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Whoa, snow!

Blizzard leaves most of Berlin without power for hours as Delmarva Power has issue

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 26, 2026) This week's heavy winter storm left some Town of Berlin residents without power for upwards of 18 hours, electric officials said.

When snow began to fall and the wind picked up Sunday night, Berlin residents found themselves without electricity until well into the afternoon the next day.

Tim Lawrence, the Town of Berlin's electric utility director, said that "things started to deteriorate around 8 p.m." Sunday, when the heavy snow started to

blow in, and the department initially received power outage calls.

The issue stemmed from Delmarva Power's transmission line. Lawrence said the line comes from a substation at Old Ocean City Boulevard and Route 50 and is owned by the power company. That line feeds into the Town of Berlin, and around 8 p.m. on Sunday, it started to trip on and off.

Around 9:30 p.m., the line went down completely, taking with it the Town of Berlin's entire electric system.

That transmission line was down until about 9:30 a.m. on Monday. Berlin staff then had to bring town facilities and residences back online slowly, working in segments.

See POWER Page 3



PHOTOS BY STEVE GREEN, TOP, AND JUSTINE GRAHAM
 Between 12 and 16 inches of snow fell across inland northern Worcester last Sunday. Top, Berlin's Main Street is pictured. Above, a downed tree is pictured in Ocean Pines.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF MAYOR ZACK TYNDALL

The Town of Berlin's electric department received some assistance Sunday afternoon. Above, a Maryland National Guard member places a metal plate to allow for bucket truck access.

Power outage details reviewed

Continued from Page 1

"That's a very slow process because you can only do a certain amount at a time," Lawrence said. "Then you have to let it die back down, and basically when people's heat levels out and everything, then you can add a little bit more to it."

The first portion of town to have its power restored was the Atlantic General Hospital area. That circuit feeds down Route 113 north, then travels east down to Old Ocean City Blvd. Then, the town's electric team concentrated on the downtown area, Franklin Avenue, and Branch Street. The next circuit to see electricity included the wastewater plant and the Berlin Police Department. Finally, power in the Buckingham Lane area was restored.

Lawrence said that by 3 p.m. Monday, about 98% of Berlin once again had electricity.

"When you have a power outage, it affects areas like hospitals, medical spaces, that type of thing," the utility director said. "We try to get that up first because if there are accidents, they can treat people ... then you start concentrating on the residents. It's kind of hard to pick and choose what areas you bring up first. When we look at it, we look at medical services, police departments, and fire departments.

"Those are the main ones we try to bring up first. Because fire has to respond to calls and that type of thing, and police are doing emergency services."

After about 3 p.m., Lawrence said crews had to go to "at least" 25 individual locations to handle the last bit of power outages. He said that his team received calls from the police department about issues such as downed service wires at some homes.

"You have to go to each location, figure out what's wrong, repair it, and get their power restored," Lawrence

said. "We had several fuse cutouts that were blown or melted because of overload. So, we dealt with that. We had four or five transformers that failed, and we had to replace them throughout the night."

He added that his team worked about 28 hours total, beginning 6 p.m. Sunday when utility employees came in for their shift to begin snow plowing, and finishing up the crisis response at 10 p.m. Monday.

The Maryland National Guard also came into Berlin on Monday to aid the effort.

According to Lawrence, there were certain spots the electric team had to service where their trucks couldn't reach. He said that the National Guard helped staff unload large, heavy mats so the utility vehicles could be backed in without sinking into any mud.

Lawrence said that in the 16 years he has been with the Town of Berlin, this week's power outage was the longest yet. He noted that the entire town was down for at least 14 hours. Previously, five and a half hours was the longest period residents were without electricity in recent history.

Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall took to Facebook Tuesday morning to thank the town's departments for their help with the blizzard aftermath.

"I have always been proud of our teams at the Town of Berlin, but these last 36 hours have been a true testament to the hard work and dedication of our town employees," he wrote. "Many showed up at 6 p.m. on Sunday and worked through the day [Monday] to help clear the roads and restore power. They worked through freezing temperatures, strong winds, and historic snowfall. Thank you, Town of Berlin Public Works, Electric, Water Resources, Police, and Berlin Fire Company for everything you have done and continue to do for our community."

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Berlin works to update comprehensive plan

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 26, 2026) The Town of Berlin's comprehensive plan update got underway last week with a work session of the mayor and council, the planning commission, and the firm contracted to complete the draft.

The meeting began with a presentation from planning company Mead & Hunt, the Town of Berlin's partner in creating a document to guide future growth and development. Project Manager Will White from Mead & Hunt outlined current demographics, trends, and legal requirements.

The Town of Berlin selected Mead & Hunt for the project in late 2025 for \$99,075.

Under Maryland law, municipalities must update or review their comprehensive plans at least every 10 years. The last plan was created in 2010. White explained that while the Maryland Department of Planning does not approve or deny local plans, it reviews them for compliance with state requirements.

"They are not an approving body, but they are a compliance body," White said, noting the document can be amended after adoption through a formal process.

Furthermore, when the town seeks state and federal funding, the desired projects must be consistent with the comprehensive plan to be considered

for financial aid.

Last week, White reviewed current Town of Berlin demographics and trends to guide the firm's plan-creation process.

Between 2010 and 2020, Berlin's population increased by 12.1%, significantly outpacing state and national averages, White said. The U.S. average growth during that period was just under 5%, while Worcester County grew by less than 2%.

He added that while the town is growing more rapidly, the 12.1% is likely low because the COVID-19 pandemic skewed the 2020 census. Some people never fill out their census, and representatives were unable to go door to door as in other years due to the pandemic.

As of 2024, Berlin's population is estimated at 5,349 residents. If current trends hold, projections show the population reaching roughly 5,518 by 2050 — an increase of about 150 people over 25 years.

Planning Commission Chair Matthew Stoehr asked if that projection seemed low.

"That's an average over time," White responded. "It's not 12.1% a year."

Officials also discussed how new developments, such as Ocean's East, factor into projections. White said new units can be estimated based on occupancy but won't appear in official census data until 2030.

Additionally, the town's average age is younger than Worcester County's average of about 54. Approximately 42% of Berlin residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher, a figure White described as "very high for the Eastern Shore." The median household income is \$81,000.

Employment data shows 30.7% of residents work in education, health care and social services. Tourism and food service are the next-largest employment sectors, followed by professional and scientific fields such as engineering, architecture, and law.

White also highlighted commuting patterns: 2,828 people travel into Berlin for work each day, 353 live and work in town, and 1,922 residents commute elsewhere — a number that includes remote workers whose offices are located outside town.

The majority of Berlin is zoned for single-family residential use (R-1, R-2, and R-3), with commercial zoning concentrated in the historic district.

During his presentation, White suggested the town consider whether commercial zoning downtown accurately reflects existing mixed-use conditions.

"By calling it commercial, you have now stopped someone from coming in and doing an infill next to it that matches the rest of the buildings," he said, noting many downtown properties include retail on the first floor and

apartments above — technically non-conforming uses under current zoning.

Several industrially zoned properties may also be better categorized as heavy commercial, he added.

The consultant said that, as part of the drafting process, his team analyzed the Town of Berlin's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. White identified Berlin's walkability and bikeability, along with its historic character, as key strengths.

Weaknesses include limited affordable housing, disparities in park and service access east of Route 113—a problem officials are looking to address with a crosswalk system or a pedestrian bridge —and aging infrastructure. Additionally, some areas remain noncompliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Severe weather impacts and the recent withdrawal of federal funding sources were labeled external threats.

Transportation priorities include improving pedestrian connections across Route 113 and addressing frequently flooded roadways that could pose safety risks.

The comprehensive plan drafting process will include a public workshop and one or two pop-up events at community gatherings. A draft plan is expected to be completed later this year and submitted to the Maryland Department of Planning by December, White said.

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Public schools to consider course in financial literacy

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 26, 2026) Worcester County Public Schools officials outlined the system's approach to financial literacy instruction last week, prompting board members to discuss whether an official course should become a high school graduation requirement.

Jess McInerney, coordinator of social studies, JROTC, service learning, and financial literacy at WCPS, presented an overview of how financial literacy is taught across grade levels.

Under the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), school systems are required to teach financial literacy in grades 3-12. The state mandates that students complete a financial literacy unit once in grades three through five, once in grades six through eight, and once in grades nine through 12.

Maryland's standards focus on six areas: making informed and financially responsible decisions; relating careers, education, and income; planning and managing money; managing credit and debt; managing risks and preserving wealth; and creating and building wealth.

McInerney explained that while the state requires instruction beginning in third grade, Worcester County begins teaching financial literacy concepts a little earlier, starting in kindergarten.

McInerney said that kindergarten students explore the question, "How do people choose their jobs and careers?" First graders learn about decision-making and trade, including goods, services, and bartering. Second graders focus on how consumers make financial decisions, while also learning to count money and apply those skills in real-world scenarios.

In grades three through five, instruction continues through social studies with a personal finance unit in fifth grade. Students learn about savings, borrowing, and taxation, while applying math skills such as adding and subtracting decimal values and discussing opportunity cost.

In middle school, students continue building on economic standards, with a dedicated financial literacy unit in seventh grade. Instruction covers career exploration, wants versus needs, and available resources. These topics are coupled with math, which includes lessons on commissions, discounts, percent increase and decrease, loans, credit versus debit and compound interest of those loans.

Through a partnership with Junior Achievement, sixth graders participate in BizTown, where they simulate running businesses and managing finances.

"That's where they build their entrepreneurial spirit," McInerney said. Seventh graders attend Finance

Park, where they are assigned a career scenario, calculate net monthly income, create budgets, apply for mortgages and reconcile credit card statements. Eighth graders participate in career exploration activities and meet professionals in a variety of fields.

At the high school level, financial literacy is taught during a 15- to 20-day unit in ninth grade government courses. This segment focuses on career choices and personal income. Algebra I classes expand on financial concepts such as investing, depreciation, exponential growth and compound interest.

Also in high school, students may take electives including consumer and personal finance, economics, and Career and Technical Education pathways such as business marketing, accounting and finance. Opportunities outside of regular school instruction include youth apprenticeship programs and Future Business Leaders of America chapters.

"Financial literacy in Maryland is required grades three through 12, focusing on one time in each grade band," McInerney said. "In Worcester County, we do this throughout K-12. We are very appreciative of our community partners."

Board member Jon Andes said McInerney's presentation stemmed from his request to examine whether the system should add a financial literacy class as a graduation requirement. Currently, nine of Maryland's 24 school systems mandate that students earn either a half-credit or full-credit financial literacy course to pass high school.

"There are 22 credits required for graduation," Andes said, noting students often have room in their schedules for additional courses.

He continued, "I want to make sure our students have a background in financial literacy so if they go to college or technical school, they understand student loan programs, scholarships, grants, and paying them back. If they go work for someone else, that gross pay is not their net pay...plus all the other aspects of dealing with finances in life. I am asking us to start considering whether we should require an additional high school graduation requirement in some class of financial literacy."

Board president Todd Ferrante added that financial education is vital to real-world success.

"Being successful in life is learning how to manage finances," he said. "If we don't teach students this at an early age, then we are doing them a disservice."

The Worcester County Board of Education indicated it would continue to consider adding a financial literacy course as a graduation requirement.

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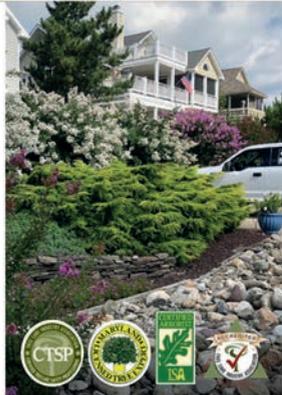


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Students urged to participate in sports, arts

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 26, 2026) Last week, Worcester County Public School leaders unveiled a new initiative aimed at shifting school culture to ensure students don't feel pressured to choose between athletics or the arts.

Tamara Mills, the fine and performing arts coordinator for WCPS, gave a presentation on the campaign at a Worcester County Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 17. Mills said the project's mission is simple: students can do both.

Mills said the idea grew out of observations she made during and after the COVID-19 crisis. She said that the arts are essential for mental health, expressing creativity, and expanding social skills. However, after the pandemic, when kids were returning to school, enrollment in these programs dropped.

The coordinator noted that, after discussions with kids and folks within the school system, a recurring theme emerged: students felt pressure to choose between a sport they loved and a performing art they also cared about.

"We don't ever want as a school system to make students have to choose the sport they love to play and the art that gives them voice, creativity, and agency," Mills said. "If you think about your own children, your nieces and nephews, the kids in your

classroom, making them choose between two things they love isn't something we want to do."

Mills researched the benefits of both athletic and artistic outlets.

According to her, students who participate in the arts are five times more likely to graduate high school than those who do not. Additionally, they are often more engaged in school activities and develop stronger critical thinking and creative skills.

From the athletic perspective, Mills noted that student-athletes, on average, have higher GPAs than peers who do not participate in sports. They also demonstrate stronger leadership skills, higher attendance rates, and develop teamwork, discipline, time management, and perseverance.

"The commonalities kept running together," she said.

Mills also addressed a recurring reason why some students choose sports. She said pursuing athletic scholarships tends to encourage kids to give up their performing arts. While scholarships are an important consideration, she shared statistics indicating that only about 7% of high school athletes go on to play college sports. In Maryland, that number drops to about 2%, and less than 2% of that group ultimately become professional athletes.

In contrast, Mills noted that many adults continue participating in the arts throughout their lives, whether through church choirs, community theater or local bands. She added that employers often value students who have participated in both athletics and the arts, describing them as well-rounded, resilient and strong leaders.

As a result, Mills has launched a "You Can Do Both" campaign within WCPS. She plans to meet with counselors, school administrators, athletic directors, coaches and music directors to identify and remove barriers that make dual participation difficult.

Part of the effort includes sharing arts performance dates with high schools in advance to help avoid scheduling conflicts with games or away athletic events.

"We want the culture to be that

you can do both," Mills said.

Through an arts grant, Mills hired a WCPS alum and local artist to create promotional materials for the campaign. Students representing a range of sports, grade levels and backgrounds were selected for a photoshoot. The resulting posters feature students in athletic uniforms holding instruments, sheet music, or other symbols highlighting their artistic calling.

The posters will be displayed throughout schools, including counseling offices, gyms, locker rooms, and at sporting events. The idea is that they will reinforce the message that students don't have to sacrifice one passion for another.

"We are super proud of all of our students who are doing both," Mills said.

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Rick Farr named veterans memorial leader

Farr will take over for Marie Gilmore, the foundation's president dating to 2015

By **Tara Fischer**
Staff Writer

(Feb. 26, 2026) The Worcester County Veterans Memorial Foundation has announced a leadership change. Longtime president of the organization, Marie Gilmore, will step down from her post, and board member Rick Farr will take over the helm.

The Worcester County Veterans Memorial in Ocean Pines hosts numerous celebrations throughout the year, including ceremonies on Memorial Day and Veterans' Day. The park is described as a space for reflection to honor members of the military who are retired and lost their lives in service to the United States of America.

Now, the memorial's foundation will say goodbye to Gilmore as its president.

Farr is a director of the veteran foundation, the vice president of the Ocean Pines Association's Board of Directors, and the chief human resource officer for the Town of Easton.

The foundation's new president spent 22 years in the United States Air Force. During this time, he supported many military operations, including Desert Shield & Desert

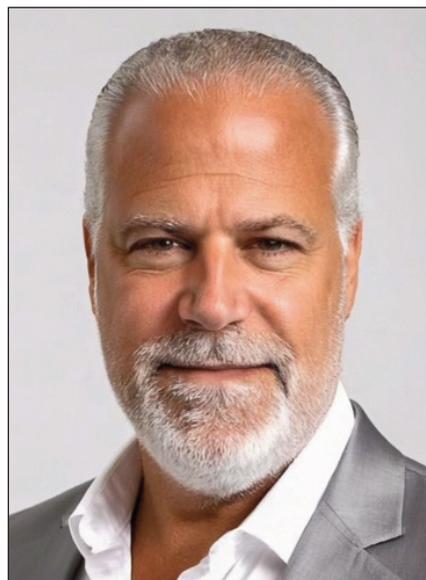
Storm, Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Northern Watch and Southern Watch, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was awarded the Citation for Valor for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"I really appreciate the opportunity, and it's an honor and a privilege to serve as the next [foundation] president," Farr said.

He added that the foundation's board voted him in unanimously as president, and that Gilmore will still serve as a director. Farr said there will be a transition period to ensure future events remain covered.

Gilmore joined the Worcester County Veterans Memorial Foundation's Board of Directors in 2005 and served as secretary and vice president. In 2012, she was elected president. Gilmore briefly stepped off the board because of term limits in 2014, but returned in 2015 and has served as president ever since.

"It has been my honor and a privilege to have served as president of the foundation," Gilmore said in an OPA-issued press release. "... Rick Farr has demonstrated his devotion to honoring veterans through his service as a director on the foundation's board. As a veteran, he understands the importance of educating the youth of our community about the sacrifices veterans and their families have



Rick Farr

made. He is highly qualified through his service to our country and the personal skills he brings to the position."

She added that she took the opportunity to step down now, when she can still act on the foundation's board and continue aiding the community's veterans.

Farr said that he will take the lessons he has learned from Gilmore into his new role as president. That includes remaining connected to Gilmore's extensive list of community contacts and partners who have helped the foundation grow and succeed.

"I will be able to lean on her to continue those relationships and also for me to build new relationships with the folks within the county," he said.

Farr said he hopes to conduct in-depth research to identify veterans in Ocean Pines and throughout the county, encourage them to sign on as members or sponsors of the memorial park, and to donate to the cause.

"I think it's very important to donate to give back to our veterans for the sacrifice that they've made, and really try to push really hard on that and get them involved," he said. "If we can get some good memberships, whether it's a lifetime membership or

an annual membership. Not only individuals, but also the corporate world. I would really love to reach out to the local businesses and corporations here in the county who can be part of the foundation."

According to a press release issued earlier this month, memberships with the veteran's park are stepped, with categories separated into 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.

Upgrades are expected at the veterans park. Farr said that between now and Memorial Day, the space will add a new wall for the Space Force next to the Air Force wall. Another flagpole and flag will be installed, and beautification efforts will enhance the area for spring and summer.

The work is expected to be completed by Memorial Day. Additionally, leaders are gearing up for a Memorial Day recognition and a special Fourth of July to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the creation of the United States of America.

Farr said that for this year's Independence Day, the foundation will work with OPA on a "really nice joint venture" to honor the USA's milestone birthday.

Farr noted that he's excited to take over as the WCVMF's president and, as term limits are not currently part of the foundation's bylaws, hopes to serve in the role "as long as the board would like to have me."

"[The veterans memorial] is an amenity of Ocean Pines," he said. "It really is a beautiful area where people can come to and reflect on the sacrifices that our veterans, who are retired, and the veterans who gave the ultimate sacrifice for the freedoms of our country that we enjoy. It's a place of solitude where people come and look and see and be part of and have that reflection as they stroll through the grounds."

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Backlash leads Ocean City to seek another sports site

Complex still has council support, but officials agree to search out alternatives

By **Bethany Hooper**
Associate Editor

(Feb. 26, 2026) The Town of Ocean City will explore other locations for a sports complex following recent backlash from nearby residents regarding a proposal to build the facility on a 95-acre site located next to Stephen Decatur High School.

Following a contentious community meeting earlier this month, and a letter from Berlin's mayor and council asking Ocean City to remove the site from its consideration, it appears the Mayor and City Council will not be moving forward with the project on a parcel of land -- owned by the Harrison family -- located north of Flower Street and west of Seahawk Road.

While sharing the city's commitment to developing a facility in the future, Council President Matt James said in a statement Wednesday that the city is exploring other options.

"This has been a long and extensive process," he said. "In response to recent community feedback, additional options are being explored at this time; the exhaustive search continues."

In a contentious community meeting earlier this month, members of the Flower Street neighborhood and other nearby communities were quick to share their objections to the city's plans for an indoor-outdoor complex at the site.

From the outset, they argued the proposed location would generate more traffic in an already congested area and create additional burden on Berlin's fire and EMS services, among other things. Many also talked about the way the Flower Street community had been marginalized, highlighting the landfill



FILE PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Ocean City is continuing to seek sites for a proposed sports complex after public outcry to a site next to Stephen Decatur High and Middle schools was largely jeered at a public meeting this month.

placed along their road and the Route 113 highway that cut off their access to downtown Berlin.

Berlin's mayor and town council took it one step further in the days that followed, issuing a letter to the Town of Ocean City with a request to abandon its consideration of the site. Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall said the community's message 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 last week. "It's just not a good fit here."

The Ocean City Council met behind closed doors for more than an hour Tuesday night to discuss property acquisition for the sports complex. In an open session that followed, council members voted to allow dedicated advertising funds generated through room tax revenues to also be used for a future sports complex, wherever that may be.

"This is not site specific on a sports complex," Council Secretary Will Savage clarified this week. "This is setting aside money for the concept."

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Schools to start before Labor Day for 26-27

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 20, 2026) Worcester County Public Schools will start before Labor Day this fall, and professional development days will be staggered, per the recently approved 2026-2027 school year calendar.

At the Worcester County Board of Education's meeting this week, the body heard from WCPS Coordinator of Public Relations Carrie Sterrs, who presented the recommended schedule for the upcoming school year.

Most notably, the calendar has students getting their backpacks ready a little early this year. The official first day of school is set for Monday, Aug. 31, a move that deviates from the educational system's traditional post-Labor Day start.

Sterrs said the decision to push up the first day of school is based on the fact that the end-of-summer holiday falls abnormally late in 2026. Labor Day is Sept. 7 this year. A Sept. 8 back-to-school is just not feasible, leaders say.

WCPS Superintendent Annette Wallace said that she and Board of Education President Todd Ferrante "had a lot of conversations" about a pre-Labor Day start, and what the logistics of that would look like. Part of that process, Wallace said, was speaking with Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan, as numerous older students — and some teachers

and staff — work at the resort's businesses during the tourist season.

The change will allow for time off elsewhere in the calendar.

The school system will be closed on Friday, Sept. 4, and Monday, Sept. 7, for Labor Day weekend. Winter break will be a full two weeks, which Sterrs said "was something the school system was very vocal about."

Christmas and New Year's vacation is set for Monday, Dec. 21 through Friday, Jan. 1.

Additionally, the tentative last day of school is June 11, rather than June 15 as was previously considered.

Regarding the early start, board member Jon Andes acknowledged the challenge the calendar development team faces and the difficulty of appealing to all school system stakeholders.

"Everyone wants to start after Labor Day, have two weeks off at Christmastime, a week off at spring break, and get out of school on June 1," he said. "That's an impossible feat to accomplish."

Also notable to the 2026-2027 calendar is how professional development is handled.

Sterrs said this model pilots a staggered closure. Under the system, elementary and high schools will be closed for students on the same days to support staff professional develop-

ment. On alternative dates, Berlin Intermediate School, Cedar Chapel Special School, and all three area middle schools will be closed for students.

The professional development days are: Oct. 7, elementary and high schools are closed for students, all other schools open; Jan. 13, Cedar Chapel Special School, Berlin Intermediate School and all middle schools closed for students, all other schools open; Feb. 10, elementary and high schools are closed for students, all other schools open; and March 10, Cedar Chapel Special School, Berlin Intermediate School and all middle schools closed for students, all other schools open.

Sterrs said that a previous half-day model for professional development was "consistently challenging," particularly for transportation and food services.

She added that the two groups were chosen with childcare in mind.

"We paired our elementary and high schools together for those closures," Sterrs said. "Older siblings and neighbors may be available for childcare."

For the other grouping, the state permits children over the age of eight to be home alone. However, Sterrs maintained that families should make the best care decisions avail-

able to them.

"Maryland law allows children over the age of eight to be home unattended," she said. "That is not to say we are endorsing that practice... but by adopting a calendar today, we are giving families ample time, six months, to plan for these days."

Ultimately, the school board approved the proposed calendar. Member Jackie Cutlip was the sole dissenting vote.

Cutlip said she was unable to sign off on the schedule because the pre-Labor Day start was not mentioned on the three calendars previously considered and presented to the community.

"For me and students and staff and people, I wasn't expecting the pre-Labor Day thing," she said. "That threw me for a loop. I'm not opposed to that in the years it hits...It just came out of left field. It wasn't on calendar one, two, or three."

She added that she also struggled to understand the staggered professional development closures.

"Parents and teachers alike, no one likes PD," Cutlip continued. "But they have to do it ... half days present a challenge, but full days will present more of a challenge for rotating days ... I think it will be more troublesome ... So that is why I voted no."

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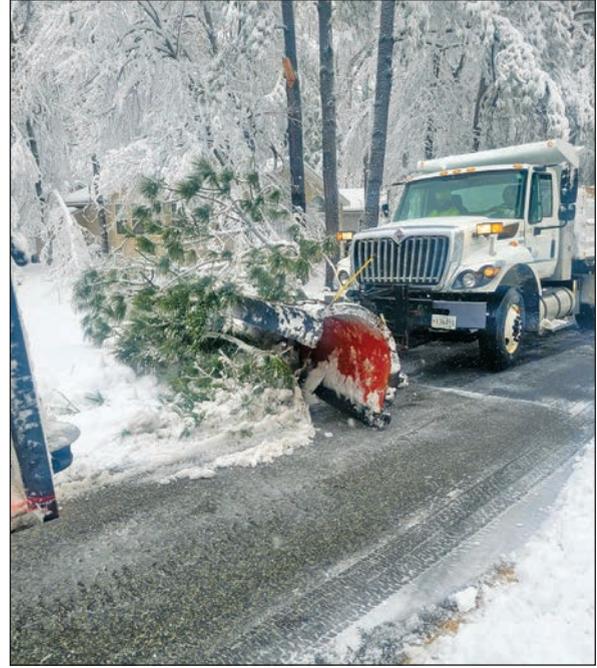
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BLIZZARD: OCEAN PINES AREA



PHOTOS COURTESY OF TARA FISCHER, OPA, RENEE KELLY AND ERIK DOWELL

Ocean Pines crews on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday worked on cleanup efforts following this weekend's blizzard. More than a foot of snow fell over the community, resulting in public works beginning to clear roads at 8 p.m. Sunday, and as of 10 a.m. Tuesday, all roadways were reported to be cleared. Crews worked to address the parking lots at all facilities once the roads were in good shape. Pictured are some scenes from Ocean Pines as well as Cathell Road, below middle, where dozens of trees were downed by the winds.



BLIZZARD: BERLIN



STEVE GREEN/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The Town of Berlin received about 16 inches of snow from the blizzard that began Sunday afternoon and continued through Monday morning. Pictured are some scenes from Monday morning around town as residents and town employees began digging out. The entire town was without power for 14 hours with some outages lasting up to 19 hours.



Education board approves operating budget

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 20, 2026) The Worcester County Board of Education will be taking a \$157 million operating budget before the county commissioners later this year, having approved that spending package for the next fiscal year last week.

Chief Financial Officer Vince Tolbert told the board the plan reflects negotiated employee salary increases, rising health insurance costs, transportation expenses, and expanded student programs. The proposed FY27 budget totals \$157,061,424, representing an increase of about \$13 million or 9.19% from FY26.

According to Tolbert, the largest share of the budget increase — \$7,011,535 — comes from employee and bus contractor costs. This includes \$4.39 million for teaching staff

salary increases, \$2.18 million for support staff, an increase in substitute teachers' pay from \$15 to \$17.25 per hour, which accounts for \$175,000, and \$268,000 in rate increases for the school system's bus contractors.

Health insurance and retirement expenses make up another significant portion of the budget increase. While subject to change, the school system anticipates a 16.8% increase in health insurance costs totaling \$2.74 million, along with nearly \$300,000 in other post-employment benefits and \$60,000 in retirement costs. Combined, those items account for \$3.09 million of the \$13 million increase.

The budget also asks for \$1.72 million for student programs and services. Requests include maintaining two pre-kindergarten teachers and two educational assistants at Pocomoke Elementary School; addi-

tional funds for dual-enrollment opportunities; launching an Elementary RISE behavioral support program; assigning bus aides to all elementary school transportation routes; and continuing summer academy programs.

Tolbert cautioned that without in-house behavioral support programs like RISE, some students could require out-of-county placements costing \$200,000 to \$300,000 per student annually.

"There are no areas on this side of the bridge for those services," he said. "That means they're going to Baltimore, across the bay ... If we just had a couple of those students placed in those out-of-county services, it would be more than what we have to pay for this RISE program."

Furthermore, operational realignment and inflationary adjustments, as well as technology upgrades, accounts for \$1.18 million of the overall budget increase.

In addition, the board approved a \$400,000 capital request for Berlin Intermediate School, which is expected to follow closely behind the planned construction of Buckingham

Elementary School.

"We are getting ready to break ground on BES, hopefully in the spring of 2027," Tolbert said. "Right on the heels of that is the BIS project ... To make sure we keep BIS on track, we are asking for some local funds for that project moving forward in 2027."

He added that the Worcester County Commissioners know the \$400,000 request is coming.

Board member Jon Andes noted that the budget provides a \$4,000 pay increase for all employees, helping the district meet the state-mandated \$60,000 minimum teacher salary under Maryland's Blueprint for Education.

"The pay increase is there, required by law, so it has to happen," he maintained.

The board voted to approve the budget as presented, with only one dissenting vote. Board member Jackie Cutlip said her opposition stemmed from concerns about school safety funding. She said that while behavioral programs are included, there is no dedicated line item for safety specific initiatives.

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Free tax preparation offered at three Worcester libraries

(Feb. 26, 2026) The AARP Tax Aide Program is offering free tax preparation at several Worcester County libraries this tax season.

This program offers tax preparation at no cost to the taxpayer. There are no age limits or AARP membership requirements.

The program is offered from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the following locations:

Mondays: Ocean Pines Library
Wednesdays: Berlin Library

Saturdays: Ocean City Library

Appointments can be made by clicking on the site locator link at <https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp-taxaide/locations/> or by calling 443-584-5661.

Prior to your appointment, please pick up an intake packet from the library and fill it out. Bring a copy of last year's tax return with your direct deposit information for refunds to your appointment.

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Officials back expanded liquor board panel

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Feb. 20, 2026) After a surprise gubernatorial appointment to Worcester County's liquor board caught local leaders off guard, officials are now backing a bill in Annapolis to expand the powerful panel from three to five members.

Maryland's governor is responsible for making appointments to county liquor boards and typically considers the recommendations of local leaders when vacancies arise. Members serve staggered four-year terms and receive an annual stipend of \$2,100.

However, according to County Administrator Weston Young, when longtime board chair William "Billy" Esham, Jr., stepped down last year, Gov. Wes Moore's office failed to connect with Worcester County officials to discuss a suggested replacement.

Young said county officials were surprised when Esham's adult son, William E. Esham III, was named an alternate to the board in July 2025 by the governor without their input.

"When the vacancy presented itself, we didn't make a stink about this publicly," Young said. "It was just like, well, did they ever reach out to us? Let's talk to Senator [Mary Beth] Carozza; they hadn't reached out to her either."

Young said the governor's office

later told county officials that a new employee unfamiliar with protocol handled the appointment.

"Even if the intentions weren't there," he added, "it gives a really bad appearance. We've conveyed our concerns and they've addressed our concerns."

He said the mix-up is what prompted county officials to take a deep dive into how other counties run their liquor boards, leading them to conclude they wanted two more panelists and to seek a legislative solution from Lower Shore lawmakers.

That bill, SB 681, sponsored by Sen. Mary Beth Carozza, was scheduled for a hearing Feb. 20. Delegates Wayne Hartman and Kevin Anderson are sponsoring companion bills in the House of Delegates. The county commissioners voted Feb. 17 to formally lend their support to the legislation along with a slate of other bills.

In a tourism-driven economy built on restaurants and bars, liquor board members wield significant power – because they decide who is allowed to sell beer, wine, and liquor in Worcester County.

Formally known as the Board of License Commissioners, the board also manages license renewal, hearing complaints, and picking punishments for licensees who violate the rules,

which can include sales to minors.

Its oversight even extends to entertainment, setting conditions on whether a bar may provide a DJ or live music, and how many performers may take the stage.

Statewide, about half of county liquor boards have five to seven panelists, while the other half employ three-person boards, Young noted. In some counties, like Howard and Kent, the county commissioners themselves serve as the liquor board.

Young told OC Today-Dispatch that the increase is justified because other boards tasked with handling "equally important" issues for Worcester County, like planning or zoning appeals, have seven members.

"Given the resort nature of the county, with a higher portion of restaurants and bars per capita, the commissioners believe increasing to a five-member board makes sense," Young said.

Other current liquor board members include Chairman R. Charles Nichols, Jr., Reese F. Cropper III and Marty W. Pusey, according to liquor board administrator April Payne.

Other bills considered

The Worcester County Commissioners on Tuesday also agreed to support additional legislation pending in the General Assembly session,

including bills that would accomplish the following:

- Require the Maryland Public Service Commission to conduct an analysis of the full costs and benefits of electricity generation in the state (SB 270).

- Establish a temporary to-go permit for alcoholic beverages that could be used during special events, like Ocean City's Country Calling (SB 846).

- Repeal certain parts of the Building Energy Performance Standards (HB 988).

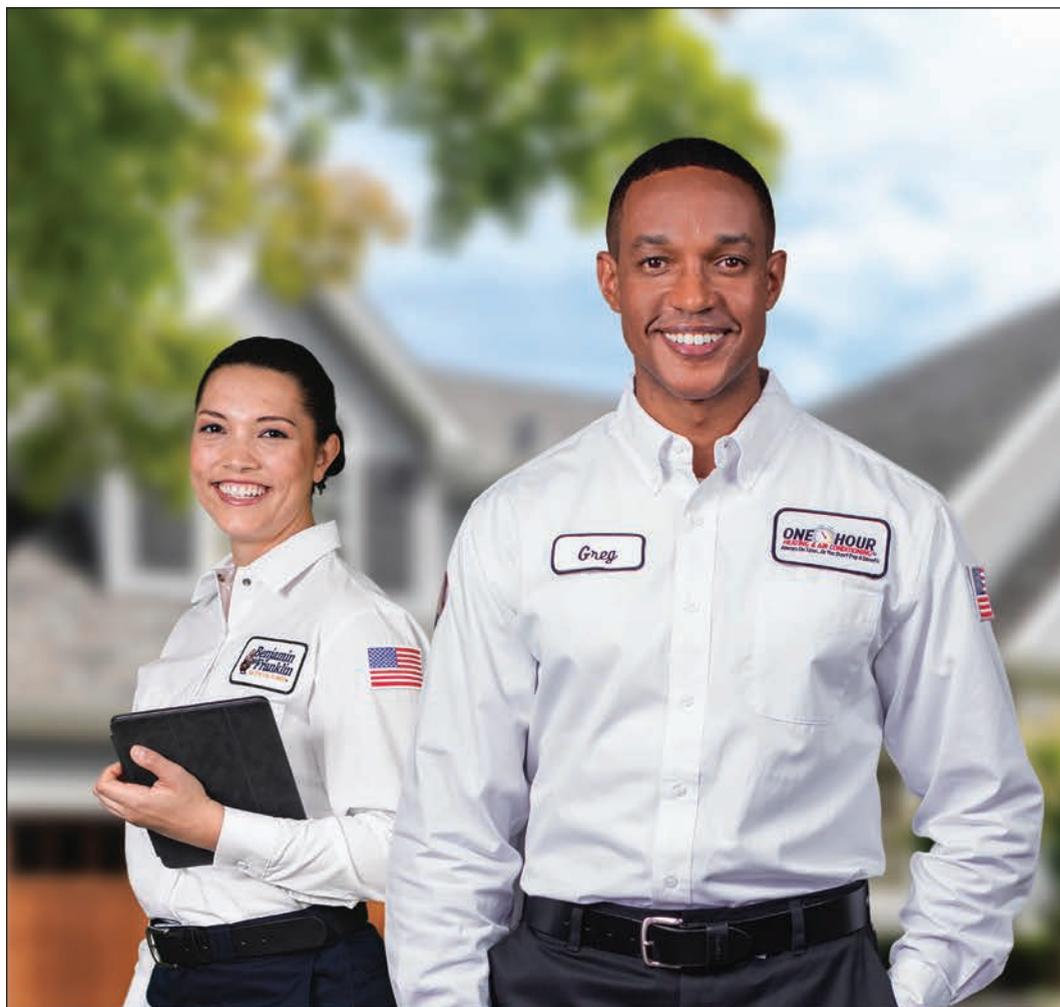
- Incentivize propane-powered school buses (HB 1019).

Conversely, another slate of bills will be opposed by the county commissioners. They would:

- Establish restrictions on where sewage sludge can be placed on land, including mitigation and monitoring protocols (SB 719).

- Mandate that some jurisdictions create opportunities for housing by evaluating the suitability of vacant, unused commercial and industrial land for housing use (HB 778).

- Mandate the county provide an annual report to the comptroller detailing who their subcontractors are, including how many employees and whether the contractor is a certified minority business enterprise (HB 905).



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Opinion

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

Electric service must be better protected

There must be a better way, and it must be a way that the public can afford, because otherwise society is completely helpless without it. That would be how to deliver electric service, without which our world ceases to function.

And yet, the distribution of power to consumers is not that much different on a fundamental level from what it was 70 years ago. For the most part, power delivery to our homes, businesses and vital institutions continues to depend on wires overhead and poles in the ground that stretch out from unprotected hubs and substations.

Although the generation and storage of electricity, along with the management of its delivery to society, have seen great advances over the past hundred years, it remains that most homes are connected to these vast grids by overhead wires that are at the mercy of the elements.

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No one at the moment knows this better than Berlin residents, who were reminded of our vulnerability when they lost their electrical power Sunday night during the early stages of the nor'easter that spent 24 hours or so pounding the coast.

As they can tell you, there's nothing quite like sitting at home helplessly in the candlelight for an extended period to remind us that we need to do more to protect this one thing that makes us who we are today, and prevents us from slipping back to who we were a century ago.

Bright days ahead for Snow Hill's inn

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Feb. 26, 2026) A Civil War-era property in downtown Snow Hill is set to reopen under new ownership, as a local group of investors plan to redevelop the former River House Inn as a boutique inn, French restaurant, and high-end wedding venue later this year.

"It just needs a lot of love," said Catherine Casto, one of the partners and a Snow Hill native. "It hasn't been really updated in a long time. We want to maintain the historic charm of the house and just bring in all the luxury amenities to make it a really nice upscale lodging destination."

Catherine and her husband Darren Casto are partnering with Jeff and Tammie Faille, founders of The Street Kitchen in Berlin, to take over the 2.15-acre property and rechristen it as the Cypress River Inn & Spa.

She expects they'll settle on the purchase by the end of the month. Renovations to the main house — a 6,743-square-foot Gothic Revival mansion built in 1864 — are planned over the next few months, with a late spring opening targeted.

Their vision is a 10-room venue anchored by a destination restaurant, helmed by Jeff Faille, a French-trained chef with culinary experience in local restaurants like Fager's Island and the Atlantic Hotel.

Once they install a commercial kitchen, Faille will open a bistro with daily breakfast and lunch service. On the weekends, he'll open as Chateau La Mere, offering a French fine dining menu.

While the "spa" part of the venue will start small, Casto plans to grow it into a full-service med spa in a year or two, possibly in its own separate building on the property.

Tammie Fallie already runs the restaurant and catering at Berlin Street Kitchen. She and her husband had talked for years about whether they wanted to open their own B&B as part of their retirement.

Now, Tammie is preparing to take on a new role — as general manager for Cypress River Inn, with her hands in every-



PHOTO COURTESY ANDREW NOCK

Local investors are planning to extensively renovate Snow Hill's historic River House Inn and reopen this year as the Cypress River Inn & Spa.

thing from bookkeeping to wedding planning.

"We like the way they run their business and they like the way we run our business, so the partnership is exciting," she said. "We're all on the same page. It's exciting to be able to work with your friends and know their business ethics."

The future Cypress River Inn could bring dozens of new jobs to Snow Hill. Between lodging, restaurant, and maintenance needs, Casto estimates the operation will need as many as 50 new employees.

Buying and redeveloping the River House Inn wasn't always the game plan. At first, Chef Faille had simply asked the Castos to partner with him to open a new French eatery.

"I laughed at him," Casto said. "I said, 'We are way too busy. I have no interest in running a restaurant. That's not gonna happen.'"

Not only is Casto a full-time obstetrician-gynecologist, she's also the site manager for Castle Farm, her family's other wedding venue she runs with her husband, a master furniture craftsman, and two sons.

Castle Farm sits on 1,800 acres outside Snow Hill, part of the same sprawling tract that's been in her family for 340 years, beginning with a colonial-era sheepskin land grant.

It was that same link to her lineage that made the opportunity to acquire the inn extra special.

The very next day, Casto learned that the inn would soon be listed for sale. She called back Chef Faille and suggested he pursue the property, as both an inn and a

restaurant. His partnership offer stood. "Buy it with us!" he asked. Again, she declined.

Another day passed. Casto was telling an aunt about the River House Inn being listed on the market. The aunt shared a historical connection — a record that proved how an ancestor named Samuel Johnson had once owned the River House Inn property.

"I said, that's the Samuel Johnson that owned my farm!" she recalled. "I started looking into the history, and called (Jeff) and said — let's buy it."

"I wasn't really planning to own a restaurant and an inn," she added. "When I knew that history, it really spoke to me. I felt like bringing it back into the Johnson family was just meant to be."

Restoration will include fixes to historic elements like brick walkways and outdoor spaces while modernizing amenities. Three cottages on site will be upgraded with king beds. Inside, multiple parlors will be converted into a single living area.

Casto is also eager to replace a lost landmark: a towering willow that stood for decades on the banks of the Pocomoke River behind the inn. Felled by a former innkeeper, the tree had long been the locals' go-to spot for special occasion portraits.

"The first thing I want to do is find the largest willow tree I can," she said, "and replant it for the town of Snow Hill. When I was in high school, 45 years ago, we would go for our prom photos. Everybody would do engagement photos there. We want to give that back to the town."

BAYSIDE GAZETTE

11934 Ocean Gateway, Suite 6, Ocean City, Md. 21842
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EDITOR Stewart Dobson
EXECUTIVE EDITOR Steve Green
ASSOCIATE EDITOR Bethany Hooper
STAFF WRITERS Tara Fischer, Brian Shane
ACCOUNT MANAGERS Mary Cooper, Renée Kelly,
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ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Gini Tufts

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Berlin Farmers Market adding mini makers

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Feb. 26, 2026) Kids of all ages will be allowed to participate in the Berlin Farmers Market this spring and summer via the town's new project, The Berlin Mini Makers Market.

Every second Sunday from May through October, during the Berlin Farmers Market, kids aged 6 to 18 can sell their own fresh products. The youthful participants can set up booths as individuals, pairs, or small teams and offer shoppers homemade or hand-crafted items such as art, crafts, and baked goods. The Worcester County Health Department must approve food items as shelf-stable. Homegrown produce, flowers, plants, or herbs grown by the kids are also permitted.

Resale items, pre-packaged commercial products, or items made primarily by adults will not be allowed.

A Facebook post by the Town of Berlin Main Streets & Arts and Entertainment Distri said, "Adult help is fine for setup and safety, but the kids must create and sell the product."

A limited number of vendors will be accepted. Those interested in participating should email berlinmainstreet@gmail.com with what the student will be growing, creating, or cultivating.

Berlin Economic and Community Development Director Ivy Wells said that as of early this week, program leaders had nearly 20 children sign up, and that they're still reviewing applications.

She added that her team will deter-

mine the number of spots to be given to the "Mini Makers" based on available space in the market. Preference will be given to Town of Berlin residents.

"The Mini Makers will bring a fresh layer of creativity to the market," Wells said.

Wells noted that the new Farmers Market addition was inspired by her witnessing kids setting up tables in front of their parents' booths. She added that she was also getting inquiries from adults, asking whether their children could have stands of their own.

"That really sparked the idea," she said. "I wanted to create something that teaches kids what it's actually like to run a small business. Whether you're a farmer growing products or a young entrepreneur creating something of your

own, there's much more involved than just making the item. There's pricing, presentation, customer service, and responsibility. I wanted them to understand the business side of it."

The Facebook post announcing the project added that the initiative strengthens Berlin's "Buy Local" mission, encouraging residents and visitors to purchase goods and services created by the town's very own craftspeople, farmers, bakers, and culinary artists.

"It encourages young farmers and entrepreneurs and gives the community a chance to support the next generation of small business owners," Wells said.

The Berlin Farmers Market is slated for Sundays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. May through October.

Pocomoke official announces delegate run

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Feb. 26, 2026) Saying Worcester County needs a stronger voice in Annapolis, a Pocomoke City councilman and charter fishing captain has filed to run in the Republican primary for the District 38A House of Delegates seat.

Carroll Lee "C.L." Marshall filed as a candidate on Feb. 13. He's running on what he calls an "Eastern Shore platform," one focused on supporting agriculture, fishing, and economic development.

"I'm on the Republican ticket, but make no mistake, my primary concern is the people who live in 38A. I'm Eastern Shore first and we'll see where everything else falls," he told OC Today-Dispatch on Wednesday.

Marshall said he wants to push back on policies he believes overlook or harm the Lower Shore. He's strongly opposed to the proposed offshore wind project off Ocean City and is critical of stringent state and federal oversight of the farming industry. He also hopes to bring economic development and flood mitigation funding to the district.

"I know the learning curve is steep,

but I think we need another person on our team from this area who sees the big picture – who understands fishing, who understands tourism, who'll fight for the farmers when they need it," he added.

Marshall had been named a finalist to fill the seat after the October 2025 death of four-term incumbent Charles Otto. Kevin Anderson, a Princess Anne farmer, won the appointment from Gov. Wes Moore ahead of the 2026 General Assembly session.

Marshall, 62, owns and operates Tangier Sound Charters, a charter fishing outfit, and is a licensed fishing guide. He also has sales experience for the Salisbury-based Holt Paper & Chemical Co.

He has been a member of the Worcester County Tourism Advisory Board, the Atlantic General Hospital Foundation board, and the Delmarva Discovery Center board. He is also the author of five books about the Chesapeake Bay.

Born and raised on Virginia's Eastern Shore, Marshall moved to Pocomoke City in 1987. He was elected to represent District 5 on the

Pocomoke City Council in 2024.

"My hands are in the dirt here. My hands are in the water here. It's of value to me. I feel that if I'm elected, I can make a difference," he said.

District 38A includes all of Somerset County, 20% of Worcester County, and 5% of Wicomico County. Two others have filed to run for the seat: Shelley Johnson, a Democrat out of Princess

Anne, and Tim Howlett, a Republican from Crisfield. Howlett had also been named a finalist for the gubernatorial appointment last year.

It's unclear at this time if Del. Anderson will run to keep the seat in November's election. As of Feb. 18, he was not listed as a candidate on a state Board of Elections website. The filing deadline is Feb. 24.

Annual Spring Sportsman's Bash

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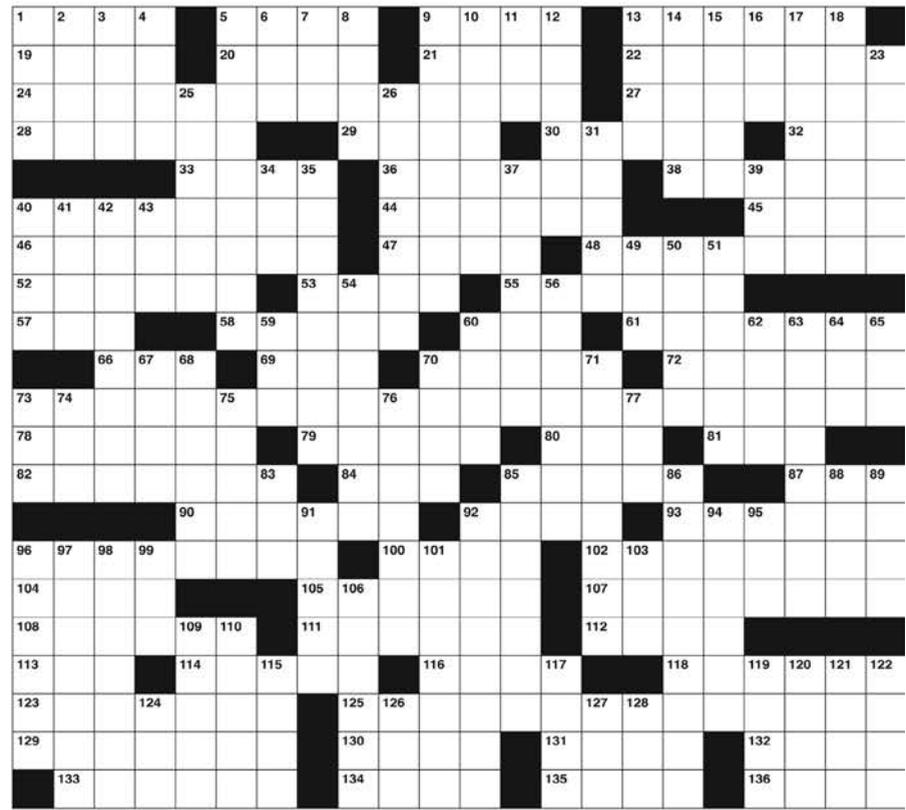
Puzzles

GOOD TO THE LAST DROP

BY MICHAEL LIEBERMAN AND REBECCA GOLDSTEIN / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Michael Lieberman, of Washington, is an attorney at Fairmark Partners, an antitrust firm. Rebecca Goldstein, of Albany, Calif., is a research scientist at Merck, developing cancer immunotherapies. While they have many mutual friends and have exchanged messages for years, they met for the first time at a crossword tournament in 2024. Rebecca's favorite part of this puzzle is its theme density. Mike's favorite part is the title. — W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Do a little too well?
 - 5 Tops
 - 9 Resident of Ayrshire or Lanarkshire
 - 13 No time at all
 - 19 Discouraged action
 - 20 Mouthy?
 - 21 "What a relief!"
 - 22 Brought (out)
 - 24 Completely destroy with a blast
 - 27 Gaia, by another name
 - 28 Something typically taken every 10 years
 - 29 Doodled
 - 30 Certain bridge positions
 - 32 Segment of a timeline, perhaps
 - 33 The moon's "maria"
 - 36 Circa
 - 38 "Rhoda" actress Valerie
 - 40 Version of a textbook designed for instruction
 - 44 Salon substance
 - 45 Muppet who loves pigeons
 - 46 "My life is over"
 - 47 Sharpness
 - 48 Sarcastic response to a show-off
 - 52 Walked gingerly
 - 53 Product with Pro, Air and Mini varieties
 - 55 Conical shelter
- DOWN**
- 1 "The Exchange" airtel
 - 2 Flaw in an argument
 - 3 Unknown author, for short
 - 4 Squabbles
 - 5 Unresolved parts of a plot
 - 6 Org. to which you might provide your bank account info
 - 7 Renewable energy structure
 - 8 Lost traction
 - 9 Globelike shape
 - 10 Dress down
 - 11 Poetic contraction
 - 12 Many middle schoolers
 - 13 Ones pressed for cash?
 - 14 Top of a latte
 - 15 Mucho
 - 16 M.L.B. team that once went by OAK on scoreboards
 - 17 In hot water?
 - 18 Fashion designer Carolina
 - 23 Shortage
 - 25 Behind
 - 26 Certain public transit network
 - 31 Singer whose "Hello" was the fastest video ever to reach 1 billion views on YouTube
 - 34 "People _____ Strange" (the Doors song)
 - 35 Conduct inciting an insurrection
 - 37 World's first billion-dollar corporation
 - 39 Sac fly result
 - 40 Game piece in Rummikub
 - 41 Royal title
 - 42 Where jet-setters may rub elbows
 - 43 Chalice
 - 49 P.D. alert
 - 50 Prefix meaning "sun"
 - 51 "Heavens to Betsy!"
 - 54 Subscription-only website feature
 - 56 Look into
 - 59 Contribute
 - 60 Chicago paper, informally
 - 62 N.Y.C. neighborhood that's home to the Grey Art Museum
 - 63 Lower-body exercise
 - 64 Occupational suffix
 - 65 J.F.K. predecessor
 - 67 Aromatic herb
 - 68 Hold tightly
 - 70 Mariner's greeting
 - 71 Natural attraction
 - 73 Two peas _____ pod
 - 74 Pitch
 - 75 French wine region
 - 76 LeBron James or Nikola Jokic
 - 77 Delivery person's assignment: Abbr.
 - 83 "Wheels"
 - 85 Beverage infused with THC
 - 86 Fixed, as a "m-i-t-s-a-k-e"
 - 88 County in western New York
 - 89 Deck out?
 - 91 Shoe with a thick sole
 - 92 Part of an equestrian's ensemble
 - 94 Small songbird
 - 95 Benefit plan option, in brief
 - 96 Wealthy sort
 - 97 Stretchy
 - 98 "Next on my list"
 - 99 _____ chi
 - 101 Lit up, in a way
 - 103 _____ Valley (San Francisco neighborhood)
 - 106 Less challenging
 - 109 Shell out
 - 110 Video game character aptly celebrated on Mar. 10
 - 115 Bicyclist's setting
 - 117 Latin list ender
 - 119 Lead-in to a conclusion
 - 120 _____ Millions (multistate lottery)
 - 121 Some addresses
 - 122 Dos + cuatro
 - 124 China's largest ethnic group
 - 126 Wellness resort offering
 - 127 Horn contents at a Viking feast
 - 128 Depressed



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



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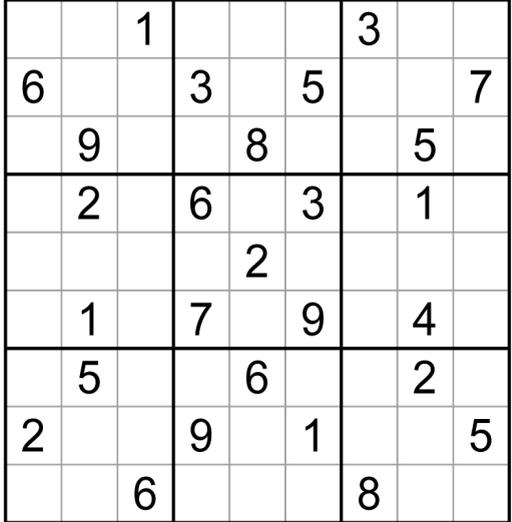
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© Puzzles by Pappocom
HARD - 45

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

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

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

Calendar

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

Thurs., Feb. 26

'STORY TIME 'ONE SHOE, TWO SHOES'

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, worcestertlibrary.org

STORY TIME: MS. ANGIE'S FAVES

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, worcestertlibrary.org

COLONIAL CRAFTS: SACHETS

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 2 p.m. Learn about and make sachets. Registration required: 410-957-0878. worcestertlibrary.org

FIRESIDE CHAT

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 3 p.m. Entertaining book discussion featuring books you have read and want to share. Come find your next great read. 410-641-0650, worcestertlibrary.org

DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF WORCESTER COUNTY MEETING

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 6-8 p.m. Speakers "Indivisible."

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. 27

OC MAHJONG CLUB

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

HISTORY & HIGHBALLS

Julia A. Purnell Museum, 208 W. Market St., Snow Hill, 5-7 p.m. Pairing local history with handcrafted cocktails and delicious hors d'oeuvres — all while supporting the Julia A. Purnell Museum. Samuel Gunn House, 1760-1780. Cost is \$40. Tickets: 410-632-0515.

O.P.V.F.D. CASH BINGO

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 6 p.m. Doors open at 5 p.m. Food will be available on site from the Grateful Grub Phood Truck. Pro-

ceeds benefit the O.P.V.F.D. Advance tickets are \$35. Tickets: <https://opvfd.com/cash-bingo/>. 410-641-8272

KIGHTS OF COLUMBUS BINGO

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

Sat., Feb. 28

AUCE BREAKFAST BUFFET

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

TOTS-TO-TEENS: FOSSILS

Delmarva Discovery Museum, 2 Market St., Pocomoke City, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Learn about paleontologists and how fossils are made. Cost is \$5 for museum members and \$10 for non-members. <https://www.delmarvadiscoverycenter.org/delmarvadiscoveryacademy/totstoteens>

GLOBAL GOODIES

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 1 p.m. Are all snacks created equal? Let's find out as we taste test snacks from around the world. For ages 6-11 years. 410-208-4014, worcestertlibrary.org

OYSTER FRITTER SANDWICHES

American Legion #123, 10111 Old Ocean City Blvd., Berlin. To be held from 2 p.m. until sold out. Cost is \$10 for dine-in or carry-out.

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Friendship Church, 10537 Friendship Road, Berlin, 4-7 p.m. The all-you-can-eat includes spaghetti with meat sauce, salad, garlic bread, cake and beverage. Cost is \$15. Eat in or carry out. Benefits the Friendship Church of Berlin Men's Group.

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., March 1

DEADLINE TO REGISTER FOR MARCH 7TH JIGSAW PUZZLE TOURNAMENT

Held on March 7 at the Bishopville Volunteer Fire Department from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Winner will be first team to complete a 500-piece puzzle. Entry is \$50 per team. Register: 443-880-4944 by March 1.

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., March 2

STORY TIME: TRAINS

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

GREAT BOOKS DISCUSSION

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2:30 p.m. The group meets once a month to discuss selections from the Great Books Foundation. Featuring "All Quiet on the Western Front" by Erich Maria Remarque. 410-208-4014, worcestertlibrary.org

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

John H. "Jack" Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center, 9707 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 3-4 p.m. Held the first Monday of each month. 410-641-2626, nicole.fry@tidalhealth.org

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

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

BRIDGE

Mondays - Ocean City 50plus Center, 104 41st Street, Ocean City, 12:30-3:30 p.m. Reserve a spot: Tish, 410-804-3971. www.Worcoa.org/oceancity

OVEREATER'S ANONYMOUS

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

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.

Tues., March 3

STORY TIME

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

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, worcestertlibrary.org

STORY TIME: ALPHABET

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 10:30 a.m. Crafts, songs and stories. For ages 0-5 years. 410-957-0878, worcestertlibrary.org

BABY TIME

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 10:30 a.m. Songs, rhymes and stories. Stay after to socialize with other families. For ages 0-2 years. 410-632-5622, worcestertlibrary.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. All ladies who love to knit invited. Continued on Page 20

Calendar

Continued from Page 19
way, 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., March 4

HADESTOWN

Ocean City Performing Arts Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 7 p.m. Featuring a haunting and hopeful theatrical experience that grabs and never lets go. Tickets: <https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/5716555/5/hadestown-ocean-city-oc-performing->

arts-center.

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=oddttdcreator>.

4-H KIDS POLLINATOR WORKSHOP

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 4 p.m. Join 4-H educator Theresa Maggio to learn about pollination and make your own chapstick. For ages 6-11 years. 410-524-1818, worcesterlibrary.org

PAINT & SIP

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 6-8 p.m. Cost is \$27 and includes wine and crackers. Must be ages 18 years or older to participate. Register: 410-641-7052.

DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT CLASS

Held weekly on Wednesday via virtual meeting, 6-8 p.m. Provider referral, patient pre-assessment, and registration are required. Insurance may cover all or part of the cost. Register: 410-543-7061.

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

HISTORY-TO-GO

Snow Hill library, 307 N. Washington St., throughout March. Pick up a History-to-Go kit that is all about Colonial gardening. Includes info sheets, recommended activities, supplies and more. Can be picked up at the Snow Hill Branch. 410-632-3495

OC READS: 'THE VIEW FROM LAKE COMO' BY ADRIANA TRIGIANI

Ocean City library, 10003 Coastal Highway. Pick up a copy of this month's read. Come in by March 30 to share your impressions and enter into a drawing to win free books. 410-524-1818

COMMUNITY JOURNAL: TELL HER STORY

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., March 2-31. Use the provided journal pages, story sheets and drawing pages to tell the story about a woman who inspires you. For families. 410-957-0878

HER WORDS, HER WORLD

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, March 2-17. Drop in and pick up a poster to fill out about a famous woman and return it to the library by March 17 to be put on display. Poster will be voted on and the winner will receive a prize. For ages 6-11 years and 12-18 years. 410-208-4014

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.



OPEN HOUSES

Feb. 26 - Mar. 5



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 \$284,750	Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community
Friday 2-4pm	26740 Chatham Lane, Millsboro, DE	3BR/3BA	Townhome	\$349,900	Katie Landon/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 10am-Noon	201 S Heron Drive #8A, Ocean City	2BR/2.5BA	Condo	\$499,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	37007 Owl Dr, Selbyville, DE	4BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$539,900	Lauren Bunting/Keller Williams Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	201 S Heron Drive #26B, Ocean City	2BR/2.5BA	Condo	\$595,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am -1pm	424 Bayshore Dr #4101, Ocean City	2BR/1BA	Condo	\$295,000	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-1pm	4 Preakness Dr, Ocean Pines	5BR/3.5BA	Single Family	\$899,900	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-1pm	26188 High Banks Dr, Salisbury	3BR/3BA	Single Family	\$479,900	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Sat & Sun, 11am-3pm	12430 Old Bridge Rd., West OC	2BR/2BA	Single Family	from \$284,750	Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community
Saturday Noon-2pm	2018 Points Reach, Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Condo	\$499,900	Debbie Hileman/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday Noon-3pm	13 Johnsons Glade Lane, Ocean View, DE	3BR/3BA	Single Family	\$\$\$699,990	Katie Landon/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday Noon-3pm	36997 Owl Dr, Selbyville, DE	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$535,000	Anne-Marie Bouse/Re/MAX/Advantage Realty
Saturday 12:30-2pm	6803 Atlantic Avenue #4H, Ocean City	1BR/1BA	Condo	\$425,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 2-4pm	12048 Pimlico Rd, Berlin	3BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$949,900	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 2:30-4:30pm	12971 Inlet Isle Lane, Ocean City	5BR/5BA	Single Family	\$2,699,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	204 S Heron Drive #202G, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$575,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	101 123rd Street #374C, Ocean City	1BR/1BA	Condo	\$254,900	Sherry Thens/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11:30am-1:30pm	6803 Atlantic Avenue #4H, Ocean City	1BR/1BA	Condo	\$425,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty



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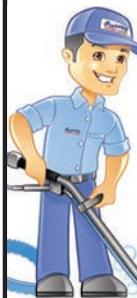
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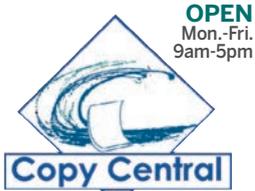
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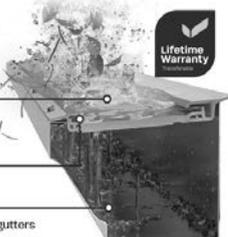
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