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BAYSIDE GAZETTE

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BETHANY HOOPER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE
Berlin Town Council member Shaneka Nichols makes a point during Saturday's discussion of Ocean City's proposed sports complex next door to Stephen Decatur High School between Route 50 and Flower Street just outside Berlin. At her immediate right is Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall, and next to him is Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan.

Berlin seeks sports plex site change

Officials tell resort leaders community doesn't want it so thanks but no thanks

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 12, 2026) Berlin officials have formally asked their counterparts in Ocean City to end their push to build a sports complex on a site near Flower Street and Stephen Decatur High School just east of town.

Citing the strong community opposition expressed during a public meeting last week, the Berlin mayor and council on Monday sent a letter to Ocean City leaders expressing their dissatisfaction with the proposed site for a sports complex.

The correspondence, addressed to Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan, reads, "On behalf of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Berlin, we would like to thank you for hosting the recent Sports Complex community meeting on Saturday, February 7, at Stephen Decatur High School.

"We appreciate the opportunity for the Berlin community to share their thoughts pertaining to a potential recreation facility in Briddletown and Flower Street Neighborhood."

The letter continues, "Following that meeting and after considering resounding feedback expressed by community members in attendance, the Town of Berlin respectfully requests that the property commonly known as 'Home Farm,' located directly west of Stephen Decatur High School and Stephen Decatur Middle, be removed from consideration as the potential site for the proposed sports complex.

See SPORTS Page 7

Sports plex pitch misses target

Neighborhood sees benefit to Ocean City but nothing beneficial coming their way

By Bethany Hooper
Associate Editor

(Feb. 13, 2026) It's not the facility. It's the location.

That's the message community members delivered Saturday during a contentious meeting on the sports

complex the Town of Ocean City proposes to build west of Stephen Decatur High School, on a parcel of land owned by the Harrison family.

While city officials told attendees they were seeking comments and suggestions that they could incorporate into a site plan, those along Flower Street and in adjacent communities were quick to share their opposition to the proposed project.

"This will only benefit Ocean City

— not Berlin, not Briddletown — so why would this community be in favor of it?" resident Greg Purnell said. "It's not the facility that they don't want, it's the site where you want to build it."

Mayor Rick Meehan began Saturday's meeting by declaring Ocean City's desire to work with the Flower Street community in developing a sports complex on the 95-acre site,

See RESIDENTS Page 6

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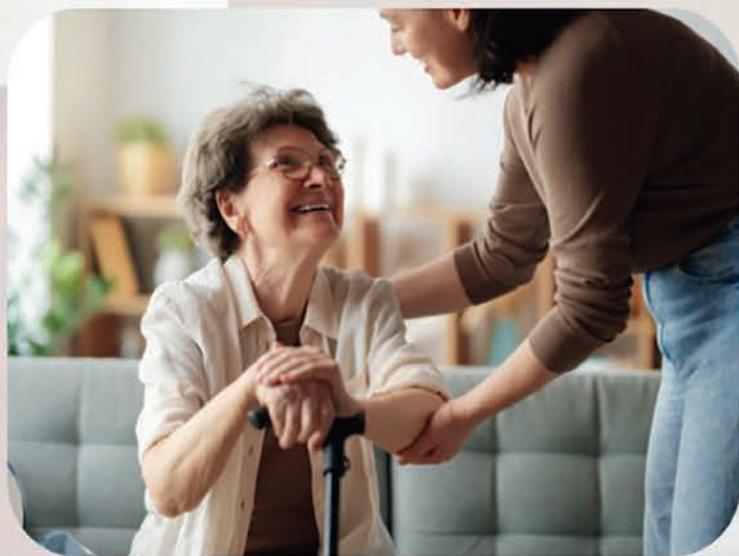
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Hotel landscaping project reviewed by HDC

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 12, 2026) Improvements at Berlin's Atlantic Hotel were approved after the fact by the Historic District Commission last week following a tense discussion about the proper approval and permitting processes.

At a Feb. 4 meeting of the Berlin HDC, the body accepted landscaping and electrical work that had already taken place on the hotel property. The unanimous vote was preceded by criticism from the town's planning department that the project did not make its way through the appropriate channels before being completed.

In January, Bryan LeCompte, owner of Salisbury-based Yard Designs, approached hotel owners John and Michelle Fager with an offer to spruce up an area with high pedestrian activity at a discounted rate.

The lodging's modifications included the installation of brick pavers on both sides of the sidewalk at the front entrance, installation of new landscaping, installation of a removable ground sleeve for the hotel sign, and installation of electrical.

The contractor said that, to secure the lower cost, the project would need to be completed the following week because the landscaping company's workload was about to increase.

In a rush to ensure the improvements could be made, the initiative failed to come before the HDC for approval, and permits were not secured before groundbreaking. Historic commission member and Atlantic Hotel general manager Laura Stearns got mixed up in the middle of what the town's planning department described as a procedural error.

Michelle Fager and Stearns appeared before the commission last week to apologize for failing to follow the proper steps.

"Recently, [LeCompte] came to us and offered to beautify the front of the hotel," explained Stearns to the HDC and town staff. "It was an opportunity that is rare...What we had there for years was roots that were exposed. It was a safety hazard and a liability for the hotel and probably for the townspeople that tripped on them."

She added that, in terms of shrubbery, two spiral boxwoods were placed on the hotel's front porch, and pavers matching those around town were installed for aesthetic appeal.

Stearns maintained that a dangerous electrical setup was also remedied and brought back into regulatory compliance.

Stearns said that once she realized the project would need proper HDC approval, she went to Berlin Planning Di-

rector Ryan Hardesty, who "was not positive about it happening." The hotel manager then called John Fager, who she said pushed for the work to proceed.

Stearns went back to Hardesty, who said she should speak to Norman Bunting, the HDC chairman. Bunting maintained that he could not provide explicit permission for the initiative.

Stearns then spoke to Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall. It was decided that the HDC members could be polled via email.

"Between all of us, we thought that we could just ask the commissioners," she said. "So it was presented to all of them in an email. They said it was beautiful. Then, I thought we were a go."

Stearns added that she knew the improvements required public permission, but that the situation mirrored others in which projects could receive retroactive approval if the adjustments needed to be completed immediately.

However, Stearns later received a message from Hardesty that the initiative should not proceed without the necessary steps. When Stearns reached out to the landscaping group to let them know to hold off, they were already too far into the work.

"With that, I called John Fager, and he said, 'We have to do it,'" Stearns said. "It was too late."

Stearns and Michelle Fager apologized to staff and the HDC for the errors. A letter from John Fager was also read, in which he acknowledged the mistake. Additionally, Stearns said that the hotel would obtain the proper permits.

Still, at last week's meeting, the town's planning department made it known that they were dissatisfied with how the situation unfolded.

"It's not the landscaping, it's not the new pavers going in," Hardesty said, addressing Stearns. "It looks beautiful, it really does. It's that those items don't constitute an emergency for it to have been done without approval. And if anyone knows it more, it would be you because you're on the board. That's the issue."

"I feel like being on the board, you set the precedent that this is the town code," the planning director continued. "This is how you have to go through the process. And then on top of that, even if, let's say you did think you got historic approval because of the email vote, there's still no permits. So, you have no permits for the town and then you have no electrical permits with the county. There are a lot of issues happening."

Hardesty also argued that because the commission failed to vote in a public venue, it may have violated the Mary- See HOTEL Page 10

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Residents pan sports plex plan

Continued from Page 1

which he said was selected after evaluating multiple properties throughout Worcester County. However, he also acknowledged some of the concerns with the project, particularly how it would be funded and accessed.

Meehan promised that the sports complex would not use taxpayer dollars but would be paid for with room tax revenues the city collects from its visitors. Officials this week were also joined by representatives of the Maryland Stadium Authority, a partner in the project's development.

"This will not affect your tax rate in Worcester County," he said, adding that any services that may be provided for the project by either the county or the Town of Berlin would be reimbursed by Ocean City.

For his part, Ocean City Business and Tourism Development Director

Tom Perlozzo said he wanted to hear the community's questions and comments regarding the sports complex, which he said was about "building our community" and giving kids and families access to local sports facilities.

Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall said he – alongside Berlin councilmembers and colleagues on the city's sports complex task force – wanted to hear directly from the affected neighborhoods should any project come to town.

"I think oftentimes when we get ready to have a meeting like this, people think that ideas are already done, things are set in stone," he told the audience "I will say in working with Mayor Meehan and the task force, that is not the case here."

Tyndall also referenced a 2022 referendum, in which the county's electorate voted down legislation



BETHANY HOOPER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Residents last Saturday had the opportunity to share their thoughts on a proposed sports complex just outside Berlin. Much of the audience opposed the project.

authorizing the county commissioners to issue a bond to construct the sports complex at the property.

"That was not a 'no' to this site, that was not a 'no' to a sports complex," he said. "That's why we're having this discussion here today."

The public was invited to Saturday's meeting as a way for "residents along Flower Street and surrounding areas to attend, ask questions, and share their thoughts," a letter signed by Meehan and Tyndall said. However, the meeting soon turned sour after it was announced that attendees would not be addressing the room, but representatives stationed at informational posterboards.

"These people are here to speak to you today, and I'm asking you to do your due diligence and give them the same respect of them showing up here today and allowing them to voice their concerns about what it is you are planning here," Berlin Councilwoman Shaneka Nichols said.

Agreeing to change the structure of the meeting, city officials then heard from several community members, most of whom opposed the proposed location. Purnell noted that most other facilities in Worcester County, including the recreation center in Snow Hill and the YMCA in Pocomoke, were built outside of communities, not in them.

"This is right in the heart of town, in the heart of our community," he said. "And you are hearing from the community that we do not want it in our community."

Many also talked about the way the Flower Street, a predominantly African American neighborhood, has been marginalized over the years. Among the slights the community endured were a landfill placed along their road (and eventually closed) and the Route 113 highway that cut off their access to downtown Berlin. Purnell argued the proposed sports complex was another project that did not benefit surrounding residents.

"Let us enjoy Flower Street ...," Hazel Purnell, another nearby resident, told officials this week. "We do not need that."

Berlin resident Gina Velong also expressed her opposition to the proposed location, noting that it would add traffic in an already congested area. She added that placing a sports complex in another nearby area would still benefit Ocean City's tourism industry.

"These people will only be able to stay at the hotels that are approved by their competitive sports teams. So with that being said, it doesn't have to be this location. We can stick this up in Bishopville, you can stick it in Showell. You just make sure Ocean City is smart enough to win the bid for the hotels," she said. "That's the part I don't understand, why all of a sudden Hale Harrison's farmland is the only location that you can have."

Ocean Pines resident Amy Peck argued the sports complex would not be a facility for local families, but for travel teams. She said that Ocean City

See OPPONENTS Page 8

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Sports complex 'not a good fit'

Continued from Page 1

"The Town of Berlin remains committed to collaborating with the Town of Ocean City to explore alternative locations that balance regional recreational goals with community priorities..."

Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall said the message from the public was clear.

"What I heard was the public said this site is a no-go; however, we're not opposed to a sports complex per se," he said. "It's just not a good fit here."

While some council members noted that Ocean City could proceed with the project without Berlin's support, Tyndall said he hoped a formal objection could carry weight, especially since state funding is involved.

"The large portion of this funding relies on state funding," he said. "... The state doesn't like to fund things when municipalities are at odds with each other."

Councilmember Shaneka Nichols, a Flower Street resident, said the community's concerns were centered on quality of life, not hostility toward Ocean City or the project itself.

Some present at Saturday's meeting argued the complex would increase traffic and place a burden on Berlin's services, such as fire, police, and EMS. Meanwhile, Ocean City would benefit from increased

tourism.

Some council members suggested sending copies of the letter to the Maryland Stadium Authority and the governor's office. However, Tyndall favored a more measured approach, focusing first on direct communication with Ocean City leadership.

"I was hoping the letter could be congenial," Tyndall said. "Just to the council and the mayor ... the community feedback should be enough... a letter from a neighboring municipality should be enough. If we were advancing a project like that was in someone's backyard, and they sent us a letter, we would say, 'okay, let's alter course.'"

Councilmember Steve Green expressed concern that Ocean City may proceed regardless with purchasing the property from the Harrison family.

"My fear is they're moving forward anyway," Green said. "But it's on Berlin to represent the citizens in that area, and even the county to do so as well. There were people there who weren't even from municipal Berlin and lived in the county at large."

Tyndall maintained that if Ocean City chooses to continue planning a sports complex at the Berlin location, community leaders would seek state-level support to halt the project.

See BERLIN Page 8



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Opponents see OC benefits only

Continued from Page 6
could see an increase in tourism, while Berlin could see an increase in fire and EMS calls.

“Berlin is going to get the headache, Ocean City is going to get the money,” she said.

When asked about other locations the city considered, Meehan said officials had explored two other sites – one on Route 589 and another west of Berlin. However, he noted that neither were zoned commercial.

“There’s price, water and sewer, highway access, topography. There’s a lot of stuff that goes into selecting a site,” Perlozzo added. “This was one that ... to us, it was an opportunity for the state of Maryland, the Town of Berlin, the Town of Ocean City, the Board of Education could all support and would be second to none here in the mid-Atlantic region. Meaning, when you can line up those four entities, I thought something special could be in place.”

David Wells, a teacher at Berlin Intermediate School, said he was disappointed that the youth were not represented at the meeting. He noted that many of his students had shared their excitement for a sports facility in their area.

“The kids do want this facility, and their families do want this facility,” he said.

Another in the audience agreed, adding, “This is something our community needs. This gives us something to do.”

Following a two-hour meeting, Meehan said the city’s sports complex task force would address and consider the community’s concerns. He said the city had planned to hold two more meetings with nearby residents.

“We’re going to have to go back and reassess where we are ...,” he said. “We’re going to determine if in fact there is another meeting. I hope that there is, and I hope we can continue to answer your questions and have further discussion.”

Berlin might ask state for support

Continued from Page 7
“If that’s the route that Ocean City chooses to take after they receive this formal correspondence, then we will go to Annapolis,” he said. “We won’t take that rolling over.”

Furthermore, at mayor and council meeting Monday night, Executive Administrative Assistant to the Mayor Sara Gorfinkel asked town officials if any other municipal locations would be more suitable.

Tyndall maintained that he was not at liberty to share what, or if, any alternative sites had been discussed.

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Hotel bypassed permits, staff says

Continued from Page 4
land Open Meetings Act.

Michelle Fager noted that Stearns was simply following her employer's directions.

"If I could just say, [Stearns] does work for us, so it would actually be my husband who is involved directly in this project who would be the one to get approval, not [Stearns]," she said. "She has to work under his direction. He told her to go ahead with it, and she was just complying with her employment with us."

Some on the commission were displeased with how the planning department handled the incident, noting that the HDC has historically been a laid-back operation. Commission member Mary Moore said that she believes Hardesty feels the body "let [her] down," and would appreciate a clarification of expectations.

"The expectations are to follow your town code," Hardesty responded.

Many in the audience felt that the planning department was unfairly and publicly admonishing the Fagers and Stearns.

Attendee Cindi Krempel said the discussion seemed to have turned into an open reprimand of those involved.

"It seems to me this is a public rebuke of them that should have been done in private," she said, addressing

Hardesty. "It could have been explained in another way...And just you, you want to rebuke them in public...They should have come to the board, which she has already admitted...You keep on repeating that and I understand why you want to drive it home, but the point is, everybody knows what the procedure should be...It feels more personal than anything, to be perfectly honest...It feels like you want to publicly humiliate, or make an example of them."

Hardesty said that because approval is meant to occur transparently, the conversation had to happen publicly.

"You need to grant the public the opportunity to come and talk about each case on an agenda," she said. "When the work was done, an application had not even been filled out yet...A poll vote can happen, but you have to have it publicly advertised that this is the topic we're talking about."

Berlin resident and We Heart Berlin founder Tony Weeg spoke at the meeting, noting his dissatisfaction with the current state of the town's planning department.

"There's a growing sense of antagonism between the planning department and many facets of this town," he said. "If the planning department...cannot understand the gravity of the Atlantic Hotel and make that work, whatever you have to do, if that doesn't translate,

then I don't think you understand Berlin...Whatever you had to do, I'm so glad you did it, and everyone I've talked to in town feels the same way. They all don't like the antagonism that's coming from the planning department...Contractors, residents, everybody."

At the conclusion of the meeting, the historic commission unanimously granted post-installation approval for the Atlantic Hotel project.

The issue was brought up again at Monday night's Berlin Mayor and Council meeting. Tyndall addressed the situation and acknowledged that the town code is not always clear, which can create confusion as shown at the Feb. 4 HDC meeting.

The mayor said that an internal working group will be launched to ensure the proper processes for projects like site plan approval and annexation are easily understood.

This team will include Town Administrator Mary Bohlen, Tyndall, Town Attorney David Gaskill, Planning Legal Counsel Emily Morris, Hardesty, Planning Commission Chair Matthew Stoehr, Bunting, Board of Zoning Appeals Chair Joe Moore, and councilmembers Jay Knerr and Jack Orris.

"I don't think there's been any lack of discussion when it comes to the idea of the planning department and the work that the planning department is



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

A new, enlarged patio in front of the Atlantic Hotel in Berlin was recently installed by a contractor looking to keep crews busy during a slow time of year.

doing, the work that is taking place with the planning commission and HDC," Tyndall said. "There is a lot of information that becomes a little misunderstood through the processes. The town code is not always super clear on how to move forward with certain things. When we try to lay out a plan...it can be difficult because it may have been different from what folks were asked in the past. We recognize that, but it doesn't change the fact that we as a municipality still have the code we need to abide by, we still have the boxes that need to be checked."

The mayor added that the group will make necessary changes to the town code and publish easy-to-follow information.



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Residents invited to get involved in OP organizations

By Tara Fischer
 Staff Writer

(Feb. 12, 2026) Several community organizations in Ocean Pines are offering residents this spring opportunities to get involved in the arts, support veterans, and celebrate local businesses.

The Pine Tones Chorus is inviting OPA citizens to join the singing group. The team is kicking off rehearsals for its spring concert, Pine Tones Goes to the MOVIES, with a first practice scheduled for Thursday, March 5. The performance will take place on June 5 and will feature well-known songs from classic films, including "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," "42nd Street," "Moon River," and "When You Wish Upon a Star."

The choir is made up of musically inclined amateurs and invites new singers to attend the first rehearsal to meet members, ask questions and see if the group is a good fit. An advertisement notes that while musical experience is encouraged, it is not required to participate.

A community press release indicates that there will be 14 rehearsals in preparation for the June 5 event. Additionally, the OP chorus group will perform at assisted living facilities and senior centers throughout Worcester County in the weeks leading up to the spring concert.

Interested residents may send any questions via email to pinetoneschorus@gmail.com.

Citizens can also get involved in Ocean Pines outreach through the Worcester County Veterans Memorial Foundation, which is currently accepting new members and donations, according to a community press release.

Funds raised help support the foundation's Educational Outreach Program, providing all fifth-grade students in Worcester County with field trips to the Veterans Memorial in Ocean Pines to learn about the United States military branches.

"During the visit, students rotate through three educational stations, where they learn about the memorial and veterans' stories, proper flag folding and etiquette, and the Patriots Pathway," a press release explains.

Memberships with the veterans' park are tiered, with categories: annual (\$25), life (\$150), corporate annual (\$100), and corporate life (\$300).

Checks should be made payable to WCVMF and sent to Membership, Worcester County Veterans Memorial, P.O. Box 1576, Ocean Pines, MD 21811.

Suzie Pantone may be contacted
 See PINES Page 16

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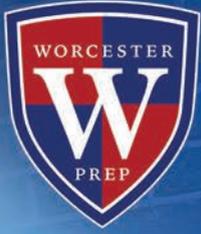


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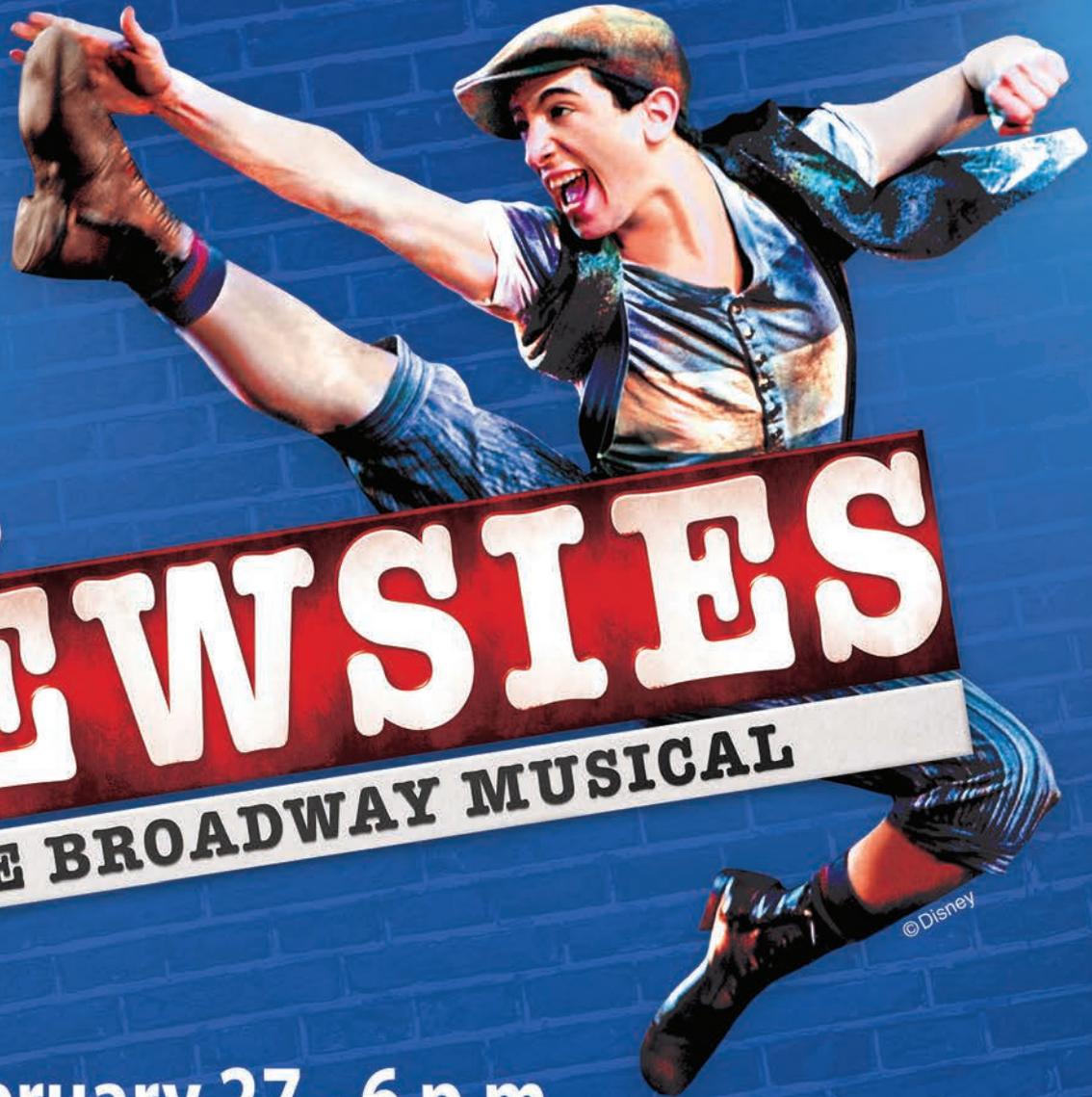
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Soaring costs questioned for Berlin Town Hall project

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 12, 2026) After a lengthy and detailed discussion on Monday night, the Berlin Town Council awarded the Town Hall renovation contract to Keller Brothers and transferred \$1,045,000 in unassigned dollars to the assigned side of the ledger to pay for it.

The approvals came through two motions considered at the Monday, Feb. 9, meeting of the Berlin mayor and council. The first authorized transferring \$1.045 million from the town's unassigned fund balance into capital reserves to help finance the project.

The second awarded the construction contract to Keller Brothers for a total of \$3,156,693. This includes a base bid of \$2.39 million, a contingency of \$260,000, an elevator at \$204,999, and, contingent on the future presentation of an itemized list to be actioned by the council, \$300,703 for furniture.

Mayor Zack Tyndall explained that while the project was originally expected to cost about \$2.5 million, unforeseen circumstances have driven the price higher.

"When we originally came up with

the amount we thought we would need for Town Hall renovations, that was us throwing something against the board," Tyndall said. "And along the way... We did not anticipate a full HVAC replacement; we did not expect the well failures with the geothermal unit... This bid includes making sure we replace those things."

Some council members raised concerns about the overall cost and the use of unassigned funds, particularly given that other town needs, such as stormwater management, sidewalks, and parking, remain unfunded.

Councilmember Jack Orris expressed frustration that money could be moved for Town Hall but not for other projects previously deemed urgent.

"I'm frustrated ... we have been told for months that things we've asked for will have to wait until Fiscal Year 27," he said. "Stormwater, parking, streets, sidewalks. Yet we are now able to move [funds] over for this Town Hall renovation."

Finance staff assured that the transferred funds will remain in capital reserves and can be reassigned if necessary.

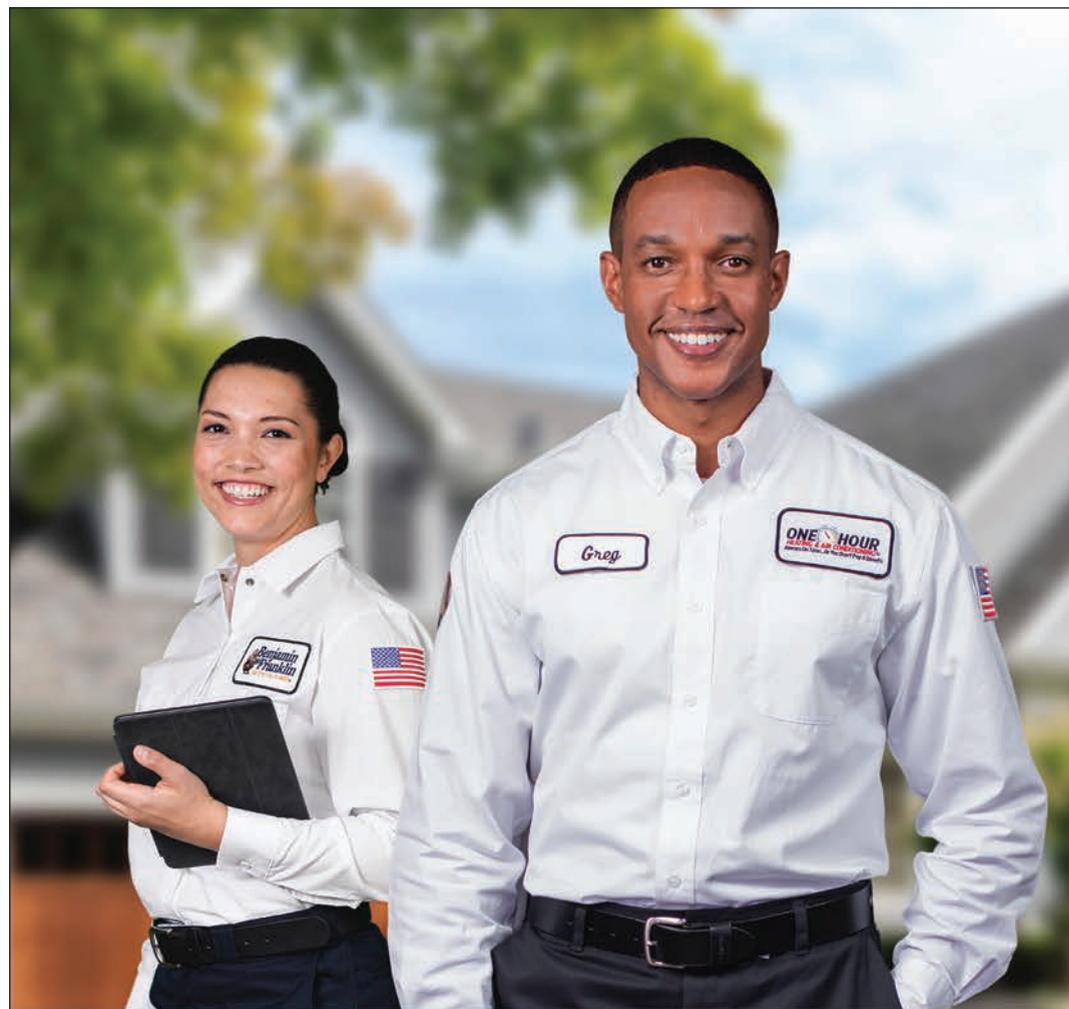
Furthermore, Tyndall clarified
See TOWN Page 18

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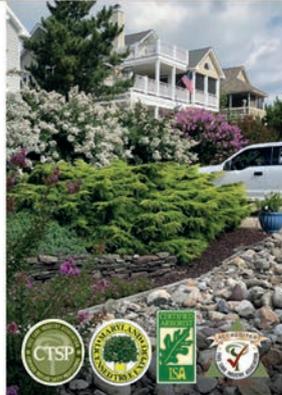
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Berlin holds work session to consider ADU requirements

By Tara Fischer
 Staff Writer

(Feb. 12, 2026) Berlin officials began laying the groundwork for how the town will comply with new state requirements for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by holding a joint work session this week with the mayor and council and the Berlin Planning Commission.

The group considered parking requirements, equivalent dwelling units (EDUs), short-term rental regulations, and size restrictions.

The meeting comes as Maryland law now requires all municipalities and counties to adopt a local law authorizing the development of ADUs on properties with single-family detached homes by Oct. 1, 2026, under Senate Bill 891 and House Bill 1466.

The law is part of a statewide mission to expand housing options. The idea is that accessory dwelling units, apartment-like structures detached from a lot's primary home, could provide additional residency options.

One of the central questions from Monday night's work session was whether ADUs in Berlin should be approved "by right," meaning automatically if they meet zoning standards, or whether applications should go through a conditional use or special exception process with review by the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Councilman Steve Green said Berlin should consider additional review, such as having the Board of Zoning Appeals hear the cases, at least to begin with in town.

"By right goes right through, basically," he said. "Are we happy by right, or do we want to add a hurdle to it, where it allows case-by-case review of each one?"

There was some discussion about whether approving ADUs under special exceptions or conditions, rather than by right, is permitted under state law. Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall said that officials and staff would seek an answer to this question, but the Maryland Department of Planning states it's permissible and that ADUs simply can't be prohibited.

The planning commission and the mayor and council also considered size restrictions. Worcester County allows ADUs between 500 and 900 square feet. However, Council member Shaneka Nichols said that she would like to see the maximum reduced for Berlin's ordinance.

"I think using the county as a skeleton and then building from it is a great idea, but I think the part that's hard for me is Worcester County ... can be vast and huge ... I think 900 square feet, that's a decent size for a first house," she said. "That's big...if you're truly using it as an accessory unit, what do you need 900 square feet for? Unless it's an income prop-

erty."

Nichols indicated that a more appropriate size for an ADU would fall between 500 and 700 square feet.

Parking was another major concern. Planning Commission Chair Matt Stoer said Berlin's residential parking study is outdated and that the town may need new data before requiring extra parking spaces.

"We can't force additional spots on property unless we have a parking study showing there's a need for us not to have extra people, extra vehicles, and to require a spot," he said. "Something most of our roads probably can't handle is more cars."

Tyndall said they were unsure whether spending around \$20,000 on a new parking study for ADUs is necessary, given that few people are likely to build the detached units.

"Is it better to just require...to assess a fee associated with parking if you can't handle it onsite?," he said. "Is it worth the town spending money if the basket is going to be so small? I don't think so. So how do you accommodate the parking considerations?"

The mayor said that parking regulations be something the group would come back to at a later work session.

The group also discussed how ADUs would impact water and sewer capacity. Current town policy requires developers to pay an equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) fee — roughly \$17,000 — for new connections. Several officials said that the fee would be too burdensome for small ADUs.

See ACCESSORY Page 18

Pines celebrates Valentine's Day

Continued from Page 12
 for more information at Suziepan123@gmail.com.

Furthermore, despite the frigid chill, Ocean Pine will celebrate Valentine's Day this week.

The Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market is gearing up for the love-focused holiday on Saturday, Feb. 14, with special treats and live entertainment. Market vendors will feature seasonal sweets, including chocolates, cookies, and sweet breads. Additionally, musician Allie Donovan is scheduled to perform on the Market Stage.

"We love any reason to celebrate and have fun," said Janice Curtis, the farmer market's events and happenings coordinator, in a press release. "It's a great opportunity to show some love to our hardworking merchants who brave the winter chill to bring you the best local goods."

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Berlin's outdated Town Hall building will soon undergo a much-needed renovation project.
SUBMITTED PHOTO/
BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Town Hall costs draw concerns

Continued from Page 15
that per calculations by the town's finance department, even with the increased cost to the project, Berlin will remain in a secure financial position.

"None of this puts the town in an uncomfortable fiscal position," the mayor said.

Additionally, to control costs, the council opted not to proceed with several alternatives, including renovations to the planning annex building, façade improvements, a new generator, and audio-visual upgrades. Those items were grouped under a third motion, which was shelved for future consideration.

Tyndall said focusing on the core building made the most sense. However, one previously alternative item, an elevator to remain compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, will be factored into the approved work.

"It makes more sense to do [the elevator] when you're doing the whole

project rather than phasing that," he said.

Furniture costs also drew criticism from the council, with some members calling the roughly \$300,000 estimate too high. Ultimately, the council approved the amount on the condition that no furniture purchases be made until the itemized list is reviewed.

Staff and officials maintained that functional furniture is essential to ensure Town of Berlin employees can do their jobs.

"\$300,000 is a big number," Tyndall said. "We don't disagree, but we have to make sure staff have the ability to have the equipment they need to do their jobs...I know what it takes for our departments to function. And the fact is, they have been holding the basics together with duct tape."

Both motions passed unanimously, with Council Vice President Dean Burrell absent.

Accessory dwellings discussed

Continued from Page 16

One option discussed was charging a fractional EDU or reviewing water usage annually and adjusting fees if necessary.

Despite differing views on details, there was agreement on several points: ADUs should not be used as short-term rentals, units should be within 100 feet of the main house, and they should match the style of the primary dwelling. Height should also

not exceed that of the main home.

Town staff and officials will continue drafting an ordinance for ADU requirements. Additional work sessions will be held to finalize details.

"We need answers to the by right question, we need an answer or some general idea of what we can discuss next time around parking, and we need something about EDUs," Tyndall said. "I think there's some research that needs to be done."



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AT OUTLETS OCEAN CITY

Woman's confession ruled valid in homicide

Bishopville resident told investigators on scene she shot boyfriend in defense

By **Brian Shane**
Staff Writer

(Feb. 12, 2026) A Bishopville woman accused of killing her boyfriend last spring will have to wait seven more months for her day in court after waiving her right to a speedy trial.

In a status hearing early Monday in Worcester County Circuit Court in Snow Hill, defendant Bonnie Hackendorn made her appearance remotely from the county jail. Over a live video feed, a television on the courtroom wall showed her seated at an empty desk, wearing navy blue prisoner garb over a white long-sleeve shirt.

Maryland State Police said Hackendorn, 62, told investigators that she shot and killed her live-in boyfriend, 57-year-old David Shaulis, claiming self-defense.

County prosecutor Dempsey Stewart and public defender Alexandria Hall discussed setting a trial date for August to accommodate Hall's expected maternity leave. Judge Beau Oglesby agreed to schedule a five-day trial and also asked for a pre-trial status hearing in

July.

Her jury trial had already been rescheduled twice, from October and then December, pushing the limits of a state law that ensures the accused a speedy trial.

A specific state law, known as the Hicks Rule, says a trial must begin within 180 days of either a defendant's first court appearance or the date an attorney files to represent the defendant.

A defendant or their attorney, however, may voluntarily agree to waive the rule, which Hackendorn agreed to in a Nov. 13 hearing, court documents show.

On the night of May 12, 2025, State Police responded to a 911 call that Shaulis had been shot dead at the mobile home he shared with Hackendorn on Shell Mill Road in Bishopville, court documents show.

Hackendorn told police she shot Shaulis with a .38 special pistol before calling 911 herself.

A statement from a funeral home included in court documents said the victim was delivered to the medical examiner in the same condition as when the body was taken into custody, wearing only shorts and underwear with a gunshot wound to the chest.

According to his obituary, Shaulis was a handyman and master carpenter

who loved motorcycles and muscle cars, and that he left behind four children and five grandchildren.

Police charged Hackendorn with first- and second-degree murder, first- and second-degree assault, and a firearms charge. She's been held at the Worcester County Jail since the murder.

Prosecutors stated in court documents they intend to seek a life sentence without the possibility of parole, the maximum possible sentence for first-degree murder. Maryland has no death penalty.

In August, the defense unsuccessfully moved to suppress inculpatory evidence stemming from a conversation Hackendorn had with one of the investigators.

Prosecutors fought the motion to suppress in court documents. They said investigators formally interviewed Hackendorn just after midnight on May 13 – about three hours after the shooting – when she waived her Miranda rights and made several statements, including “he’s gone.” Police later had her sign a search warrant for her DNA.

Less than an hour later, ahead of an appearance before the District Court Commissioner, Hackendorn approached one of the troopers who interviewed her earlier and “advised him that she had lied about some-



Bonnie Hackendorn

thing.” The details of that conversation were not included in the public case record.

Prosecutors argued she'd already waived her Miranda rights and agreed to speak to police without an attorney present. Judge Brian Shockley denied the motion to suppress, saying at the Nov. 13 hearing that Hackendorn's statements were admissible.

Court documents show the prosecution is planning for several expert witnesses at trial, including a forensic pathologist from the medical examiner's office, a State Police forensic scientist to testify about DNA, and a State Police firearms examiner.

Public defender Hall confirmed to Judge Oglesby that one of her defense witnesses will be a clinical psychologist with an expertise in battered spouse syndrome.

Worcester approves Sheriff's doorbuster buy

Commissioners question whether \$40K equipment is really needed for dept.

By **Brian Shane**
Staff Writer

(Feb. 12, 2026) The Worcester County Sheriff's Office will soon be the only police force on the lower Eastern Shore with a remote-controlled pneumatic door-breaching tool.

And while the county commissioners did approve the expenditure more than two months ago, some commissioners on Feb. 3 still pressed Sheriff Matt Crisafulli about budgeting \$40,000 for a device that likely won't be used that often.

“In your career as being the sheriff, how many times have you had to knock a door down?” asked Commissioner Jim Bunting (District 6, Bishopville) at Tuesday's meeting.

According to Lt. Rob Price, who leads the Sheriff's Tactical Armed Response (STAR) team, it's a lot.

“Often times, when we execute these warrants, people don't come to the door, so we're forced to breach through,” he told the commissioners, noting that the department currently has a steel ram

device at its disposal for such a task.

When Commissioner Diana Purnell (District 2, Central) criticized the sheriff for “working outside the budget,” he reminded her how the commissioners had already approved the money for the proprietary Holmatro Door Blaster through a fiscal year 2026 budget amendment on Dec. 2.

“I do respect your question, commissioner, but I respectfully disagree that this is a surprise or that we're not being forthright or bringing information to you,” he told her.

The sheriff's office had included the item as part of its original spending request for the current fiscal year, but it was pulled ahead of the budget being finalized.

The device also could be shared with nearby police departments throughout the county as needed, Crisafulli said.

Invoices provided show the cost of just the Door Blaster itself was quoted as \$15,247. Other accoutrements like a pump, wireless control, and air cylinder add another \$22,050 to the bill. The vendor offered a discount of 2%, or \$780, bringing the total expenditure to \$38,230.

Using compressed air to power a

door-breaching tool is faster and safer than using a manual battering ram and gets the job done more quietly than shotguns or explosives, Capt. Brian Cardamone told the commissioners in a Jan. 27 internal memo.

He also said the device's precision means less structural damage after the fact – helpful for getting into public places like apartments or hotels. Once activated, the device applies 4.5 tons of hydraulic force, per the manufacturer, typically breaching a doorway in under a second.

The commissioners voted to approve the purchase unanimously, with varying levels of enthusiasm.

Commissioner Eric Fiori (District 3, West Ocean City) supported the purchase, saying, “if this brings one of your deputies back home for \$38,000, I think it's a bargain.”

Commissioner Joe Mitrecic (District 7, Ocean City) was less effusive.

“Do I think this \$38,000 could be spent someplace else? Absolutely,” he said. “But we approved this.”

Bullets purchased

Also at last Tuesday's meeting, the commissioners approved a \$76,632 over-expenditure for 195,400 additional rounds of rifle

and pistol ammunition. This would supplement the 227,000 rounds already purchased for the fiscal year, Crisafulli told OC Today-Dispatch.

The sheriff was asking the commissioner for more ammo funding because his department has already used up 94% of its ammo budget of \$84,500 for the fiscal year, he added, and wants to stockpile approximately a year's worth of extra bullets.

The sheriff's office isn't obligated to buy ammunition through the state's approved vendor, but piggybacking on the state contract does allow for competitive pricing and volume discounts, he said.

It's typical for the sheriff's office to sometimes order ammunition up to a year in advance due to long lag times in delivery of seven to 12 months. This latest purchase should arrive in time for the 2027 fiscal year, which starts July 1.

Outside of training situations, Worcester's deputies haven't discharged a service weapon in the field in years. Crisafulli says the stockpile of ammunition purchased is used almost exclusively for mandatory training, marksman drills, and range time for his 96 deputies and the STAR team.

Obituary

JOANNE BREEDLOVE
Berlin

Joanne Isabel Miller Breedlove, (age 96) of Berlin and formerly of Takoma Park, died Monday, Feb. 2, 2026.



Joanne Breedlove

Born in Chicago, Ill., Aug. 4, 1929, she was the daughter of Josephine H. Miller and Elmer Frederick Miller. She grew up in Zionsville, Ind., where she graduated high school in 1947 and then attended Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind, graduating in 1951.

She married William H. Breedlove in 1952 and was married for 57 years. She was employed at the University of Maryland, College Park in the Resident Life Department. Upon retirement, they moved to South Point, Berlin. Recently, she was a resident of Gull Creek Senior Living, Berlin, which she enjoyed very much.

She was an active member of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in Takoma Park and St. Mary's/Holy Savior Catholic parish in Ocean City, where she loved to volunteer in the food pantry and as a Eucharistic minister. She once received the Volunteer of the Year award from the Diocese of Wilmington. She served at the Di-

akonia Thrift Shop, Joseph House, and Blind Industries and services in Salisbury. She was a member of the Republican Woman of Worcester County, Worcester County Garden Club and the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Joanne is survived by her children, Cathy Link (Conrad), Sue Lowe (Bob), Bill Breedlove (Yvonne), Mary Miller (Michael) and Trish Masterson (Mike), son in law Dave Leatherman, Dan Breedlove (Kylie), and Barbara Aughenbaugh (David); 20 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. She is preceded in death by her parents, her husband, Bill, her daughter Denise Leatherman, grandson Rob Lowe, and great granddaughter Alexandra Cohen.

A Mass of Christian Burial will take place on Saturday, Feb. 14, 2026, at 11 a.m. at Holy Savior Roman Catholic Church in Ocean City. A burial will take place at a later date at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be sent to: Holy Savior RC Church, 1705 Philadelphia Ave. Ocean City, Md. or Diakonia, 12747 Old Bridge Road, Ocean City, Md. Letters of condolence can be sent to the family via www.burbagefuneral-home.com. Arrangements are in the care of The Burbage Funeral Home.

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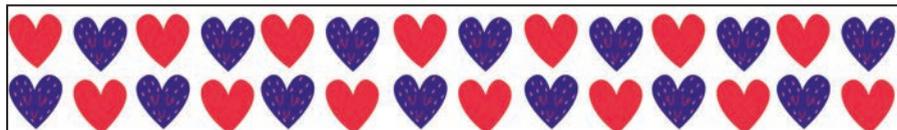


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Opinion

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

Ocean City stumbles in Berlin presentation

No one can blame the residents of Flower Street, the Berlin mayor and Town Council, or even some individuals connected to the two Stephen Decatur schools on Seahawk Road for opposing Ocean City's plan to build a sports complex on the eastern edge of town.

Because the proposed site abuts school property and Flower Street, the currently vacant tract will unquestionably affect surrounding properties once it is developed with multiple athletic fields and indoor facilities. Yet Ocean City officials never made a meaningful effort to bring Flower Street residents and Berlin officials into the conversation early on.

Assumptions were made. But as Ocean City officials saw during their presentation at Stephen Decatur High School on Saturday, the penalty is steep for assuming their grand idea would be perceived as grand by everyone else.

That is especially true for residents of the Flower Street area, where generations of Black families have endured slights, marginalization, and worse. That includes the 1950 opening of the Worcester County landfill that operated as an open-burning dump until 1983. It wasn't fully closed until 1990.

Given that history, it is no surprise that Black families and other residents on the east side of Berlin are sensitive and suspicious when they aren't consulted in the beginning when proposals arise that will affect their community. They expect to be engaged, not bypassed — and certainly not dictated to. Berlin officials, in turn, had little choice but to stand with their constituents.

Ocean City now faces unexpected heavy lifting if it hopes to secure the state funding needed to build the facility. It is entirely possible that the Town of Berlin could block the project.

If so, supporters of the sports complex have a serious task ahead: persuading Berlin Town Hall and the residents of east Berlin neighborhoods that this development truly serves their interests.

Letters

Invitation to join party for primary

Editor,

Hey, Independent, Libertarian and Unaffiliated voters. It's unfair that you have no voice in our gubernatorial election on Tuesday June 23, 2026. You are locked out -- 22% of Marylanders, one million people, have no affiliation with either the Republican or Democrat party. As the polarization of both parties grows, so does the number of unaffiliated voters. You have no voice.

With our Worcester County local elections approaching, we implore you to become more active. Our gubernatorial ballot will vote for a Governor candidate, a state Senator, district Delegates, Commissioners, many county and municipal officers.

The Worcester County Republican Central Committee wants to extend an open invitation for you to consider joining our party and switch your voter registration to Republican. Maryland has a closed primary election but by joining the Republican Party, you will be able to vote in this primary, voting for the causes and candidates that you support, and that mean the most to you.

While Republicans and unaffiliated voters do not agree on everything, we agree on most issues:

Smaller, more efficient government, lower taxes and

less interference in our churches, schools and families.

Until our election laws change, by shutting out your largely unrepresented base, we invite you to join us Republicans on June 23, 2026. Vote!

*Susan Ostrowski
(The writer is the chair of the Worcester County Republican Central Committee.)*

Accountability and transparency needed

Editor,

Any incident that ends with a civilian shot by a federal officer demands clear, independent scrutiny — not rushed conclusions. When Congressman Andy Harris weighs in on the Minneapolis encounter, it reflects how quickly national immigration debates can shape the story before all the facts are known.

But relying primarily on statements from federal agencies or political leaders who already have firm positions on immigration enforcement does little to build public trust. Investigations that lack visible independence can leave communities feeling that law enforcement is reviewing itself rather than being held fully accountable. Transparency is not anti-law enforcement — it is how confidence in law enforcement is maintained.

This tragedy also should

not be used to broadly condemn protest or label community dissent as a threat. Peaceful protest and even disruptive civil disobedience are long-standing parts of American civic life and are constitutionally protected. Blurring the line between protest and violence risks justifying excessive force and discouraging lawful public expression.

Claims that expanded cooperation with immigration enforcement would have prevented this outcome are speculative and shift focus away from the central issue: whether proper use-of-force standards were followed and whether deadly force was truly a last resort.

Here on Maryland's Eastern Shore, we value both public safety and individual rights. Many of Congressman Harris's own constituents believe law enforcement should be supported — and also held to clear, consistent standards when lives are at stake. Those principles are not in conflict. In fact, accountability, transparency, and respect for constitutional rights are what make public safety efforts stronger and more legitimate.

After a loss of life, the priority should be facts, independent review, and a commitment to both safety and civil liberties — not using tragedy to discourage dissent or to score political points in a national debate.

*Joan Roache
Berlin*

Officials stumped on parking future

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 12, 2026) Members of Berlin's parking committee told the Town Council this week that they have been unable to agree on how to pay for repairs to municipal and quasi-public parking lots.

Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall told the council and audience members at Monday night's regular meeting that the parking subcommittee, which includes himself,

Councilmember Steve Green, and Councilmember Jay Knerr, has explored several options to get more than \$1 million needed to repair parking lots in the downtown business district.

Suggestions have included paid parking, paid parking only during events, increased business license fees in exchange for no paid parking, an arts and entertainment fee on all sales and voluntary donation campaigns.

However, none of the ideas have received enough support from committee members as well as business merchants to move forward.

"From what I recall from our last meeting, we could not reach consensus on a paid event parking plan," Tyndall said. "We could not reach a clear consensus on ... increasing business license fees to cover a portion of what paid parking would generate in in-

See LOT Page 23

BAYSIDE GAZETTE

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Pending bills opposed by Worcester leaders

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Feb. 6, 2026) Officials in Worcester County are pushing back against a slate of bills pending in the General Assembly they say would chip away at counties' authority over zoning, land use, and workforce policy.

The County Commissioners on Tuesday unanimously agreed to oppose four bills in the House of Delegates while expressing support for two Senate bills. County staff ultimately will submit written testimony to be considered at each bill hearing.

Legislative Analyst Charlene Sharpe walked the commissioners through each proposal. She warned three of the bills would strip commissioners of legislative authority while another could impose new costs without additional state funding.

House Bill 99 would allow towns to take control of newly annexed land sooner and limit how long counties can block or dictate development on that

land.

Specifically, it would remove the commissioners' existing right to review and approve zoning classifications that would result in higher density within five years after annexation.

HB 99 is sponsored by Delegates Matthew Schindler (D-2B, Washington) and Kris Fair (D-3, Frederick.)

House Bill 203 says employers can't contractually bind workers to reimburse them for training after leaving the job. The bill specifically would make it illegal for employers to require such "training repayment agreements" as a condition of employment.

For Worcester, this could affect positions like correctional officers, deputy sheriffs, roads workers, and 911 dispatchers, according to Sharpe. HB 203 is sponsored by Del. Joe Vogel (D-17, Montgomery).

House Bill 239, known as the "Starter and Silver Homes Act of 2026," targets municipal control over zoning.

It says cities and counties can't use zoning to block the construction of smaller, more basic homes – more affordable "starter" houses that might appeal to new home buyers or retirees.

Specifically, the bill would prohibit the county from enforcing lot size minimums over 5,000 square feet for single-family homes on public water and sewer. It also would force the county to allow townhouses in areas where single-family homes can be built.

HB 239 was filed by the House Economic Matters Committee at the request of the state's Department of Housing and Community Development. The agency has been pushing for more ways to generate affordable housing in the state.

House Bill 257 would require new housing or subdivision developments to conduct flood-related watershed studies, which would then have to be submitted for approval to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) on the developer's dime.

HB 257 was filed by the House Environment and Transportation Com-

mittee at the request of MDE.

"That's basically an unfunded mandate," Sharpe told the commissioners, "because once the watershed is designated, the counties will have to do these studies every five years."

Sharpe also named several bills the county plans to support.

Senate Bill 300 would establish a "Rural Readiness Program" to provide assistance to small towns and nonprofits that lack the capacity to compete for funding.

The bill would establish a grant program to benefit rural communities where funding could go toward community assessments and feasibility studies. Sharpe said the bill is being pushed by the Rural Maryland Council, an independent nonpartisan state agency.

SB 300 has bipartisan support from eight sponsors in the Senate, including Lower Shore Sen. Mary Beth Carozza (R-38, Worcester).

House Bill 460 concerns solar farms on rural lands. It would reduce

See BILLS Page 25

Lot repairs unfunded in Berlin

Continued from Page 22
come."

Green said the town faces over \$1 million in infrastructure needs for municipally owned and town used lots. The much-needed work includes not just resurfacing but also underlying structural issues.

"We keep throwing ideas out ... and we keep running into opposition," Green said. "...We have all tried very hard. We are back to no solution at this point."

Tyndall said one proposal was to launch a campaign to encourage residents and visitors to pay for parking voluntarily. Signs could be placed in parking lots, and posts could be made on social media to encourage donations to the repair effort.

However, subcommittee members and town staff weren't optimistic that the venture would generate enough revenue.

Berlin's Economic and Community Development Director Ivy Wells said the Berlin Fire Company often solicits donations at town events but raises only a few hundred dollars.

"I think people would be more inclined to donate to the fire company than just, 'Hey, keep parking free, but you pay so everyone else doesn't have to,'" she said. "I think it's potentially a waste of our time with the amount of money that is needed."

Grant options are also being explored to address the project.

Knerr suggested breaking the work into smaller phases, starting with individual projects. The Commerce Street lot alone is estimated at \$178,000. However, town staff noted that these figures are outdated and require revision.

phased approach, the municipality needs to be cautious in how the parking lot work gets funded.

"We all know how residents are going to feel if we are now spending a sizable amount of money for parking downtown from the general fund without a way to really show contributions to cover those expenditures," he said.

Councilmember Jack Orris questioned why even event-only paid parking failed to gain traction. Green said there was "robust opposition" and concern that it would lead to broader paid parking policies.

"We are failing to gain any sense of consensus," Tyndall concluded, "even with a slim majority."

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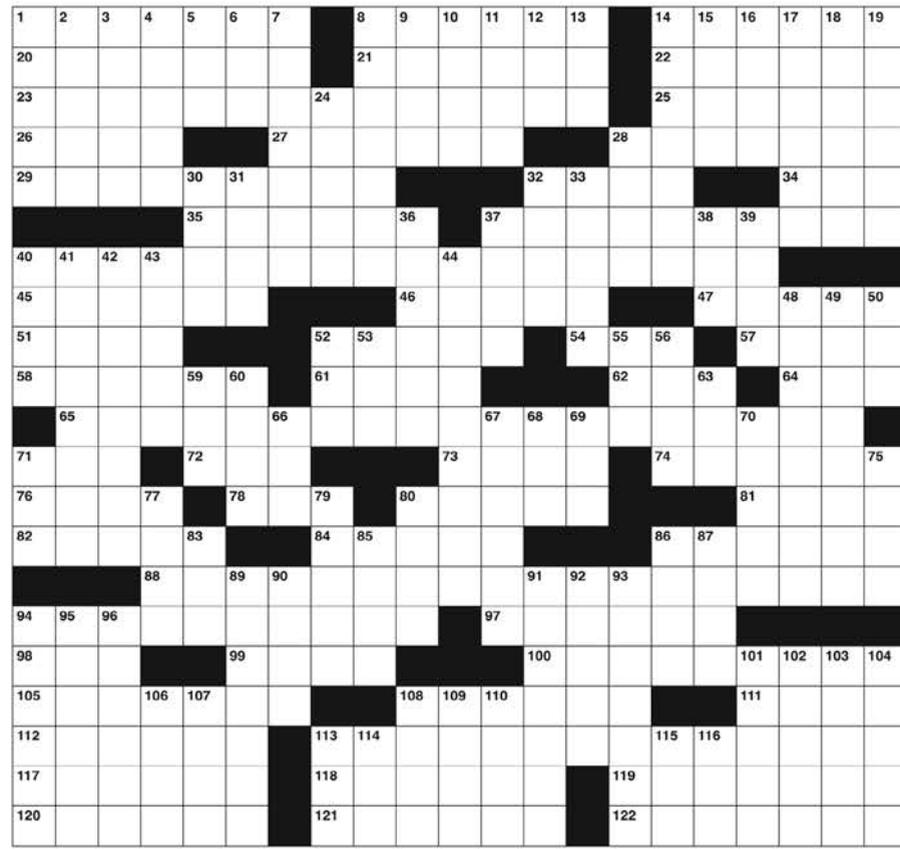
Puzzles

COMICAL MUTATION

BY LANCE ENFINGER AND JOHN KUGELMAN / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Lance Enfinger is a pharmacist from Mint Hill, N.C., near Charlotte. John Kugelman, of Gainesville, Va., is a software engineer specializing in cybersecurity. Lance started constructing crosswords a few years ago in part to teach his children "the important lesson of taking on new challenges and growing through failure." As this is his third crossword published in The Times, Lance doesn't seem to be teaching failure very well! — W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Meter in a video game showing a character's health
 - 8 Relative of a gazelle
 - 14 Office square
 - 20 Food additive named one of Time's 50 worst inventions
 - 21 Keep cruising, say
 - 22 On which Apple Pay can be used
 - 23 *Canio* in "Pagliacci," e.g.?
 - 25 Noxious atmosphere
 - 26 Prefix with business
 - 27 "My house, my rules"
 - 28 QB Drew whom Tom Brady ultimately replaced
 - 29 Get tuckered out
 - 32 Indian wedding wear
 - 34 School subj.
 - 35 Grab the chips and dip?
 - 37 *News hound?*
 - 40 *Atomic bond, essentially?*
 - 45 Many visitors to national parks
 - 46 Nearsighted person
 - 47 Messing up on the big screen
 - 51 Italy's third-largest island (after Sicily and Sardinia)
- DOWN**
- 1 Person from the neighborhood
 - 2 Volunteer's offer
 - 3 Boogeymen
 - 4 Maker of Bikini So Teeny nail polish
 - 5 Breakthrough K-pop group
 - 6 Horror director Aster
 - 7 Most suggestive
 - 8 Like the Eid al-Fitr festival
 - 9 Department store eponym
 - 10 Pale lager, informally
 - 11 ___ gobi (Indian potato dish)
 - 12 Feeling down
 - 13 ___ Taylor (fashion retailer)
 - 14 Home of the Preakness Stakes
 - 15 Early TV role for Ron Howard
 - 16 Atlantic fish
 - 17 Like Frisbees and some salads
 - 18 Not stereo
 - 19 Hard-boiled Chinese snack
 - 24 Sapporo competitor
 - 28 Bowler's edge
 - 30 Blemish
 - 31 Fixes, as a driveway
 - 32 Cake not to be eaten
 - 33 French for "after"
 - 36 Barry Bonds and Shohei Ohtani, notably, for short
 - 37 Hammer wielder
 - 38 Furthermore
 - 39 Caustic solutions
 - 40 Mother of Helios, in myth
 - 41 Metaphor for a runaway success
 - 42 Gen Z put-down of an elder
 - 43 Bit of wisdom
 - 44 Orbit
 - 48 Arcane technique
 - 49 Iron-rich variety of fertile soil
 - 50 Exclamations in nurseries
 - 52 Lead-in to "tech"
 - 53 Primatologist's interest
 - 55 Give the cold shoulder, with "out"
 - 56 Grating voice
 - 59 Common diner order
 - 60 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical setting
 - 63 Photog's undergrad degree
 - 66 Stick on a table
 - 67 Like Volvo and Nokia, by origin
 - 68 Gold, in Guadalajara
 - 69 London granny
 - 70 Standard battle wear
 - 71 No. 2's
 - 75 Vodka in blue bottles
 - 77 New Zealander
 - 79 One studied in the art of invisibility
 - 80 Touch
 - 83 Govt. campaign watchdog
 - 85 Scottish refusals
 - 86 Loretta of "M*A*S*H"
 - 87 Small keg size
 - 89 With zeal
 - 90 Director Kazan
 - 91 Neighbors of premolars
 - 92 Audibly shocked
 - 93 Landlords, more formally
 - 94 Pack carriers
 - 95 Crack open?
 - 96 Is fueled by
 - 101 Fill in a mill
 - 102 Right-hand page
 - 103 Strike zone?
 - 104 Mike or Michael in movies
 - 106 Raison d'___
 - 107 Close up tight
 - 108 Invitation letters
 - 109 Uber predictions, in brief
 - 110 Style
 - 113 Zippo competitor
 - 114 Co-producer of the documentary "The Beatles: Get Back"
 - 115 "The Bells" poet
 - 116 Fenway team, familiarly



- 60 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical setting
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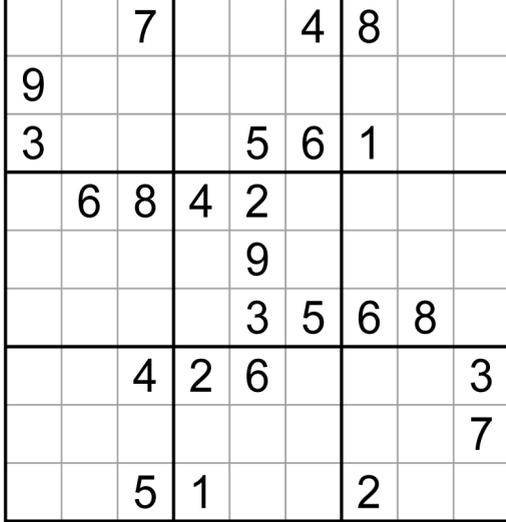
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HARD - 47

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

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

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

County's veterans memorial group seeking members

(Feb. 12, 2026) The Worcester County Veterans Memorial Foundation is inviting individuals and businesses to become members and help preserve a place of honor for those who have served our country.

Memberships and donations directly support the foundation's Educational Outreach Program, which provides every fifth-grade class in Worcester County the opportunity to participate in a field trip to the Veterans Memorial in Ocean Pines. During the visit, students rotate through three educational stations, where they learn about the memorial and veterans' stories, proper flag folding and etiquette, and the Patriots Pathway.

In addition to the Educational Outreach Program, memberships and donations also help fund the ongoing maintenance, programs, and future enhancements of the memorial.

Membership levels include Annual, \$25; Life, \$150; Corporate Annual, \$100; and Corporate Life, \$300.

Checks should be made payable to WCVMF and sent to Membership, Worcester County Veterans Memorial, P.O. Box 1576, Ocean Pines, Md. 21811.

For more information, contact Suzie Pantone at Suziepan123@gmail.com.

To learn more about the Worcester County Veterans Memorial, visit www.wocovets.org.

Bills reviewed by county officials

Continued from Page 23
from 5% to 2% the amount of priority preservation area acreage that can be used for solar. It also would require MDE to study the environmental impact of the disposal of solar farms.

HB 460 has 30 Republican sponsors in the House, including Lower Shore Del. Wayne Hartman (R-38B, Worcester). No Democrats are supporting the bill.

Commissioners President Ted Elder expressed some hope that HB 460 might be helpful to Worcester County by shrinking the size of farmland that might be turned into solar farms.

However, Commissioner Chip Bertino (District 5, Ocean Pines) chimed in to say that the measure is unlikely to make it to a floor vote in the House.

Based on feedback he's hearing from his colleagues in the Maryland Association of Counties, where he's a board member, "there's not a chance it's going to pass," Bertino said Tuesday.

Lawmakers have a hard deadline of March 9 to file bills. The 2026 Legislative Session ends April 13.

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WORCESTER COUNTY LIBRARY

@WorcesterLibraryMD

Worcester County Maryland Library

UPCOMING EVENTS:

13 FEB MOTOWN ICE CREAM SOCIAL

2:00PM-4:00PM Enjoy ice cream sundaes while listening to hits from Motown legends. **Ocean Pines Branch.**

17 FEB UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

1:00PM-2:00PM Join us in person or online for a presentation examining the term and its role in supporting the antislavery movement. **Ocean City Branch. *Registration Required**

18 FEB AFRICAN AMERICAN ART

2:00PM-3:00PM From the 19th century to the 1980s explore the highlights of Black artists. **Ocean Pines Branch.**

19 FEB MD 250: TOILE REIMAGINED CRAFT

4:30PM-5:30PM Join us Worcester County Tourism and learn how to blend modern art with historic patterns and textures. **107 W Green St, Snow Hill, MD.**

23 FEB THE HENRY HOTEL

4:00PM-5:00PM Join us for a presentation on the history, progress, and future of the Henry Hotel. **Ocean City Branch.**

25 FEB COFFEE & CRAFTS

10:30AM-11:30AM We bring the materials, you bring the creativity! **Ocean City Branch.**

25 FEB PUZZLE SWAP

1:00PM-7:00PM Swap one of your puzzles for a new one. Don't have a puzzle? You can still grab one. **Berlin Branch. Check our website for other dates & locations!**

26 FEB MD 250: COLONIAL CRAFTS

2:00PM-3:00PM Learn about and make sachets. **Pocomoke Branch. *Registration Required**

26 FEB FIRESIDE CHAT

3:00PM-4:00PM A popular book discussion featuring books you have read and want to share. **Berlin Branch.**

Scan to register or view all programs



WorcesterLibrary.LibCal.com



OPEN HOUSES

Feb. 12 - 19


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 11am-1pm	6305 Atlantic Avenue #301, Ocean City	3BR/3.5BA	Condo	\$1,495,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Friday 1:30-3:30pm	12971 Inlet Isle Lane, Ocean City	5BR/5BA	Single Family	\$2,699,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 10am-Noon	201 S. Heron Drive Unit #2D, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$429,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 10am-Noon	201 S. Heron Drive Unit #26B	2BR/2.5BA	Condo	\$595,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 10am-Noon	201 S. Heron Drive Unit #8A	2BR/2.5BA	Condo	\$499,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 10am-Noon	7 Starboard Ct, Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$379,900	Lisa Jackson/Engel & Volkers Real Estate
Saturday 10am-12:30pm	18 41st Street Unit 103, Ocean City	4BR/2BA	Condo	\$669,000	Debbie Bennington/BHHS PenFed Realty
Saturday 10:30am-12:30pm	2819 Plover Drive Unit 4305, Ocean City	1BR/1.5BA	Townhome	\$405,000	Taylor Fowlkes/BHHS PenFed Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	100 White Horse Drive, Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$399,999	Debbie Hileman/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-2pm	2 80th St. Unit 212, Ocean City	3BR/2BA	Condo	\$499,900	Tim Meadowcroft/Long & Foster Real Estate
Saturday 11am-1pm	401 14th Unit 1 Street, Ocean City	2BR/2.5BA	Townhome	\$865,000	Kristie Fogle/Keller Williams Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	12048 Pimlico Ln, Berlin	3BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$949,900	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-1pm	32 Liberty Street Ocean Pines	4BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$474,900	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-1pm	12302 Jamaica Ave #302 Ocean City	3BR/2.5BA	Condo	\$359,900	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Sunday 11am-1pm	11964 W War Dancer Ln #107, Berlin	4BR/4BA	Townhome	\$484,900	Rob & Marie Bouse/RE/MAX Advantage Realty
Saturday Noon-2pm	11500 Coastal Hwy #1614, Sea Watch, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$579,900	Lauren Bunting/Keller Williams Realty
Saturday Noon-2pm	26 W Mallard Dr, Ocean City	8BR/8.5BA	Single Family	\$2,299,000	Shawn Kotwica/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday Noon-2:30pm	110 120th St Unit 203B, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$415,000	Shawn Kotwica/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday Noon-3pm	8906 Rusty Anchor Rd Unit 8, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$380,000	Tim Meadowcroft/Long & Foster Real Estate
Saturday 12:30-2:30pm	205 125th Street #208B2	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$499,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 12:30-2:30pm	6305 Atlantic Avenue #301, Ocean City	3BR/3.5BA	Condo	\$1,495,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 1-3pm	231 N. Heron Drive, Ocean City	4BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$2,200,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 1-3pm	18 41st Street Unit 103, Ocean City	4BR/2BA	Condo	\$669,000	Taylor Fowlkes/BHHS PenFed Realty
Saturday 1-3pm	13100 Coastal Hwy #1607 PH2, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$549,000	Debbie Bennington/BHHS PenFed Realty
Saturday 12:30-2:30pm	745 Mooring Road #202, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$399,990	Katie Landon/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 2-4pm	124 Camelot Circle, Ocean Pines	4BR/2BA	Single Family	\$414,900	Debbie Hileman/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 3-5pm	12971 Inlet Isle Lane, Ocean City	5BR/5BA	Single Family	\$2,699,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	14 Liberty Street, Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$549,000	Debbie Bennington/BHHS PenFed Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	8 Edgewood Drive, Ocean Pines	5BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$549,000	Katie Hammond/Keller Williams Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	74 Birdnest Drive, Ocean Pines	6BR/4BA	Single Family	\$539,900	Taylor Fowlkes/BHHS PenFed Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	231 N. Heron Drive, Ocean City	4BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$2,200,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	12971 Inlet Isle Lane, Ocean City	5BR/5BA	Single Family	\$2,699,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	203 125th St #387W, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$489,900	Danielle Hamilton/RE/MAX Results
Sunday 11am-1pm	101 123rd St #374C, Ocean City	1BR/1BA	Condo	\$254,900	Sherry Thens/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11:30am-1:30pm	26 W Mallard Dr, Ocean City	8BR/8.5BA	Single Family	\$2,299,000	Shawn Kotwica/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday Noon-2 pm	204 S. Heron Drive Unit #202G, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$575,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday Noon-2pm	11500 Coastal Hwy #1614, Sea Watch, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$579,900	Lauren Bunting/Keller Williams Realty
Sunday Noon-2:30pm	110 120th St Unit 203B, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$415,000	Shawn Kotwica/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday Noon-3pm	104 56th St Unit 206, Ocean City	1BR/1BA	Condo	\$319,900	William Allen/Long & Foster Real Estate
Sunday 1-4pm	11 Hatteras Street, The Parke, Ocean Pines	2BR/2BA	Townhome	\$327,500	Greg Erdie/BHHS PenFed Realty
Sunday 1:30-3:30 pm	6305 Atlantic Avenue #301, Ocean City	3BR/3.5BA	Condo	\$1,495,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Monday 11am-1pm	12971 Inlet Isle Lane, Ocean City	5BR/5BA	Single Family	\$2,699,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Monday 1:30-3:30pm	6305 Atlantic Avenue #301, Ocean City	3BR/3.5BA	Condo	\$1,495,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker 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.

Thurs., Feb. 12

ART UNCORKED: A DINNER PAIRING ART & WINE

Ocean Pines Yacht Club, 1 Mumfords Landing Road, 6-9 p.m. A dinner pairing art and wine hosted by Laurie Forster. Cost is \$150 per person or a table of 6 for \$900. Tickets: <https://givebutter.com/ArtUncorked>. Benefits Art League of Ocean City. 410-254-9433.

COLONIAL ERA BRAIN GAMES

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Test your wits 1700s-style with a series of puzzles and riddles inspired by 18th century Colonial life. Finish the puzzles and be entered into the drawing for a prize. 410-957-0878

STORY TIME 'I AM HAPPY'

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

STORY TIME: 'THE DAY IT RAINED HEARTS'

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, worcesterialibrary.org

MERRY MAKERS: PAINTED CANVAS HEARTS

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. Paint a sweet heart on a mini canvas block that you can keep or gift to someone you love. Registration required: 410-208-4014, worcesterialibrary.org

AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE COLONIAL ERA

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 2 p.m. Explore the lives and legacy of African Americans in the colonial era and how African Americans contributed to the development of early America. 410-641-0650, worcesterialibrary.org

BINGO

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 2 p.m. Play a lively game of Bingo and win fun prizes. 410-524-1818, worcesterialibrary.org

YOGA BASICS FOR BEGINNERS

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 5 p.m. Build confidence and familiarity with foundational yoga poses. Bring your own mat. 410-957-0878, worcesterialibrary.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., Feb. 13

MARYLAND CRAB CAKE DINNER

Stevenson United Methodist Church, 123 N. Main St., Berlin, 4-6 p.m. Cost is \$15 for one crab cake sandwich and sides. \$25 for two crab cake sandwiches and sides. \$10 for a crab cake sandwich. Bake sale table available. Carryout or eat in.

COLONIAL ERA BRAIN GAMES

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Test your wits 1700s-style with a series of puzzles and riddles inspired by 18th century Colonial life. Finish the puzzles and be entered into the drawing for a prize. 410-957-0878

TODDLER TIME AT THE MUSEUM

Delmarva Discovery Museum, 2 Market St., Pocomoke City, 10-11 a.m. This early opening of the museum is great for kids ages 0-5 years and their families. Regular admission rate apply. <https://www.ococean.com/event/toddler-time-at-the-museum/2591/>

BABY TIME

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10:30 a.m. A great opportunity for babies 0-2 years and their caregivers to socialize, play, read and explore the bright play space. 410-641-0650, worcesterialibrary.org

MOTOWN ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. Enjoy ice cream sundaes as the DJ plays hits from Diana Ross and the Supremes, Smokey Robinson, and The Four Tops. Singles can mingle, and, for couples. It's a sweet Valentine's date. 410-208-4014

BOOK DISCUSSION: 'MISS CHLOE' BY A. J. VERDELLE

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. Pick up a copy of the book at the Ocean Pines branch circulation desk and then join in for a lively discussion. 410-208-4014, worcesterialibrary.org

KIGHTS OF COLUMBUS BINGO

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

GALENTINE'S DAY TEA PARTY

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 3:30

p.m. Celebrate friendship with your pals at the library. Enjoy tea and treats, friendship bracelet making, and other fun activities. 410-524-1818, worcesterialibrary.org

'BLEEDING CONTROL AND THE ESSENTIAL OF CPR' FREE TRAINING

Ocean City Golf Club, 11401 Country Club Drive, Berlin, 6-9 p.m. Offered by Maryland's Shock Trauma Center. Pre-registration not required. No class certification if you are late arriving. 410-641-0378

Sat., Feb. 14

FREE CARRIAGE RIDES FOR VALENTINE'S DAY

North Main Street & Pitts Street, Berlin, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Free carriage rides in Berlin. No reservations needed.

VALENTINE SWIM

Ocean Pines Sports Core Pool, 11144 Cathell Road, 12-3 p.m. Crafts, games, music and food (for purchase). Plus a chocolate kiss guess contest. Cost is \$8 for swim members, \$10 for residents, \$12 for non-residents and \$3 for non-swimmers. 410-641-5255

VALENTINE'S DAY AT THE MUSEUM

Delmarva Discovery Museum, 2 Market St., Pocomoke City, 12-1 p.m. Mac & Tuck are hosting a Valentine's Party. Featuring a special otter program and other fun activities. Regular admission rates apply. <https://www.ococean.com/event/valentines-day-at-the-museum/2592/>

WINTER PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT

Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City. Men's, women's and mixed doubles. Specific age groups and skill levels provide days of fun and energetic competition. <https://oceancitymd.gov/oc/departments/recreation-parks/pickleball/>, 410-250-0125

OCEAN PINES ANGLERS CLUB

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 9:30 a.m. Enjoy complimentary coffee and donuts, check out the members only free tackle bin and join in the discussion of all things fishing. All are welcome. Jack Barnes, 410-641-7662

CRAFTY SATURDAY: HOLIDAYS

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Create some holiday themed crafts. For families. 410-208-4014, worcesterialibrary.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., Feb. 15

WINTER PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT

Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City. Men's, women's and mixed doubles. Specific age groups and skill levels provide days of fun and energetic competition. <https://oceancitymd.gov/oc/departments/recreation-parks/pickleball/>, 410-250-0125

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., Feb. 16

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., Feb. 17

SHROE TUESDAY PANCAKE DINNER

Stevenson United Methodist Church, 123 N. Main St., Berlin, 4:30-6 p.m. All-you-can-eat pancake and sausage dinner.

Continued on Page 28

Calendar

Continued from Page 27

ner. Cost is \$8 for adults, \$5 for children ages 6-12 years and free to those 5 years and younger. Carryout available. Proceeds support Stevenson's youth.

GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

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

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

STORY TIME

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

PLAY TIME

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

WHY DID THEY CALL IT 'THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD?'

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 1 p.m. Historian Richard Bell zooms in to examine the mysterious origins of the term "The Underground Railroad" and explains why it caught on so quickly. 410-524-1818, worcesterlibrary.org

COLONIAL GAMES

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 4:30 p.m. Travel back to the 1700's and learn about colonial-era toys and games, then try them out for yourself. For ages 6-11 years. 410-957-0878, worcesterlibrary.org

SOAP SURPRISE

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 4:30 p.m. Learn how to make a heart-shaped soap filled with heart erasers. For ages 12-18 years. 410-208-4014, 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., Feb. 18

SENSORY STAY AND PLAY

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Get ready to squish, build, splash, shake and scoop through several fun stations. For ages 0-5 years. 410-524-1818, worcesterlibrary.org

ASH WEDS SERVICE

Friendship Church, 10537 Friendship Road, Berlin, 6:30 p.m. Join in for Soup & Dessert in the Social Hall prior to service at 5 p.m.

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

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

'SCORCHY'S CORNER: WANDERING OUR DELMARVALOUS LAND' VIDEO SERIES

Museum of Ocean City, 217 S. Baltimore Ave., 2-3 p.m. Held Wednesdays, Feb. 4-March 4. Offering audiences a nostalgic journey across Delmarva with host Scorchy Tawes. Preregister: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1978305907223?aff=oddtcreator>.

AFRICAN AMERICAN ART

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. This brief introduction looks at some of the highlights of Black artist, from the 19th century to the 1980s. Investigate the history of people who were left out of the canons of art history. 410-208-4014

SERVICE SQUAD

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 4 p.m. A service hour earning program that lets you be creative while benefiting worthy causes. Open to students of Worcester County Schools. For ages 12-18 years. 410-641-0650, worcesterlibrary.org

FREE COMMUNITY DINNER AND GROCERY GIVEAWAY

St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church, 302 Baltimore Ave., Ocean City, 4-7 p.m. St. Paul's By-the-Sea Episcopal Church will host its Free Community Dinner on Wednesday, February 18, 2026, from 5-7 PM at 302 N. Baltimore Ave., Ocean City. The evening includes grocery giveaway. 443-440-1422

COLONIAL GAMES

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 4:30 p.m. Travel back to the 1700s and learn about colonial-era toys and games, then try them out for yourself. For ages 6-11 years. 410-524-1818, worcesterlibrary.org

KIWANIS CLUB MEETING

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

CASH BINGO

Wednesdays - Ocean City Elks Lodge 2645, 13708 Sinepuxent Ave. Door open at 5 p.m., bingo starts at 6:30 p.m. Food

available before bingo and at intermission. Open to the public. 443-605-5028

ONGOING EVENTS

FREE TAX PREP

AARP is offering free tax preparations to the public. AARP Foundation Tax Aides will be available at the following libraries: Mondays in Ocean Pines; Wednesdays, Berlin; Fridays, Pocomoke City; and Saturdays, Ocean City. By appointment only: 443-584-5661, aarp-foundation.org/taxaide.

MARYLAND FIREFIGHTER 50/50 FUNDRAISER

Drawings are held every Thursday at 8 p.m. Ticket sales open Thursdays at 8:05 p.m. and close the following Thursday at 7:59 p.m. One winner takes home 50% of the total jackpot and the remainder supports the Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department. Tickets: <https://md.5050raffle.org/give/mdfire/50-50-raffles/md5050/charities/ocean-pines/checkout>

HISTORY-TO-GO

Snow Hill library, 307 N. Washington St., throughout February. Pick up a History-to-Go kit and learn about ciphers and codes used throughout history. Supplies provided to make your own cipher disk. Pick up between December and February. 410-632-3495

2025 KIWANIS LOTTERY TICKETS ON SALE

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

OCEAN CITY-BERLIN ROTARY CLUB

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

OCEAN CITY CHAPTER OF THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF ITALY

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

POLISH AMERICAN CLUB OF DELMARVA

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

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

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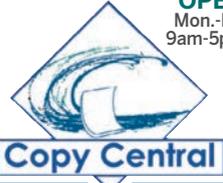
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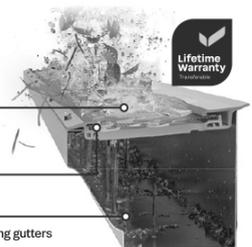
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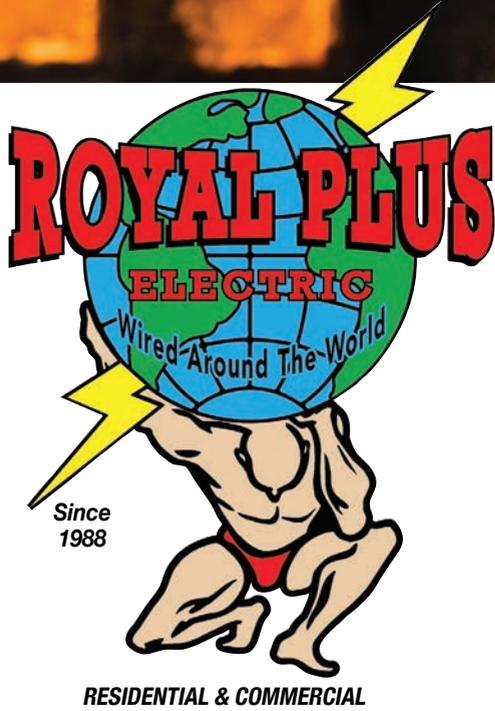
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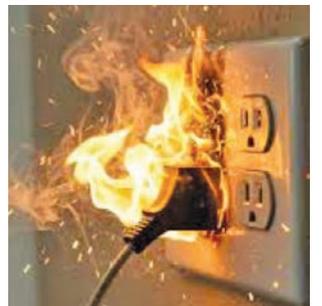
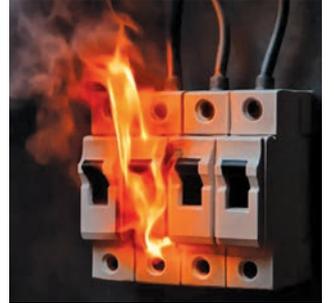
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