cost for the property's occupant. This price tag will be significantly reduced under the new flat-rate system.

Town Administrator Mary Bohlen added that the policy change would encourage routine maintenance and help prevent properties from deteriorating.

"These are the kinds of ordinary expenses we want to encourage property owners to do, rather than allowing properties to go into disrepair," she said.

Hardesty clarified that the reduced

fee applies only to like-for-like replacements — standard maintenance work that does not alter a structure. Deck repairs, such as replacing rotten boards with the same materials, would qualify, but full deck replacements or projects requiring additional inspections would not.

Councilmember Jack Orris asked whether the amendment would apply to homes located in Berlin's historic district. Hardesty said the fee change would not alter existing requirements, and property owners would still need to obtain approval from the Historic District Commission before receiving a building permit.

The council unanimously approved the amendment, with Councilmember Shaneka Nichols and Vice President Dean Burrell absent, formally adopting a \$60 flat permit fee for qualifying residential repair projects.

## Changes possible to Berlin's New Year's Eve

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Jan. 15, 2026) Although the town's New Year's Eve ball drop drew a strong turnout, the mayor and Town Council on Monday wondered if a later start time or additional activities could enhance the event and encourage visitors to stay downtown longer.

Councilmember Steve Green (the executive editor of this paper), noted that the scheduled 6 p.m. ball drop established to make the event available to families with young children, doesn't keep the crowd around for long. He said it's typical to see the town clear out within a half hour. He wondered if the event could be bolstered with a later start time and added attractions.

Late last year, Sterling Tavern owner Matt Borelli had questioned why the ball drop was held at 6 p.m. and asked whether there was flexibility to push it later for the 2026 event to encourage residents and visitors to

stay and patronize local restaurants and bars.

Green raised the conversation again this week. The councilman asked town staff what they observed during the recent New Year's Eve celebration and if there was any merit in launching a slightly later ball drop.

Economic and Community Development Director Ivy Wells said the 6 p.m. ball drop was again successful, attracting 3,000 attendees. She also said the town was busier throughout the day than on previous New Year's Eve's, with shops seeing increased foot traffic in the lead-up to the event.

"My take on that is that people knew they wanted to wait for the 6 p.m. ball drop so the shops were busier that day," she said. "The shops did better that day than they had in previous years. Walking around town at 7 and 7:30 p.m., the restaurants still had wait times."

"So, the streets, of course, may have been clear because we opened

the road, and the shops weren't open. But everyone was piled into the restaurants. I went to the Berlin Beer Company because there was no place to eat downtown at 7 p.m. The Berlin Beer Company was jammed. And Forgotten 50. They were all busy."

Wells added that the point of the 6 p.m. ball drop is to cater to families, particularly those with young children.

"It's a really positive thing that the town is doing by having a family-style New Year's Eve celebration," she said.

Town Administrator Mary Bohlen echoed Wells' sentiment.

"There are lots of things for adults to do on New Year's Eve," she said.

Furthermore, staff discussed adding more activities to the event. Berlin Finance Director Natalie Saleh suggested adding music or ice sculptures, which were on-site during last year's Christmas Tree lighting, around the ball drop to create a festive atmosphere and keep families down-

town longer.

She said she had some conversations with parents who felt that, after the ball drop, there was little to do on the street, with restaurants too crowded and no vendors or entertainment available.

Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall suggested that staff explore potential enhancements and a slight extension of the event, such as moving the ball drop to 7:30 p.m.

Public Works Director Jimmy Charles cautioned that many attendees arrive specifically for the ball drop and may not stay, regardless of any additional programming.

Ultimately, the town's economic and community development team will investigate the event's timing and structure ahead of next New Year's Eve. Wells said there is ample time to gather feedback and refine the celebration.

"We have plenty of time to decide," she said.

# Berlin to draft ordinance to allow development of ADUs

Continued from Page 13

there's a tight timeline to complete the work, which will likely include a few joint work sessions between the council and the town's planning commission, followed by public hearings.

"The reason we need to have this on our radar is we really have between now and April, the way I see it, to craft something," Tyndall said. "It's going to require public input, it's going to require time for us to meet and work through something for Berlin."

"In April, we really ramp up significantly for the budget through about May or June. During the warmer time of the year, people aren't as active and engaged. I don't feel comfortable having that level of discussion in the summertime when we want to have public feedback, and then if you wait until after summer, you're in September. It goes into effect in October."

Accessory dwelling units, apartment-like structures detached from a property's main house, have been promoted statewide to expand housing options. However, allowing ADUs isn't without its challenges.

During Monday night's discussion, Town Attorney David Gaskill cautioned that the legislation leaves some logistical questions unanswered, particularly those involving water and sewer capacity. He raised concerns about how additional dwelling units on residential lots could impact existing infrastructure.

"If we're going to allow people to build accessory dwelling units on their residential lot, what about the EDU?" Gaskill said, referring to equivalent dwelling units tied to water and sewer usage. "I guarantee you they didn't think about that."

Tyndall acknowledged that while municipalities can adopt regulations, state law requires that guidelines not be unduly restrictive.

"They've said you can't make the cost of implementation prohibitive," Tyndall said. "It's going to be troublesome to work through."

Town Administrator Mary Bohlen emphasized that the State of Maryland requires the discussion and that it's not optional.

"The important thing people need to keep in mind is that this has been mandated by the state," she said. "We have to have this conversation, and we have to have something in place."

Bohlen added that while the town may establish local regulations, those rules must be reasonable and cannot effectively prevent homeowners from building ADUs.

Councilmember Steve Green asked whether requiring the purchase of an additional EDU could be considered overly restrictive under the law. These types of questions will be worked through during the upcoming ordinance-drafting process.

Tyndall said the following steps will involve council members and planning commissioners reviewing the legislation, gathering information, and then holding joint meetings to discuss potential approaches to the new state law. Once a draft ordinance is developed, public hearings will be scheduled to garner community feedback.

"It's going to be our job to work through it and then come prepared to discuss what we like, what we think," the mayor said. "Even with the fact that we only have a few months. Then we have to get some public hearings on the books."

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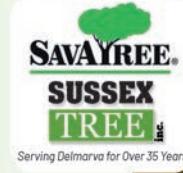


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# Opinion

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## Berlin will bring new life to fire co. parade

The Maryland State Firefighters' Association and the Town of Berlin — once people see the trucks, cars and specialty vehicles, as well as the marching units from 150-160 volunteer fire companies and departments, they will wonder why the annual parade hasn't been held here every year.

Because the parade is a highlight of the association's annual assembly in Ocean City, it made logistical sense to stage the event there on Baltimore Avenue, close to the conference's headquarters at the convention center.

But from the perspective of mood, image and atmosphere, as the parade's muscular red, yellow and green fire-fighting apparatuses roll up road, Baltimore Avenue had ceased to be the right place years ago.

The redevelopment of that corridor eliminated that traditional feel, and if there's one thing that a parade of fire trucks is, it's traditional. That's why the pairing of the annual parade and the Town of Berlin is going to make this event the special attraction it used to be.

Berlin, as has been demonstrated repeatedly, knows how to throw a party and having a parade that brings its own spectators — the friends and families of association members — is a fantastic way to get one started.

Add to that fans of ladder trucks, puffers, tankers, rescue and other specialized apparatus and the one guarantee organizers of the event and town officials will have is that the parade is going to draw a big crowd.

As this week's story points out, the Maryland State Firefighters' Association is the only state firefighters' association on the East Coast that still hosts an annual parade, and its members hope that moving it to Berlin will keep the tradition alive.

A traditional parade taking place on a traditional main street in a town that fosters that traditional image should do better than merely keep the event alive. We expect this change of location will breathe new life into the parade and allow it to thrive for years to come.

## BAYSIDE GAZETTE

11934 Ocean Gateway, Suite 6, Ocean City, Md. 21842  
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## Letters

### County should halt overdevelopment

Editor,

(The following letter was sent to the Worcester County Commissioners for inclusion in the public hearing concerning the proposed housing and retail development along Route 589.)

I am writing to submit a formal complaint regarding the ongoing and excessive overdevelopment along the Route 589 corridor and surrounding areas. As a long-time resident of Ocean Pines since 1984, I have witnessed many changes — some positive, some negative — but the current scale, pace, and lack of a coherent development plan are simply unacceptable and deeply concerning.

The continued conversion of productive farmland and open natural spaces into dense development represents a significant loss to the county. Farmland that has sustained local food systems, rural livelihoods, and the county's character is being permanently eliminated. Natural areas that provide wildlife habitat, environmental balance, flood control, and quality of life are being fragmented or destroyed. Once lost, these resources cannot be restored.

Of particular concern is the apparent prioritization of short-term gains over sound planning and accountability. Decisions appear to have been made without sufficient consultation, impact assessment, or regard for cumulative effects. This lack of foresight has directly contributed to the issues now evident and reflects poorly on the planning and oversight process.

The scale and intensity of development have exceeded

reasonable and responsible limits. This has resulted in overcrowding, excessive strain on infrastructure and resources, diminished functionality, and a clear erosion of the original purpose and character of the area. Rather than delivering meaningful progress, the continuing overdevelopment has already and will continue to compromise quality, efficiency, and livability.

These outcomes were not unavoidable. They are the result of deliberate choices that ignored warning signs and failed to apply appropriate restraint. Continued development under the current model risks further deterioration, increased public dissatisfaction, and long-term damage that may be difficult or impossible to reverse.

I strongly urge an immediate reassessment of zoning and development policies and practices. This should include a halt to further overdevelopment, a transparent review of decision-making processes, and the implementation of stricter controls to ensure future development is measured, sustainable, and aligned with clearly defined objectives.

Currently, overdevelopment has placed increasing strain on roads, infrastructure, water supplies, and public services, while eroding the rural and environmental qualities that residents value. Rather than measured growth, the county is experiencing expansion that prioritizes short-term economic gain over responsible land stewardship and long-term planning.

It is particularly troubling that these decisions appear to move forward despite clear and well-documented impacts. Adequate consider-

ation of cumulative effects, environmental consequences, and agricultural preservation has been insufficient. This represents a serious lapse in oversight and accountability at the county level.

These outcomes are not inevitable. They are the result of policy choices that favor rapid development at the expense of farmland preservation, environmental protection, and future generations. Continuing along this path will permanently alter the county's landscape, reduce resilience, and undermine public trust. The current approach reflects a failure to adequately consider long-term consequences, sustainability, and the broader negative impacts that such overdevelopment inevitably creates.

I strongly urge the County Commissioners to immediately reassess current development policies and practices. This should include a pause on further overdevelopment along Route 589, a transparent review of past and ongoing decision-making processes, and the implementation of stricter controls to ensure future growth is measured, sustainable, and aligned with clearly defined long-term objectives. A transparent review process and a clear commitment to sustainable, balanced growth are urgently needed.

I expect this complaint to be acknowledged and for concrete steps to be outlined in detailing how the county intends to address these concerns. The excessive strain on infrastructure and natural resources must be treated as a priority, not an afterthought.

Sandee Sharp  
Berlin

### 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](mailto:editor@baysidegazette.com). For questions, call 410-723-6397.

# Confusion surrounds town's letter request

Commissioners deny Snow Hill's request for support letter to pursue state grant

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Jan. 15, 2026) Snow Hill's pursuit of a state grant to cover the cost of an in-house energy audit hit unexpected resistance last Tuesday when the Worcester County Commissioners declined to issue a letter of support for the grant application.

Some commissioners indicated they thought the project involved planning for solar battery storage – and, for that reason, voted to reject the measure, saying that industrial batteries connected to photovoltaic power sources were hazardous.

However, Snow Hill Town Manager Rick Pollitt said that isn't the case and is unsure how the confusion arose. All they wanted, he said, was to proceed with an assessment of how much electricity the town was using.

Pollitt said he was unable to attend last Tuesday's commissioner meeting because of other commitments. Now he says he's "in the dark" on what happened.

"My understanding was the only thing we were looking at was a grant to conduct an audit, period," Pollitt told OC Today-Dispatch. "The way it was pitched to me was, it would be an audit, then a follow-up to see whatever the audit recommended."

At the meeting, Commissioner Caryn Abbott specifically asked that this agenda item be isolated for dis-

cussion so she could make a motion to deny it, saying, "I don't support the battery storage for the solar."

Commissioner Chip Bertino, who seconded that motion, later added that he based his vote on the information provided – about a state program supporting battery units for solar power.

He said such energy storage devices, if they ever catch fire, can be dangerous and hard for firefighters to extinguish, which is why he was opposed.

The commissioners ultimately voted 5-2 against sending a letter of support. Commissioners Diana Purnell and Joe Mitrecic voted "no" on the motion.

After the meeting, Bertino (District 5, Ocean Pines) said the confusion about what Snow Hill wanted from the project could have been cleared up if a representative from the town had been available to answer questions. "We could have solved the issue immediately and in real time," he said.

County Administrator Weston Young said Maryland Energy Administration grants like these tend to support "microgrids," or small-scale solar and battery installations that provide power to critical infrastructure like water or wastewater plants.

Calling it a pre-construction planning grant, Young said the town could still apply without the county's support. "The money doesn't flow through us at all. We just won't be an active partner in this. So, there's no downside," he said.

According to a Dec. 30 internal memo from Legislative Analyst Char-

lene Sharpe to the commissioners, which is public record, Snow Hill came seeking the support letter as part of a state grant application, one that would pay for an audit of the town's energy use. Batteries were not mentioned.

Pollitt explained to OC Today-Dispatch how Snow Hill had not sought out the initiative. Instead, the town had been approached by two separate energy consultants, each saying they could write a grant request to the state on the town's behalf. That grant would pay for an assessment of municipal energy usage.

"It was a two-step process, and the first step was to apply for this grant," Pollitt said. "Both were centered on evaluating how we spent for energy. We made sure we didn't have to do anything. We would cooperate with them to give them the information."

Pollitt also said there was no intent to pursue anything but funds to cover their energy audit and, as far as he knows, the consultant was not pushing for anything connected to batteries or solar.

Snow Hill opted to work with a Maryland firm called Optimize Renewables and gave permission for CEO Len Jornlin to communicate with the county directly.

He emailed Young on Dec. 22 about a grant proposal for an energy infrastructure assessment under the Resilient Maryland grant program. The program's website says it's making \$500,000 available to grant applicants.

Jornlin wrote that, with the town's

blessing, his firm had mostly completed writing the grant. All they needed was a recommendation letter from the county to meet the Dec. 31 application deadline. The deadline was later extended by the state to Jan. 9.

When reached for comment last Wednesday, Young told OC-Today Dispatch that the county commissioners are supportive of Snow Hill, but "when you dig into this one, it is about solar and battery storage."

"The commissioners, being consistent, have been against solar – in this case, it's the threat of a battery system," he said. "These battery installations, when they catch on fire, just like an electric car battery, it takes a significant amount of water to put those out over and above an internal combustion fire. A lot of our fire companies are not prepped for that. The smoke is infinitely more toxic."

Young added, "If it was called an 'energy audit grant,' they may have acted differently."

In a phone call last week, Jornlin said the confusion likely stems from the fact that there wasn't a briefing in advance to county officials, and that dialogue between officials over the holiday season was spotty. He's open to appear before the commissioners to explain things more clearly.

The big picture, he added, is that smaller towns can't necessarily afford to spend on an energy audit and state grant funding can fill that need.

"It's simply creating an assessment and a plan for energy infrastructure," Jornlin said.



## OPEN HOUSES

Jan. 15 - Jan. 22



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
Saturday 10 am-Noon	201 S. Heron Drive, Unit #2D, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$429,9000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 10am-Noon	10300 Coastal Hwy #1509, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$399,900	Terry Miller/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 10am-2pm	160 Clam Shell Dr, Montego Bay, Ocean City	3BR/1.5BA	Single Family	\$324,900	Scott Holdren/Larry Holdren Real Estate
Saturday 10:30am-12:30pm	18 41st Street #103, Ocean City	4BR/2BA	Condo	\$689,000	Taylor Fowlkes/BHHS PenFed Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	104 125th Street #106, Ocean City	3BR/2.5BA	Condo	\$575,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	6803 Atlantic Avenue #4H, Ocean City	1BR/1BA	Condo	\$425,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	11964 W War Dancer Ln #107, Berlin	4BR/4BA	Townhome	\$489,900	Rob & Anne-Marie Bouse Re/Max Advantage Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	26792 Porter Mill Rd, Hebron	4BR/3BA	Single Family	\$418,000	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-1pm	100 White Horse Drive, Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$419,900	Debbie Hileman/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-1pm	401 14th Street Unit 1, Ocean City	2BR/2.5BA	Townhome	\$865,000	The Sunny Beach House Group/Keller Williams Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	8 Edgewood Drive, Ocean Pines	5BR/2.5 BA	Single Family	\$549,000	The Sunny Beach House Group/Keller Williams Realty
Saturday 1:30-3:30pm	6305 Atlantic Ave #301, Ocean City	3BR/3.5BA	Condo	\$1,550,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 2-4pm	1404 N. Chase Street, Ocean Pines	4BR/2.5 BA	Single Family	\$614,888	Debbie Hileman/Hileman Real Estate
Sunday 11am-1pm	6803 Atlantic Avenue #4H, Ocean City	1BR/1BA	Condo	\$425,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	401 14th Street Unit 1, Ocean City	2BR/2.5BA	Townhome	\$865,000	The Sunny Beach House Group/Keller Williams Realty
Sunday 1:30-3:30pm	6305 Atlantic Avenue #301, Ocean City	3BR/3.5BA	Condo	\$1,550,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty

# Puzzles

BASE PAIRS  
BY GENE LOUISE DE VERA / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Gene Louise De Vera is a data scientist in Quezon City, Philippines. One night when he couldn't sleep he was browsing the internet and stumbled on a crossword — which he liked. Soon after, he subscribed to The Times's crossword. Then he discovered he enjoys making puzzles even more than solving them. This is his fifth one for the paper and his first Sunday. —W.S.

**ACROSS**

1 It protects the heart  
8 Egyptian god of the underworld  
14 Dr.'s order?  
17 Substances found in cured meats and explosives  
18 Theme park with attractions like the Count's Splash Castle and Oscar's Rusty Rotten Rockets  
21 High marks  
22 "That's enough bickering!"  
24 Valletta's land  
25 Sci-fi protagonist who says "I don't like the idea that I'm not in control of my life"  
27 Max's opposite  
28 Morpheus, to 25-Across  
29 Good ol' boy  
31 Actor Thomas — Church  
34 Stares stupidly  
35 General who crossed the Rubicon  
37 Snubs  
39 Ultimate end, to Aristotle  
40 TV E.T.  
41 Secondary list of options  
43 — Veronese, "The Wedding at Cana" painter  
(region of Antarctica claimed by Norway)  
47 Classification that anyone can donate to  
48 Got off  
49 With warts and all  
53 Pesto ingredients  
55 Made less angry now  
58 Ozone no-no, for short  
59 The dash in many an emoticon  
60 It's a "tyrannical discipline," said Sylvia Plath  
61 Titular role in a 2024 Disney prequel  
63 Derived from gold  
66 Steals, informally  
67 Something a bug produces  
68 Certain Army noncom  
70 Points to a church?  
71 What the 7 may mean in 7/11  
73 Brewed beverage  
74 Perseveres  
76 Certain drink + what that drink has a lot of = women's lifestyle website  
80 "Horsefeathers!"  
82 "Fiddlesticks!"  
83 Combine using heat without melting, as particles  
85 Make a lot, say?  
86 Famed firefighter Red  
88 "All right, but that's not my opinion"  
90 L.A.P.D. unit?

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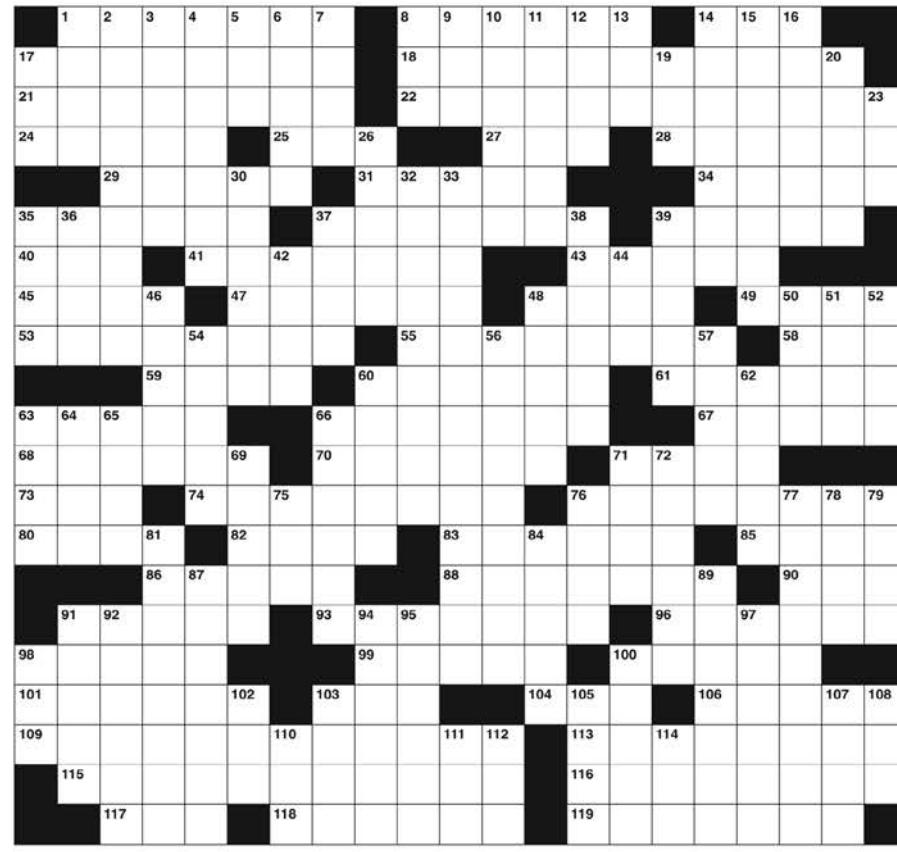
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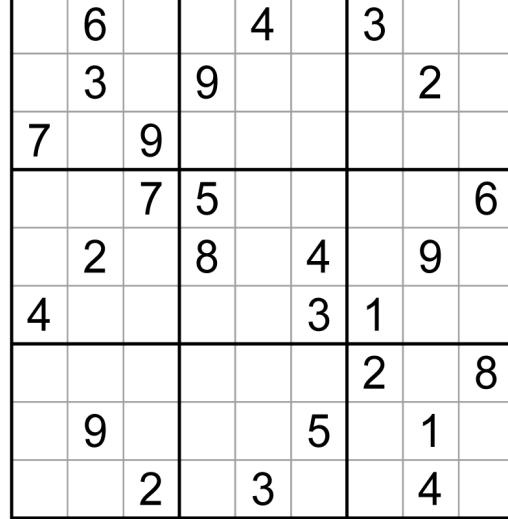
57 Fencing contests	75 Title for a guru	91 2011 Lady Gaga hit	107 Driven by envy toward his comrades, he fabricated events that led to their downfall
60 Chemistry lab dropper	76 Survivor's affliction, for short	92 Steamy	108 Official lang. of Liberia
62 Prepare quickly, as eggs for breakfast	77 Elf portrayed by Cate Blanchett in "The Fellowship of the Ring"	94 Paired chips with dips?	110 Acorn, in the future
63 Chop-chop	78 Big name in makeup	95 Touch lightly, as a gas pedal	111 Messenger ____
64 Wrinkly fruit	79 Music score squiggle	97 Floral victory symbol	112 Birth month of most Virgos: Abbr.
65 GPS lines: Abbr.	81 Disagrees (with)	98 Lead-in to Tech	114 "Ruh-____!" (cry from Astro on "The Jetsons")
66 Programming language that's also a musical key	84 Ixnays from Irkutsk	100 Spawner	
69 <i>He sold out his master in exchange for silver</i>	87 Obnoxious fratty sort, colloquially	102 Camera inits.	
71 Baby in a pouch	89 Possible scenario, to a coder	103 _____ me tangere (Latin warning)	
72 Pandemonium		105 Jafar's parrot in "Aladdin"	

# **su | do | ku**

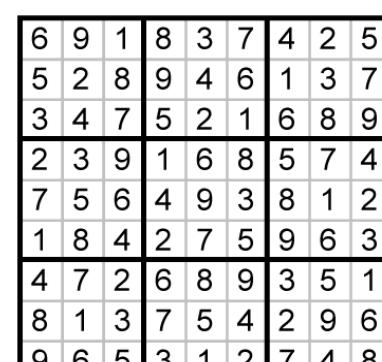
© Puzzles by Pappocom

## **HARD - 51**

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



# Calendar

## Thurs., Jan. 15

### DREAMFEST - THE POINTER SISTERS

Ocean City Performing Arts Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, 7 p.m. The sisters blended pop, R&B, rock and country with unmistakable style. Doors open 6 p.m. Tickets: <https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/46588499/the-pointer-sisters-ocean-city-ocean-city-performing-arts-center>.

### LITTLE EXPLORERS: BEARS

Delmarva Discovery Museum, 2 Market St., Pocomoke City, 10 a.m.-noon. Make your own Sleeping Bear Cave and learn all about bears in the world. Two sessions at 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. Register: <https://www.delmarvadiscoverycenter.org/delmarvadiscoveryacademy/littleexplorers>.

### STORY TIME 'DEAR ZOO'

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 10:30 a.m. Stories, song and rhymes. For ages 2-5 years. 410-632-3495, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

### REPUBLICAN WOMEN OF WORCESTER COUNTY GENERAL LUNCHEON MEETING

Worcester Technical High School, 6270 Worcester Highway, Newark, 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Maria Sofia, Government affairs, CATO Institute and First VP of MFRW will discuss "How to use AI effectively and safely."

[gopwomenofwc@gmail.com](mailto:gopwomenofwc@gmail.com)

### STORY TIME: 'THE SNOW THIEF'

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. Crafts, songs and stories. For ages 2-5 years. 410-208-4014, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

### HERBAL HEALTH

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 2 p.m. Learn about the therapeutic and medicinal properties of herbs. Attendees will receive a specially curated tea to enjoy at home. Registration required: 410-957-0878. [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

### SILENT BOOK CLUB

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 3-4 p.m. Bring your current read or borrow one. The first 50 minutes will be spent silently reading, the last 10 minutes can be used to mingle and discuss your read. 410-524-1818, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

### LEGO MASTERS CHALLENGE

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 4:30 p.m. Join in for a Lego challenge event. All materials provided. For ages 6-11 years. 410-208-4014, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

### COLONIAL SILHOUETTE CRAFT

Maryland's Coast - Worcester County Tourism & Economic Development, 107 W. Green St., Snow Hill, 4:30 p.m. Join in for a colonial silhouette craft best for teens and adults. 410-632-3495, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

### DRY PANTRY

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

## Fri., Jan. 16

### 15TH ANNUAL DELMARVA ART & WOOL EXPO

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Featuring classes, vendors and demonstrations. Desash bin available for yarn and craft projects no longer wanted. Admission is \$4 per day or \$5 for the weekend. Classes: [www.woolandfiber.com](http://www.woolandfiber.com). 443-235-2926

### DREAMFEST - SHADOWS OF THE 60'S

Ocean City Performing Arts Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, 7 p.m. Number one Motown Tribute production in America. Tickets: <https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/46828837/shadows-of-the-60s-ocean-city-ocean-city-performing-arts-center>

### FANDOM FRIDAY: CRYPTIDS

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Drop in any time for crafts, quizzes and discussions about the monthly topic. For ages 12-18 years. 410-524-1818, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

### 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 are welcome. 410-524-1818, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

### BOOK DISCUSSION: 'BEWILDERMENT' BY RICHARD POWERS

Oaked at The Globe/Tiki Tim's, 12 Broad St., Berlin, 2 p.m. Pick up a copy of the book at the Berlin branch circulation desk and then join in for a lively discussion at Oaked at the Globe. 410-641-0650, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

### FRIED FLOUNDER DINNER

Bowen & Trinity United Methodist Church, 8426 Newark Road, Newark, 4:30 p.m. Fried flounder dinner with green beans, Mac & cheese, cornbread, dessert and beverage. Cost is \$10. 410-208-8943

### KIGHTS OF COLUMBUS BINGO

Fridays - Knights of Columbus, 9901

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

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., Jan. 17

### 15TH ANNUAL DELMARVA ART & WOOL EXPO

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Featuring classes, vendors and demonstrations. Desash bin available for yarn and craft projects no longer wanted. Admission is \$4 per day or \$5 for the weekend. Classes: [www.woolandfiber.com](http://www.woolandfiber.com). 443-235-2926

### DREAMFEST - EVOLUTION OF POP

Ocean City Performing Arts Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, 7 p.m. A high-energy, multi-sensory celebration of the greatest hits in pop music history. Tickets: <https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/90758045/the-evolution-of-pop-ocean-city-ocean-city-performing-arts-center>

### KIDS CRAFT TIME

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 2-3 p.m. Featuring DIY Dream Catchers. Cost is \$8 for residents and \$10 for non-residents. Participants must pre-register: 410-641-7052, [www.oceanpines.org](http://www.oceanpines.org).

### ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BULL & OYSTER ROAST

American Legion Synepuxent Post 166, 2308 Philadelphia Ave., Ocean City, 3-6 p.m. Pit beef, pit ham, oysters, oyster stew, coleslaw, potato salad, desserts, beverages, raffles and music by DJ Mikey. Cost is \$60. Limited tickets available at the post. 410-289-3166

### ORIGINALS ONLY: NO COVERS, JUST CREATORS

Art League of Ocean City, 502 94th St., 5:55-8 p.m. Featuring three musical performances and a published author. Suggested donation is \$5. 410-524-9433, [development@artleagueofoceancity.org](mailto:development@artleagueofoceancity.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., Jan. 18

### 15TH ANNUAL DELMARVA ART & WOOL EXPO

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10

a.m.-3 p.m. Featuring classes, vendors and demonstrations. Desash bin available for yarn and craft projects no longer wanted. Admission is \$4 per day or \$5 for the weekend. Classes: [www.woolandfiber.com](http://www.woolandfiber.com). 443-235-2926

### 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](http://www.jw.org)

## Mon., Jan. 19

### MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

Sturgis One Room School Museum, 209 Willow St., Pocomoke City, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Free tours, photo exhibit, community prayer (11:10 a.m. and 3 p.m.), lite refreshments and more. Donations: [sturgisschoolmuseum.com/donate](http://sturgisschoolmuseum.com/donate). Info: [sturgismuseum5@gmail.com](mailto:sturgismuseum5@gmail.com).

### 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 Campon, 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/oceanicity](http://www.Worcoa.org/oceanicity)

### 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](http://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., Jan. 20

### GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m. This workshop starts with a 20-minute lesson on genealogy research, followed by a Q&A. Bring a laptop, tablet or papers contains family information, if you can. Registration required: 410-208-4014.

### MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke

Continued on Page 20

# Calendar

Continued from Page 19

**Branch, 401 Fifth St., 10:30 a.m.** Sing silly songs, play rhythmic instruments and move to the beat. For ages 0-5 years. 410-957-0878. [worcesterlibrary.org](http://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. For ages 0-5 years. 410-641-0650, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://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, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

## OC KNITTING GROUP

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Bring whatever project you happen to be working on. 410-524-1818, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

## GLASS PAINTING

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 2 p.m. Local artist Jean Frank will teach the

group how to paint on glasses. Registration required: 410-524-1818. [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

## NEEDLE FELTING WORKSHOP

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 4:30 p.m. Learn about the properties of wool and needle felting with 4-H educator Barbara Barga and create your own piece to take home. For ages 12-18 years. 410-957-0878, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

## SNOW SLIME

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 4:30 p.m. There's more than one way to play with snow. Get ready for a mess. For ages 6-11 years. 410-208-4014, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

## SHARED VISIONS READING

Art League of Ocean City, 502 94th St., 6-8:05 p.m. Meet the artists and writers of this year's "Shared Visions" collaboration. Hear readings of the poetry and prose inspired by the artwork on display. Plus complimentary refreshments. Free. 410-524-9433

## 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 Agri-

culture 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](http://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: [TangobyleBeach.com](http://TangobyleBeach.com)

## ZUMBA TONING TUESDAYS

Tuesdays - Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City, 5:30 p.m. Zumba with optional light weights. [zumbajoyceoc@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://www.htcanglican.org/activities).

## Wed., Jan. 21

### EASTERN SHORE SEWISTS

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10 a.m. Promoting needle arts through sewing education, activities and textile crafts. For artisans of all skill levels. 410-641-0650, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

### BACKGAMMON CLUB

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

### CAREER POWER HOUR: LINKEDIN

Maryland's Coast - Worcester County Tourism & Economic Development, 107

W. Green St., Snow Hill, 12 p.m. Looking to start or refresh your LinkedIn profile? Join in for this workshop. Bring lunch if you like. 443-783-6164, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://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 box. 410-641-0650

## SERVICE SQUAD

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 4 p.m. Service hour earning program that lets Worcester County School students be creative while benefiting worthy causes. For ages 12-18 years. 410-641-0650, [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

## DECODING THE CENSUS

A virtual presentation about the history of the census using census records for family history research, 5:30 p.m. Registration required: 410-632-3495. [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org)

## PAINT & SIP

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 6-8 p.m. Cost is \$27 and includes wine and crackers. Must be at least 18 years of age to participate. Register: 410-641-7052, [www.ocean-pines.org](http://www.ocean-pines.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](http://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

### TOWN OF BERLIN RESTAURANT WEEK

Held Jan. 19-26. Pick up an entry card at The Berlin Welcome Center. Dine at three different participating restaurants and get your card stamped. Drop your card in the Entry Box located in the foyer of the Berlin Welcome Center. Random drawing for the winner.

### BUS TRIP TO WASHINGTON CAPITALS VS. CAROLINA HURRICANES REMATCH GAME

Held Jan. 31 at the Capital One Arena in Washington, DC. Cost is \$130 and includes transportation, game ticket and food package. Bus departs Ocean Pines Community Center at 1 p.m. Game time is 5 p.m. Tickets: OP Recreation & Parks, 410-641-7052.

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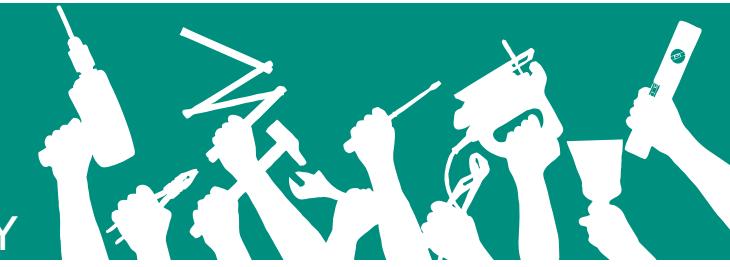
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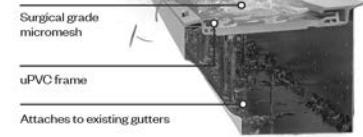
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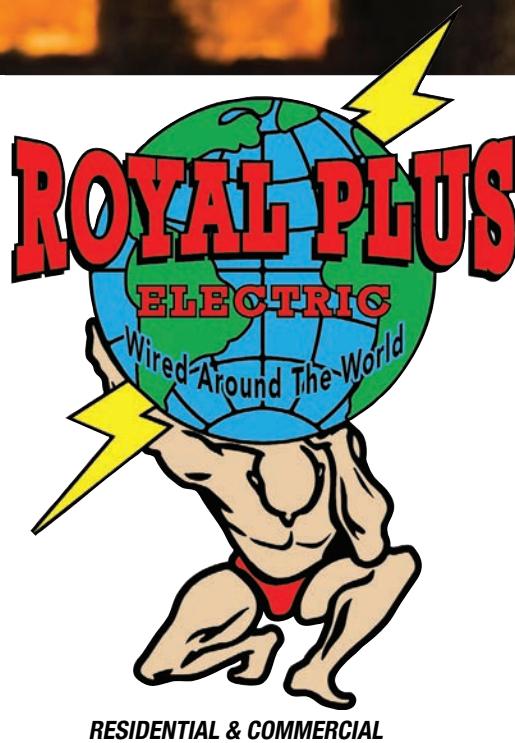
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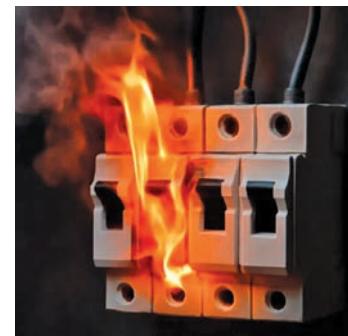
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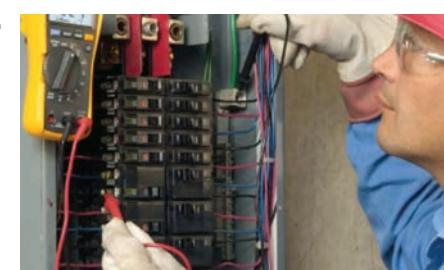
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