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JANUARY 14, 2021

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FREE

Town Council approves SHA easement deal

Will allow state to improve turn lanes off Route 376

By Ally Lanasa
Staff Writer

(Jan. 14, 2021) The Berlin Mayor and Council on Monday approved the transfer of rights of way along Maryland Route 376 to the State Highway Administration (SHA) to widen its intersection with U.S. Route 113 for safety purposes.

"These are easements that are required ... for the geometric improvements of Bay Street Extended, Maryland Route 376 and its intersection with U.S. Route 113," Berlin's Planning Director Dave Engelhart said during the virtual meeting. "There is one area where we are actually conveying the property to the State Highway," he said. "The other three areas are easements. One's a temporary easement, and the other two are perpetual easements."

According to exhibits from SHA representatives, the improvements on Route 376 from U.S. Route 113 to east of Flower Street will lengthen the

See EASEMENTS Page 2



ALLY LANASA/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

IN MOURNING

Berlin Mayor Zackery Tyndall ordered that Town Hall, 10 William St., be draped in mourning bunting from Jan. 7 until the day of interment to honor John Dale Smack Jr.'s service to the Berlin community as the first African American Councilmember from 1980 to 1988. See obituary page 15.

Pines budget begins review of forecasts

Department proposals get scrutiny in uncertain times

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(Jan. 14, 2021) Ocean Pines kicked off a multi-day FY 2021-22 budget presentation last Wednesday, with covered food and beverage services, fire/EMS, golf operations, finance, marketing and general administration.

In-depth departmental presentations were provided for the Budget and Finance Committee, which will subsequently issue guidance for consideration during a board of directors work session on Jan. 19-20.

General Manager John Viola is scheduled to publish recommended budget figures by Jan. 29, followed by a board hearing on Feb. 6 before final approval on Feb. 20. The new fiscal year begins on May 1.

FOOD/BEVERAGE

The proceedings actually began a day earlier than originally anticipated, with food and beverage contractor the Matt Ortt Companies presenting its information on Tuesday.

CEO Ralph DeAngelus said although precise time frames remain open to conjecture, the current distribution of coronavirus vaccines indicate the possibility of stronger financial returns this year at the Yacht Club, Beach Club and Golf Clubhouse Bar and Grille.

"I truly believe we're going to have a great year," he said.

One positive financial indicator DeAngelus noted is a recent uptick in private event deposits.

"We have \$335,000 already booked in weddings and events," he said.

DeAngelus said that figure is guaranteed.

See DEPARTMENTS Page 3



John Viola

Return to classroom to begin next week

By Ally Lanasa
Staff Writer

(Jan. 14, 2021) Schools in Worcester County have begun preparations to return to in-person instruction next week after conducting virtual classroom learning during the first two weeks following the winter break.

The classroom closure followed the Worcester County Health Department's strong recommendation that schools wait to bring students and staff back immediately after the holidays.

Small groups of Worcester County public school students are expected to start in-person instruction on Jan. 19, Superintendent of Schools Lou Taylor said last Friday.

As of last Friday, Worcester's covid-19 positivity rate

See COUNTY'S Page 5



PHOTO COURTESY WORCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Superintendent of Schools Lou Taylor observes Snow Hill High School teacher Keith Donoway's virtual math lesson on Monday when all Worcester County Public Schools faculty and staff returned to campuses.



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PHOTOS COURTESY STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

The Berlin Mayor and Council on Tuesday approved the transfer of rights of way of Maryland Route 376 to the State Highway Administration at the intersection of U.S. Route 113 to widen the road where congestion occurs for safety purposes.

Easements granted to state for safety project

Continued from Page 1

right turn lane from Route 376 onto U.S. Route 113 North to prevent traffic from piling up.

In addition, the intersection experiences extensive congestion and heavy RV/trailer traffic during the summer. As a result, southbound ve-

hicles turning left onto Maryland Route 376 exceed the capacity of the left turn lane and spill out onto Route 113. The current left turn lane from U.S. Route 113 southbound to the east side of Maryland Route 376 is roughly 375 feet. The proposed turn lane will be about 850 feet.

Town Administrator Jeff Fleetwood informed the mayor and council that the existing sidewalk on the east side of Maryland Route 376 will be reconstructed to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

"These improvements can only enhance and make our community

safer," Councilman Dean Burrell said, moving to approve the requests.

Before the approval, Fleetwood assured the Town Council that plans to realign Decatur and Flower streets will still be feasible after the project.

The council unanimously agreed in favor of the requests.

Use of force amendment approved for police

Federal funds dependent on department's adoption of clearer chokehold policy

By Ally Lanasa
Staff Writer

(Jan. 14, 2021) The Berlin Mayor and Council approved amendments to the Use of Force General Order for the Berlin Police Department on Monday.

"It's adding of two statements that the presidential Executive Order on



Arnold Downing

Safe Policing for Safe Communities advises that has to be included by all law enforcement agencies," said Police Chief Arnold Downing.

The first statement is that all federal, state and local laws will be followed.

The second statement prohibits the use of chokeholds, except for when following the established guidelines, because the policy considers

the use of chokeholds deadly force.

Downing said if the statements had not been added to the policy by Jan. 31, the police department would have lost federal funds.

"We will be looking at the actual use of force policy with our insurance carrier, which is [Local Government Insurance Trust] LGIT, and law enforcement representatives there with staff to go ahead and enhance that right after the state delegates go ahead and put in their mandates," he added.

Councilmember Jay Knerr asked Downing how officers select between pepper spray (Oleoresin Capsicum), also known as mace, and tasers for non-lethal use of force.

"First of all, they have to go ahead and have it," Downing replied. "Not all officers have both of those tools, and they actually fall exactly in the same line, so again, it's not a difference in those two."

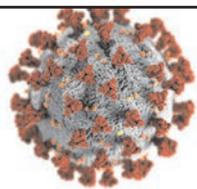
He added that mace is often used more for crowds rather than individuals.

"It has to be tools that people are trained with," Downing said.

Furthermore, it depends on what is available to the officers and what they choose to carry.

"If you tried to put on everything that is available to you, you'll be walking around with 102 pounds worth of equipment," he said in response to Councilmember Shaneka Nichols. "Most of our officers do not carry mace on a regular basis now. Taser is the tool of choice, and again not everyone here has been trained in taser."

Downing also explained to the councilmembers that a taser is now referred to as an electronic control device (ECD).



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Departments see better times for FY21/22

Continued from Page 1

anteed to grow between now and May 1.

“It proves public confidence is coming back,” he said. “This is more than we had scheduled for last year.”

DeAngelus estimated 85 percent of private events booked for next year are at the Yacht Club.

“It’s a bigger venue,” he said.

Looking at bottom line numbers by food unit, the Beach Club, which was budgeted for a net profit of \$96,937 for the current fiscal year, is estimated to net \$97,742 profit during FY21/22.

DeAngelus said charting profit margins at the new Golf Clubhouse Bar and Grille is difficult because the lack of history.

“We don’t see covid being impactful on the Clubhouse,” he said.

Revenue estimates for the Clubhouse Bar and Grille are roughly \$230,000, which DeAngelus characterized as a conservative figure that likely could be topped.

Net revenue at the Yacht Club is estimated at \$1.8 million next year and forecast to close this year at roughly \$1.5 million.

The surplus in revenue, however, will be eliminated by rising payroll, with salaries forecast to close the current fiscal year at just over \$676,000 and forecasted at more than \$927,000 in the next budget.

Still, DeAngelus expressed confidence in netting a 10 percent.

“We did a good job of keeping our revenues up because of the specials we did,” he said.

FIRE/EMS

Ocean Pines Fire Department President Dave VanGasbeck said emergency responders had to main-

tain a flat budget this past year.

“It was a challenging year,” he said.

The department tapped into reserve funds for building projects and apparatus replacement expenses.

“We’ve done our best to come in as efficiently and effectively as we can and still provide ... services,” he said.

Fire Chief Steve Grunewald said the Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department is requesting funding of roughly \$722,000 from the association, up about \$46,000 from about \$675,000 requested for the current fiscal year.

Increased revenue is also anticipated from Worcester County, which ponied up roughly \$704,000 between fire and EMS for the current fiscal year, with roughly \$808,000 anticipated for fiscal 21-22.

VanGasbeck said preliminary work is in progress to update the South Station at 911 Ocean Parkway to meet National Fire Standards, with a plan being developed to keep maintenance costs reasonable.

GOLF OPERATIONS

General Manager of Golf Operations and Maintenance John Malinowski said net revenues, which were budgeted at \$1.07 million for the current fiscal year, are proposed at \$1.1 million for next year.

Malinowski said the roughly \$35,000 increase would likely break down to about \$30,000 from play fees and \$5,000 from merchandise sales.

On the expense side, payroll costs are anticipated to top \$297,000,



John Malinowski

compared to \$282,000 budgeted for the current fiscal year.

Revenue from membership dues is proposed at \$130,000, the same amount budgeted in fiscal 20-21.

Regardless of a stuttered start for golfers this spring due to covid-19, the number of rounds played this year is approaching prior numbers.

“If you look at May and June we lost over 3,500 rounds, which is more than \$100,000 in revenue,” he said.

Since that slow beginning, course play has accelerated, with at present 22,414 rounds played to this point in the calendar year, versus 22,155 in the year prior.

“Things are looking good for golf,” he said.

Finance/Marketing/General Administration

Director of Finance and Operational Logistics Steve Phillips said one minor revenue change would include the proposed increase from \$25 to \$50 for property transfer fees based on the amount of administration work involved and increased numbers processed recently.

Marketing Coordinator Julie Malinowski said the impact from covid-19 on public relations objectives has been less severe than anticipated.

Malinowski also noted that starting next fiscal year revenue generated by the Ocean Pines Farmers and Artisans Market would be shifted from administration to Recreation and Parks.



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Berlin Mayor and Council Briefs

By Ally Lanasa

Staff Writer

(Jan. 14, 2021) The following took place during the Berlin Mayor and Council virtual meeting on Monday:

Hiring

The Town of Berlin is hiring a superintendent for the Public Works Department, which handles maintenance, streets and sanitation, as Dave Wheaton is retiring.

"The game plan is to do paper screening [and] telephonic screening before staff begins the interview process," said Town Administrator Jeff Fleetwood.

Fleetwood added that town staff hopes to have the new superintendent start March 1 to overlap with Wheaton for about 30 days.

Electric utility

Tim Lawrence, the town's electric utility director, said the department has been working on several projects.

His staff installed the underground service, energized it and set all the meters at 2 Stevenson Lane behind Fins Ale House and Raw Bar.

"The only thing left we have to do there is install a streetlight," Lawrence said.

For the SHA project at Maryland Route 376 and U.S. Route 113, the

utility staff had to set the dead-end pole for Verizon. Lawrence said there is a new pole past the Dollar General on Decatur Street.

"State Highway asked that we go ahead and set that, so Verizon could start planning on their work," he added.

The utility also received two new solar customers, 208 Henry Mills Drive and 201 Presidents Court.

"We just changed out the meters to net meters that record import/export power," Lawrence said. "We have three other solar systems that are going to be coming online."

In addition, Berlin's electric utility is waiting on approval of a grant from the Maryland Energy Administration for a 49kW rooftop solar system at the electric facility on Schoolfield Street.

Lastly, all the Christmas lights and decorations have been removed from downtown.

Lineman apprentice

Caleb Hunter, an electric lineman apprentice, is halfway through the four-year lineman training program, which provides hands-on experience and formal training.

"The town has invested in two lineman apprentices," Fleetwood said, to replace lineman, who will be eligible to retire.

Fleetwood and Lawrence added that no other apprentices have made it this far in the program.

Berlin Police Department

With two new hires, the Berlin Police Department is fully staffed.

Patrolman First Class Avery Marshall, a six-year veteran, began working at the Berlin Police Department on Jan. 4. Recruit Ean Spencer started the police academy on Jan. 5. He has to complete six months of the police academy followed by field training.

"We're proud to have those two starting," said Chief Arnold Downing.

Jason Odegaard, who graduated from the police academy and was sworn into the police department at the end of 2020, should begin field training soon.

In addition, the Berlin Police Department played Secret Santa again last month, giving away a full training room of toys.

"What we did have left over we actually had two daycare providers come in and actually give them out to three different daycares," Downing said. "We're real proud of that and glad we had a good end to 2020."

FY22 budget

Natalie Saleh, the town's finance director, has asked the town department heads to present their capital expenditure requests by Jan. 31.

"So, we're going to be creating two separate lists," she said. "One is what we would like to see in capital outlets, or capital purchases, for our next fiscal year, and then the items that we must have."

A budget schedule will be uploaded online with work sessions to meet as posted.

In addition, Saleh will provide councilmembers with the six-month performance of the general fund budget soon.

"Also, I have exciting news. We had

the most successful year to collect contributions to our electric energy fund," she said. "All the citizens donated \$5,500. The town will match the same, so this amount will go to SHORE UP! and will go to the low-income families to assist with electric bills."

MLK Jr. Day project

Ivy Wells, the town's economic and community development director, is working with Melissa Reid from Buckingham Elementary School on an art and writing project for Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Jan. 18.

"Kids are doing either a drawing or writing a paragraph called, 'I Have a Dream,'" Wells said. "I did this a few years ago with Melissa, and it worked out really nicely."

There is a drop-off box at the Berlin Welcome Center, 14 S. Main St.

The artwork will be displayed in the windows of the Welcome Center and downtown businesses.

As an incentive, five Island Creamery gift cards will be randomly drawn.

Bee City designation

Berlin's Bee City designation is up for renewal in February, said Kelsey Jensen, administrative manager, who is working on the application.

"They are aware that with covid, we weren't really able to have any activities that were related to the bees, because we weren't really having outdoor gatherings or really any gatherings of sorts this year," Jensen said.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Most Berlin Town offices will be closed on Jan. 18 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Recycling collection normally scheduled for Monday will be collected on Tuesday along with regular Tuesday trash collection, said Deputy Town Administrator Mary Bohlen.

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County's private schools reopen classrooms

Continued from Page 1
for testing — the percentage of people testing positive out of all the tests administered — was 13.06. That's still higher than the state's rate of 9.16 percent.

The Maryland Department of Health on Monday reported 447 new cases in the county just since Jan. 1.

In his announcement, Taylor reminded families that all faculty and staff at the local public schools received a customized covid-19 training in December.

The county school system also put into place additional supports and precautions last week to bolster comprehensive safety protocols and procedures.

"We have also had lengthy discussions with our local health officials, and with their full support, I am able to announce that our faculty and staff will return to our schools this Monday, Jan. 11, and we will welcome our first small group of students back to our classrooms the following Tuesday, January 19," Taylor wrote.

"Schools have already made contact with the families of those students in that first wave. I also want you to understand that this timeline relies heavily on no unforeseen circumstances occurring and no major changes in our local covid-19 met-

rics." Approximately 32 percent of students are expected to return to in-person learning on Jan. 19, said Carrie Sterrs, coordinator of public relations and special programs for the county school system.

The superintendent also encouraged families to take responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and others as the schools begin Stage Two of the "Responsible Return" plan.

"Please complete our screening tool honestly each day," he wrote. "Make sure your child is properly masked; remind them of the importance of keeping a physical distance of 6 feet or more from others; and please keep your child home when sick. I cannot stress to you how important your help is to making sure your child, our teachers, and staff can remain healthy and safe."

Sterrs added that the screening protocols were developed in consultation with the health department.

The staff at Most Blessed Sacrament School on Racetrack Road in Berlin also urges families to be transparent and take responsibility for keeping students in the classrooms. According to a newsletter last Thursday, parents are required to monitor students and other family members

for any covid-19 symptoms each morning.

"If any student, or sibling, or family member is exhibiting any symptoms of covid-19, they should be kept home from school until you are able to speak with the nurse or your physician to determine if follow up and/or testing is required. Do not send any child to MBS if anyone in their family is being tested for covid-19," wrote Nurse Maureen Mumford.

Families are to update Mumford at attendance@MBSCS.org.

Students and their families are reminded to complete daily health checks and temperature screenings, continue to enforce good hygiene, sanitize regularly, wear masks and social distance when outside of the house.

Most students returned to campus on Monday, but a few are still learning virtually.

As for Worcester Preparatory School on South Main Street in Berlin, students were invited to return to in-person instruction on Monday, but some requested to remain in virtual learning, said Dr. John McDonald, head of school.

"All safety protocols implemented in September remain in place," McDonald said. "We also continue to communicate with our families re-

garding CDC and Worcester County Health Department guidelines."

Faculty and staff conduct temperature screenings daily when students arrive to campus.

"Families are reminded that they should be checking their children before leaving for school, but we do not require documentation," he said.

Wicomico County Public Schools continued with virtual learning on Jan. 4. Superintendent of Schools Donna Hanlin announced on Jan. 5, that the Return to School Action Plan would aim to start hybrid learning the week of Feb. 2 for all grades with all school staff returning to campuses as of Jan. 25. Next week, Hanlin will provide updates on the county's health metrics regarding a safe return to in-person instruction in February.

Somerset County Public Schools announced on Tuesday that in-person learning is now expected to start Jan. 25 because of covid-19 health metrics. A press release stated, "As of today, Somerset County's 7-day positivity rate is 9.76 [percent] and case rate per 100,000 is 66.92. Both metrics remain above the state recommended benchmarks for safe in-person learning, making the previously revised reopening target of January 19th unattainable."



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OP budget meeting examines parks, marinas

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(Jan. 14, 2021) The Ocean Pines Budget and Finance Committee continued its line item vetting of the next fiscal year's budget proposal last Thursday with presentations from public works, recreation and parks, marinas, and the police department, as well as reviewing proposed new capital expenditures.

The Ocean Pines Association's fiscal year begins May 1.

PUBLIC WORKS

Linda Martin, from Public Works, said two unfilled positions were eliminated to help curtail rising payroll costs.

The total proposed payroll for public works in the FY21/22 budget is roughly \$1.18 million, which is about \$166,000 greater than the just over \$1 million forecast for the current year.

Budget Committee member Brian Reynolds asked what costs fall in the repairs and maintenance category, which was budgeted at \$320,000 this year and proposed for \$299,000 for fiscal 21-22.

Public Works and CPI Director Eddie Wells said the general maintenance line item includes costs such as painting and servicing equipment.

"Maintenance we have to do yearly to keep things up and operating," he said.

General Manager John Viola said deferred maintenance was a topic of contention two years ago but more recently greater attention has been paid to facilities' upkeep.

Viola said the increased focus could reduce costs for building upkeep in future years.

Next year's proposed budget includes \$220,000 for general maintenance of buildings and facilities, which matches the sum in the current year budget.

Viola said last year public works had estimated about \$500,000 would be required to address numerous failing drainage pipes, which are outside of the large scale Bainbridge project.

"We reallocated about \$300,000 of this public works drainage money to Bainbridge," he said.

To rectify the shortfall, the new budget proposes to include \$266,000 in

replacement capital for public works to complete pipe repairs.

"They're key pipes and they have to be done," he said.

Viola said both the Budget and Finance Committee and the board of directors previously signed off on the reallocation to update underground piping, some of which have been in use more than four decades.

"They're pretty bad and it's a big cost," he said.

Wells said a number of less costly alternatives are being explored.

"The traditional way of digging in to replace pipes runs into lots of utility lines," he said. "The prices are mind boggling."

Wells is obtaining pricing and specifications for epoxy pipe lining, which eliminates the need to dig trenches by employing resin to fill in damaged sections.

Public Works Operations Manager Nobie Violante updated the status of a four-year bulkhead replacement program launched two years ago.

Violante said price estimates for FY21/22 are about \$375,000, but could end up being closer to \$400,000.

Once the next budget goes into effect in May, the intent is to contact multiple vendors to lock in pricing and avoid any increases for materials prior to the bulkhead repairs getting underway in September.

"We would do less linear feet and stretch out the bulkhead program if we can't negotiate for lower prices," he said.

Viola said depending on the final cost for bulkhead work, the initial estimate of a related \$40 increase on assessments could be lowered to \$25. The current assessment charge for bulkhead maintenance \$19.

RECREATION AND PARKS

Director of Parks and Recreation Debbie Donahue said revenue from event bookings and Camp Ocean Pines took a nosedive in 2020.

Special event revenues, which were budgeted at \$102,000 this year are expected to close at \$1,500, but are proposed at \$900,000 for next year.

Camp Ocean Pines, which was bud-



GREG ELLISON/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Ocean Pines Marina Manager Ron Fisher said recreational boaters proliferated in 2020 due to coronavirus shifting work regiments for large segments of society.

geted to raise \$159,000 this year is presently forecast at \$71,000 but is anticipated to return to form in summer 2021.

"We're hoping to get back to normal," she said. "That's why it is jumping from \$71,000 this year to \$160,000 next year," she said.

MARINAS

Ocean Pines Marina manager Ron Fisher attributed strong financials this year to an increase in recreational boating, as more boaters had more time because of pandemic-related work closures.

Marina fuel sales, which were budgeted to generate almost \$139,000 this year, are forecast to close at more than \$195,000.

"This fall was decent boating weather," he said.

Still, Fisher adopted a conservative view in proposing \$150,000 in net revenues from fuel sales for next year.

"We have no control over the weather," he said.

Fisher said a 4 percent increase for annual slip rentals is proposed next year.

Annual fees for slips accommodating vessels under 26 feet are proposed to in-

crease from \$1,872 to \$1,947, while the smaller number of slips for boats up to 40 feet would rise from \$2,548 to \$2,649 and slips at the Swim and Racquet Club would go up from \$1,352 to \$1,406.

Fisher, who had researched comparable prices from area marinas, said the average slip cost for 22-foot boats hovered around \$3,000 annually.

"We have a waiting list of about 30 boats for slips," he said. "We got 5-6 calls in the last few days."

POLICE

Chief of Police Leo Ehrisman noted his department is not intended to generate revenue.

"Our budget is limited to equipment, operations and salaries," he said.

Viola said the budget proposal for the department includes replacements for two high-mileage vehicles.

"Based on the seriousness, I will ask for two cruisers at the next board meeting," he said. "It can't be avoided and waiting four months could be high maintenance costs."

Ocean Pines President Larry Perrone said in that scenario the request would

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Pines fiscal discussions ends with aquatics

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(Jan. 14, 2021) The Ocean Pines Budget and Finance Committee closed its multi-day review of the budget proposal for next year on Friday with detailed financial projections for aquatics, beach club parking, racquet sports and the Bainbridge drainage project.

AQUATICS

Ocean Pines Director of Amenities and Operational Logistics Colby Phillips said the Aquatics Department's bottom line for 2020 was hammered by coronavirus restrictions.

While a net operating loss of \$108,000 for the current fiscal year was expected, the pandemic-related health-safety restrictions led to a loss more than triple that, with a closing forecast of minus \$381,000.

"We were down 48 percent at all pools," she said.

With uncertainties abounding regarding vaccination disseminations and timelines for reopening social activities the aquatics budget proposal for next fiscal year reflects an operating loss of about \$236,000.

"We will have to rebuild with people getting comfortable using pools," she said.

Cash revenue from daily use fees was also severely reduced, Phillips

said.

While budgeted at \$262,000 this year, cash fees are forecast to close at around \$174,000. Next year's proposed budget estimates that number increasing to \$223,000.

"Private lessons slowed down," she said. "Exercise classes are doing decent but swim lessons took a hit."

Revenue from swim classes, which was budgeted at \$220,000 this year is now forecast to close at \$80,000, while the proposed budget estimates the figure expanding to \$187,000.

"Normally in May, swim lessons are busy, but we feel it will be slow this year to start," she said.

Perrone, while agreeing that rebuilding usage is going to be a pri-

mary challenge, asked what steps could be taken to reduce the projected loss for next year.

"Maybe not open all pools at the same time to reduce staff," he said.

Phillips said a few cost-cutting measures were already enacted this past summer.

"We have shortened some hours ... to reduce expenses," she said.

Perrone advised further scrutiny be paid to next year's budget projections before the board work session on Jan. 19.

"This is a big number," he said.

BEACH CLUB PARKING

See OP Page 8

Second day of FY21-22 talks police issues

Continued from Page 6
qualify as a budget issue for the current year.

"We don't need to get into it now," he said.

Viola concurred and said the proposed budget would be adjusted to reflect a single vehicle acquisition, which could be amended later, contingent on board approval.

NEW CAPITAL

The proposed budget includes \$257,000 in capital additions, including \$68,000 for expanded pickleball courts, \$67,000 for new junior tennis courts, \$27,000 for racquet courts fencing, \$70,000 for T-Docks at the Ocean Pines Yacht Club and \$30,000 for boat ramp gates.

Perrone took issue with the slate of

proposals.

"These spends this year don't qualify for the new capital reserve account," he said. "The purpose of that is to look at projects the board feels we want to accomplish that are multi-year."

Perrone said the projects are reasonable but need to be financed through other means.

Viola said he was under the impression the board had intended the account for

new capital expenditures once approved.

"I can alter the approach if you want," he said. "This is new capital that is attainable in the budget year we're looking at."

OPA Treasurer Doug Parks said further clarification is needed for the process to request use of funds from the new capital reserve account.

"Changes are inevitable but as they come up, how do we want to handle them on a consistent basis?" he said.



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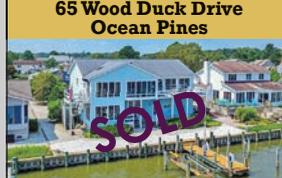
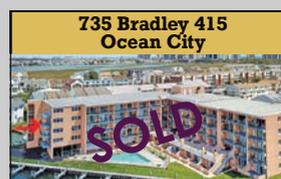
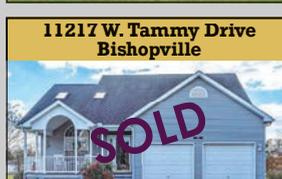


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OP budget meeting closed Friday

Continued from Page 7

Phillips said revenue projections for beach parking next year were on par with current forecasts but unknowns remain for next summer.

"It could be a slower go next summer," she said.

Beach Club parking, which was budgeted for a net operating profit of \$97,000 last summer, is forecast to close at more than \$96,000.

The initial projection for next year is another \$97,000 profit margin.

RACQUET SPORTS

Manklin Meadows Racquet Sports Complex Facilities Manager Tim McMullen and licensed U.S. Tennis Association instructor Terry Underkoffler offered an overview of projected revenues and enhanced marketing strategies.

McMullen said racquet sports, including tennis, pickleball and platform tennis, were less affected by coronavirus than other Pines amenities.

"We averaged 115 people a day through June, July and August," he said. "We've still averaged 55 people a day the last few months."

Underkoffler said after Ocean Pines hosted its first USTA tournament in late September, the hope is to expand that marketing and revenue stream in the future.

"As we grow with tennis tournaments, and tournaments in general, it will be a revenue gatherer," he said.

Underkoffler said the pandemic has caused the U.S. Tennis Association to delay its tournament schedule, with no dates set for when tournaments might resume.

"We're looking at maybe 4-5 tournaments in the summer," he said.

In total, racquet sports are projected for an operating loss of more than \$10,000 next year, while being budgeted for a loss of \$25,000 this year that is currently forecast at \$34,000.

While tennis and platform tennis have proposed budget deficits of roughly \$26,000 and \$4,000 respectively next year, pickleball has a projected profit of about \$20,000.

To help offset those projections, non-resident daily rates for tennis are proposed to increase from \$10 to \$12, with pickleball and platform also slated to increase from \$5 to \$6 next year.

McMullen said improved instructional offerings would help boost revenues next summer.

Perrone suggested taking another pass at tweaking fees for next year to compensate for anticipated losses.

"Those numbers should probably go up if you are looking at an overall

proposed loss of \$10,800 for next year," he said.

To further muddy the fiscal picture, the association just learned that the repair of cracks and repainting pickleball courts and a pair of Har Tru tennis courts could cost \$30,000.

Phillips said the cost is not currently factored in the next fiscal year budget.

"The costs will be less if we address it now," she said.

DRAINAGE

Phillips said the Bainbridge drainage project is projected to begin by early March and should be completed by the end of October.

"Bainbridge is kind of the backbone of future grant opportunities," she said.

Phillips said a state grant of \$549,000 is in the hands of Maryland Department of Natural Resources, with Ocean Pines slated for reimbursement once invoices are provided to Worcester County.

Viola said Ocean Pines has also approved an additional \$300,000 in the current fiscal year budget to cover costs above the grant amount.

"Right now the team is confident there will not be a cost in the fiscal 21-22 budget," he said.

Hospital to offer first Strong Bones Virtual Workshop

(Jan. 14, 2021) Atlantic General Hospital will offer its first-ever Strong Bones Virtual Workshop on Facebook, Jan. 18-22.

Included during the workshop will be a series of posts on the Atlantic General Hospital Facebook page, featuring video presentations from its health experts on a number of osteoporosis-related topics such as risks, screening, nutrition and treatments.

According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation, an estimated 10 million Americans have osteoporosis, and about 80 percent of those are women.

The foundation also reports that approximately one in two women over age 50 will break a bone due to osteoporosis.

The Centers for Prevention and Disease Control describes osteoporosis as a disease with "costly, painful and sometimes deadly consequences."

This event is free and does not require registration. For more information, contact Genie Blake at 410-641-9268 or gblake@atlanticgeneral.org.

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Jan. boards, commissions meetings canceled

Berlin transitions to virtual gatherings, but no urgent matters occur this month

By Ally Lanasa
Staff Writer

(Jan. 14, 2021) All town of Berlin boards and commissions meetings have been canceled for January, given the absence of any urgent matters to discuss, Deputy Town Administrator Mary Bohlen and Planning Director Dave Engelhart said this week.



Zack Tyndall

The meetings last month were canceled as well, as town officials waited until preparations could be made to meet entirely online because of coronavirus concerns.

“The boards and commissions are allowed to start meeting anytime their respective chairperson feels their respective committee or board is capable of transitioning to Zoom,” said Mayor Zackery Tyndall. “We have staff

members who are trained to help facilitate the Zoom meeting process for our members and the public.”

The Berlin Mayor and Council meetings have been operating via Zoom and streamed live on Facebook since Dec. 14.

Engelhart said he is working on the agendas for upcoming Board of Zoning Appeals, Planning Commission and Historic District Commission meetings.

The next Board of Zoning Appeals meeting date has not yet been confirmed. However, the Historic Dis-

trict Commission is scheduled to meet virtually on Feb. 3 at 5:30 p.m. The Planning Commission will meet over Zoom the week after on Feb. 10 at 5:30 p.m.

The Parks Commission is set to meet virtually on March 2 at 5:30 p.m.

According to the January newsletter from town staff, if a public hearing is scheduled, procedures will be in place and announced ahead of time to allow public participation during the live meeting.

For more information, visit berlinmd.gov.

County picks consultant for irrigation system

By Elizabeth Bonin
Staff Writer

(Jan. 14, 2021) The Ocean Pines Association moved closer to adding a wastewater irrigation system to its golf course last Tuesday, when the Worcester County Commissioners chose Hydro Design Inc. as the consultant for evaluating the upgrade cost.

The agreement is to pay the Frederick-based company \$8,800 for consultation services.

The Ocean Pines Association has been considering the upgrade since last year, as irrigation systems have



John Ross

been shown to improve the quality of golf courses and decrease harmful nutrients in nearby waters.

John Ross, the county’s public works deputy director, said one reason he recommended Hydro Design was because it’s in driving distance and has done work on the Eastern Shore. He added that the price for the consultation was reasonable, given that upgrading the system could cost \$2-3 million in

total. When County Commissioner Chip Bertino asked whether the county or the Ocean Pines Association would be paying for the multi-year project, Ross said that responsibility falls on the OPA.

“In discussions with the association, Ocean Pines is going to pay for this,” he said. “They’re either going to pay it via their water sewer bill or they’re going to pay for it via their annual dues or via their rates on the golf course.”

He also said it would be advisable to view the project as an environmental

undertaking for purposes of obtaining grant funding. According to Ross, the project would reduce nutrient discharge into the St. Martin’s River and would improve one of the assets, the golf course, of the association.

“We’re going to reduce the amount of nutrients going into the water,” Ross said. “There are a lot of situations here where we could put a project together that would be very, very beneficial to all involved, and ultimately, it does become the people of Ocean Pines paying for it, even if it’s in their rates.”



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Media Expo honors WCPS students' artwork

Aspects of annual event to take place online because of current covid concerns

By Ally Lanasa
Staff Writer

(Jan. 14, 2021) Since 1975, Worcester County's public schools have celebrated students' creative communication through media and technology to local and global communities with the annual Media Expo.

"In the late 1970s, the Maryland state library media organization began promoting media production in Maryland public schools," said Deb Peccia, a retired county schools media specialist. "The first few years of competition were film festivals and were celebrated at the county, state, and national levels. Technologies that were present at the times were filmstrips, videotaping using Beta

and VHS, 8mm film, and U-film. The film competition became a media festival in the 1980s, when photography was added as an entry category."

In the 1990s, the media festival became Tech Fest with the advent of computer-generated entries, Peccia added.

Although state and national competitions no longer occur, county school librarians continue to celebrate student work at the local level with what is now the Media Expo.

According to the website, Media Expo aims to: "inspire students to try innovative forms of technology as a way to express their talents, knowledge, and understandings; foster a sense of pride and confidence in their technological skills; encourage collaboration between students, teachers, parents and community and allow community members the opportunity to have a greater understanding of [the county school system's]

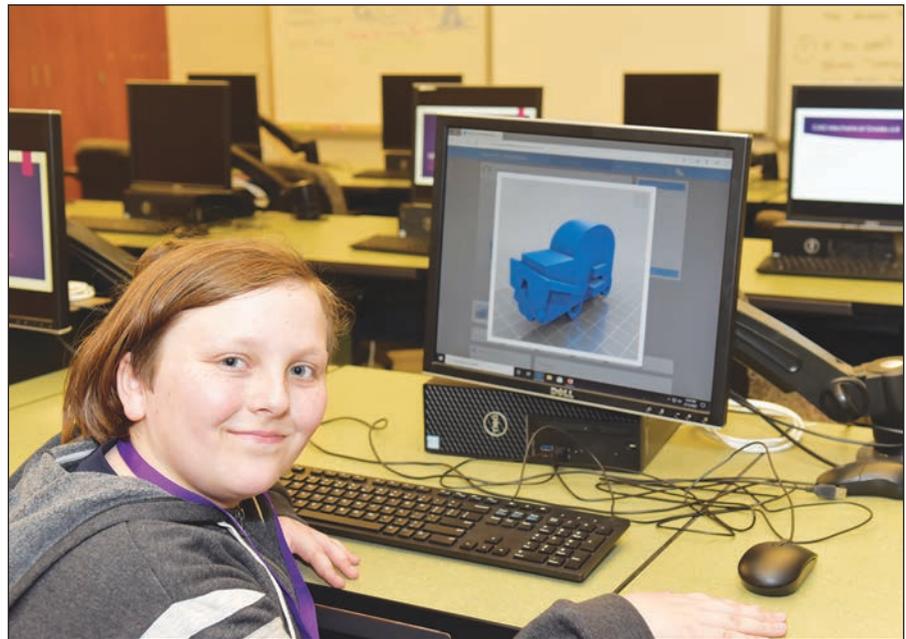


PHOTO COURTESY WORCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Griffin Hagenrater-Gooding, a sixth grader at Pocomoke Middle School, entered the "Through CAD" category during the 2020 Media Expo with his creation "Quaco's Food Place."



PHOTO COURTESY WORCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dorian Messick, a fourth grader at Ocean City Elementary, displays his gold medal for his "Through the Lens" entry called "Best Friends" with Superintendent of Schools Lou Taylor during the 2020 Media Expo.

continuing technology goals."

There are six categories in Media Expo: "Computer Programming," "On Screen," "Online," "On Paper," "Through CAD" and "Through the Lens."

"The Media Expo categories have evolved over the years to better fit the changing technology in our students' lives," said Jennifer Beach, the Pocomoke Middle School media specialist.

"Most recently, 'Computer Programming' and Computer Aided Design (CAD) categories were added, allowing us to showcase our students digital design skills," she continued. "Even categories that have been part of Media Expo since its inception, such as 'Through the Lens,' have evolved to include digital enhancements."

According to the website, "Through the Lens" entries may be the work of an individual, a group or a class. If students from more than one grade division work on an entry, the entry must be entered in the grade division of the oldest student participating.

Students are grouped into grade level bands for each category: PK-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12.

All entries must be submitted using

the online entry form at <https://www.wcpsmediaexpo.com>.

Each Worcester public school with a student population less than 500 can submit four entries in each grade division of each competition. Public schools with a population over 500 in each age division may add an entry for each additional 100 students.

Media Expo entries are due Jan. 15 for Pocomoke Elementary School and Ocean City Elementary School. The other 12 public schools in the county are accepting entries until Jan. 20.

For more information about project deadlines, visit <https://www.wcpsmediaexpo.com/schools>.

Beach said each year, county students submit over 400 entries to Media Expo.

Virtual entry judging will take place between Feb. 11 and Feb. 18.

Jack Cleveland, librarian at Pocomoke High School, said judging will be based on how the content achieves purpose, how suitable the content is to the audience, creativity and originality, organization and structure, overall effectiveness and presentation and appropriate design techniques and

See SIX Page 11

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OP Budget cmte. issues guidance

Six categories for students to enter

Advisory group gathers on Monday to review results of departmental presentations

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(Jan. 14, 2021) After spending more than 12 hours reviewing next year's proposed budget, the Ocean Pines Budget and Finance Committee reconvened on Monday to issue formal guidance for the board of directors before it meets next Tuesday.

Budget Committee Chairman Dick Keiling said General Manager John Viola for the committee's opinion about whether to use any money in excess of this year's budgeted bottom line to pay down prior operating deficits.

"Budget and Finance has said it was important to clear up the prior year loss," he said.

Viola estimated the current operating budget would reflect a surplus of roughly \$650,000 when concluded on April 30.

"It's actually \$162,000 [left] on the balance sheet as of September," he



Doug Parks

said. "We remain firm on that point moving forward."

Factoring out the \$162,000 in past debt, Keiling asked if whatever balance remained could be employed to reduce potential assessment increases next year.

"How do you marry the two so it works?" he said.

Ocean Pines Treasurer Doug Parks said the board previously approved paying off an operational deficit incurred in 2017 over a three-year period.

"We can also look at options to not pay off the entire amount right now," he said.

Still, Parks hesitated about applying the current year's surplus against assessment rates.

"I'm not a big fan of trying to reduce assessments with prior year dollars," he said.

Keiling reiterated the need to use any budget surplus to counter potential assessment rate hikes.

Committee member John O'Connor asked if any planned projects or improvements for next year could be delayed.

"We either increase revenue or decrease expenses to change the increase in assessments," he said.

Committee member George Solyak noted there was a request last week for roughly \$33,000 to repair cracks and repaint pickleball and tennis courts.

"It came in the last day and is not in the original figures," he said.

Solyak said that budget request, as well as roughly \$162,000 for new pickleball and tennis courts, along with fencing and \$70,000 for T-Docks at the Yacht Club could be

moved to the next year.

Committee member Brian Reynolds advocated fiscal conservatism.

"Given the uncertainties, why not let the small surplus ride out and keep it in our back pocket for covid-related problems?" he said.

Keiling said if feasible the estimated \$33,000 for court repairs should be completed this year as costs would likely increase if work is delayed.

"Is there an opportunity to use the surplus and the board could populate the reserves with some of that?" he asked.

Parks said a super majority of two-thirds of board members is required to move a budget surplus to reserve accounts.

Solyak suggested the committee propose what percentages of surplus funds are directed to what ends.

Keiling recommended designating one-third for retained earnings and the bulk to help reduce assessment increases.

Reynolds said the board should ascertain the percentage dedicated in either direction.

Committee member Tom Piatti took issue with spending \$70,000 to install T-docks at the Yacht Club.

"We know there will be a return on investment but it's not a high priority," he said.

Piatti said the planned courts expansion at the Racquet Sports Center should be considered a higher priority.

In closing, Keiling said the committee would recommend any current year budget surplus amount be stashed in retained earnings, with specific allocations left to the boards' discretion. The committee also proposed the T-dock project should be ranked lower in priority.

Continued from Page 10 resources.

"Media Expo judges are community members who volunteer their time each year to evaluate and provide feedback to our students," Cleveland said.

He added that the judges are professionals involved in areas of journalism, photography and graphic design, as well as members of the schools staff and faculty.

Brittany Tignor, librarian at Snow Hill High School, said the event coordinators are staying true to traditions while adapting for coronavirus concerns.

"This year, we are still providing students an opportunity to share their work with the community and receive recognition for their hard work, but all events will be held virtually," Tignor said. "From 3-6 p.m. on Feb. 25, students, families, and community members will be able to view projects and entries and participate in a virtual event."

The county school system librarians will moderate the chat of the virtual event.

"At 6 p.m., the award ceremony will begin," she added. "Gold and silver medal winners will be celebrated during a Facebook premiere event. Winning entries will be highlighted, and students will receive their medals from the librarians following the ceremony."

In addition, Worcester County media specialists recognize one or more students with The Media Specialists' Award.

"This award is reserved for any entry of exceptional quality or an entry which demonstrates the use of technology in a highly creative or sophisticated way to suit its purpose," said Beau Williams, librarian at Snow Hill Middle School. "The award may also be given to a student whose body of work in the Worcester County Media Expo has shown continuous growth and excellence."

Hundreds receive holiday gifts from Worcester GOLD

(Jan. 14, 2021) Worcester County GOLD, Inc. (Giving Other Lives Dignity), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing emergency assistance for Worcester County residents in times of crisis, is celebrating another successful Helping Hands for the Holidays Program.

Despite many challenges, the community rallied together to make sure wishes came true for neighbors in need.

"In a year filled with uncertainty, one constant has always been GOLD's supporters" said Executive Director Nicholas Cranford. "We're so fortunate to have such a dedicated network of sponsors, donors, volunteers and community partners. With their help, GOLD provided holiday gifts for 352 Worcester County families in need, including 649 children and 74 vulnerable adults. As a small organization, we could never have such an impact without help from local churches, business, organizations, clubs and individuals."

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Snapshots



PHOTO COURTESY D.J. LANDIS, SR.

KIWANIS GIVES

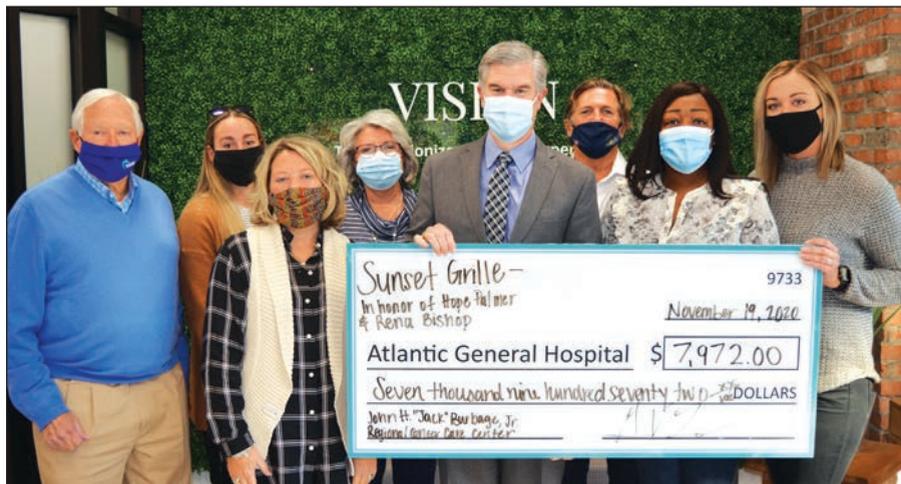
In the spirit of Giving Tuesday on Dec. 1, the Kiwanis Club of Greater Ocean Pines/Ocean City, represented by Steve Cohen, president, presents a large supply of handcrafted afghan blankets to the Lower Shore Shelter in Princes Anne. Accepting the donation on behalf of the shelter is Valerie Drummond, house manager. The blankets were donated to Kiwanis by Josephine Alexander, wife of the late Jack Alexander who was a former member of the local club.



GREG ELLISON/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

HEARTY

Ocean Pines resident Julian Zimmer, 14, exhibits textbook form while hovering low in the bowl during chilly weather on Saturday at the skate park in White Horse Park.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

DONATION

Sunset Grille's annual Pink Party, in honor of Hope Palmer, and its inaugural Bishop Broadbill Bash, in honor of Rena Bishop, raised \$7,972. The proceeds from both events benefit Atlantic General Hospital's John H. "Jack" Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center. Pictured, from left, are Jack Burbage, past chairman of the Board of Trustees at Atlantic General Hospital and CEO of Blue Water Development; Caroline Phillips, development officer at Atlantic General Hospital; Hope Palmer, Blue Water Development; Mary Mullins, director of the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center; Michael Franklin, president and CEO of Atlantic General Hospital; and Buddy Trala, Rena Bishop and Hillary Mozeik, of Sunset Grille.



GREG ELLISON/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

HEAVY WEATHER

Following high precipitation levels last weekend, drainage pipes in Ocean Pines running underneath Carrollton Lane and Mumfords Landing Road were at maximum capacity.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

TREE SALE

Taylor Bank employees, family members and students help sell Christmas trees for the Ocean City-Berlin Rotary Club at its tree lot on Route 589. Pictured, from left, are Chase Ponton, Tammy McCabe, T.J. Jones, Liam Boyle and Debbie Jones.



LAP ROBES DONATION

The General Levin Winder Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution donated lap robes to the Coastal Hospice "We Honor Veterans" program at the Macky and Pam Stansell House in Ocean Pines. Pictured are Chapter Regent Gail Weldin and Coastal Hospice Director of Business Development Bob Miller, Sr. SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Worcester Youth to host annual celebration

(Jan. 14, 2021) During Worcester Youth & Family Counseling Services' 45th annual celebration, the organization will focus to what has been gained in 2020.

Worcester Youth adapted to the changes the pandemic imposed and continued serving the community with the help of some individuals, who donated their time and services to contribute to its mission.

Worcester Youth's annual celebration will look a little different this year and will be hosted virtually on Jan. 15 at noon during a recorded Zoom meeting. It will be posted on YouTube for viewing after.

The organization will highlight what it accomplished despite the pandemic, and honor those who helped make it possible.

Every year Worcester Youth dedicates a "Sun Award" to people and organizations in the community who have contributed to the organization in significant ways.

This year three people will be given a Sun Award for their contributions to WYFCS and the community – Gee Williams, Robin Walter and Adriano "Bubba" Almony.

Williams, former mayor of Berlin, will be honored as an "Outstanding Supporter."

He has devoted much time over the past 45 years to civic and political service to improve the quality of life for his community.

He served for 12 years as Berlin's mayor until this fall. Under his leadership, he has supported Worcester

Youth in many ways.

From being available for simple phone calls to advocating for Worcester Youth's community office in Berlin, Williams has been a significant part of why the organization is what it is today.

Most significantly, he supported Town of Berlin funding for the organization's youth programs and has been a leading influence with the Berlin Youth Club.

Walter is being recognized as the "Outstanding Contributor" Honoree.

Walter was born and raised in Seattle, Washington, and moved to Maryland after retiring from 38 years in public school education.

She became a Worcester Youth Board member in January 2016, and

then served as its president from July of 2019-July 2020.

In this role, she assisted with fundraising, agency planning and staff support. She helped develop the most recent strategic plan for the agency and helped guide Worcester Youth in a positive direction to meet its mission and vision.

Her leadership and compassion helped the agency remain stable and productive.

Almony will receive the "Distinguished Advocate" Honoree award.

Almony was born in Hanover, Pennsylvania, however, he grew up in Ocean City, and graduated from Stephen Decatur High School in 2012.

He is a celebrity bodyguard, founder of Bubba's Celebrity Basketball Game, humanitarian, and U.S. chairman for Bodyguards Against Bullying.

In his mission to give back to his hometown, Almony has been very supportive of Worcester Youth and Family. He has promoted its mission and vision through social media and his podcast.

He also hosted a presentation for children in its youth programs and the community about bullying and the importance of having a mentor.

Almony has been a true advocate for the agency, and has inspired youth to be kind, have healthy relationships, and find positive support systems.

Mentors recognized during January

(Jan. 14, 2021) January is National Mentor Month, a month set aside to shine the spotlight on individuals who donate their time to make a difference.

Worcester Youth & Family Counseling Services works with a number of youth in grades 1-12, who could benefit from the support of mentors.

Currently, Worcester Youth has over 30 mentors who are donating

their time and skills to the lives of those they mentor, but there is still a great opportunity.

Mentors have a powerful impact on youth in many areas, from education, and careers, to personal, reducing the need for more intensive treatments.

According to youth.gov, young people who have the support of a

mentor have healthier lifestyle choices and relationships, enhanced self-esteem, and improved behaviors both at home and in school.

When matched appropriately, mentorship can have a positive, lasting impact.

Anyone interested in becoming a mentor should send an email to shine@gowoyo.org.

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Three-day blood drive at convention center

(Jan. 14, 2021) The Ocean City Blood Drive will be held over three days for the first time in its 22-year history at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center on 40th Street in order to comply with federal and state covid-19 restrictions, including social distancing.

One thing that has not changed is that Blood Bank of Delmarva and the Town of Ocean City will mark National Blood Donor Month, celebrated each January for the last 50 years.

The three-day Ocean City Blood Drive is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 19, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Wednesday, Jan. 20, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Thursday, Jan. 21, 8 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. in the Roland E. Powell Convention Center Dockside Hall.

"Every January for decades the Ocean City blood drive has helped us rebuild the blood supply after the holidays," Blood Bank of Delmarva Di-

rector Donor Recruitment Marie Forrestal said. "The drive this year is even more important as covid-19 has devastated the blood supply. We are looking forward to seeing donors of all ages at the blood drive. It truly has always been such a community bonded event which we have expanded to three days for social distancing as we follow all CDC guidelines."

Blood Bank of Delmarva would like to give special thanks to the Town of Ocean City, the Chamber of Commerce and the Ocean City Lions Club, long-time blood drive partners, for helping to make the blood drive successful year after year.

The blood drive includes an annual presentation of a \$500 check from the Ocean City Lions Club while several realtors donate and/or recruit donors.

"The Town of Ocean City is fortunate to be able to provide a blood

drive for Ocean City residents and surrounding areas," Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan said. "Is it important now more than ever. With the covid-19 pandemic, the need is high. Please consider giving blood, it could save a life."

In addition to Ocean City and the aforementioned entities, this drive has been supported through the years by the generous, local businesses and merchants that financially sponsor and promote the Ocean City Blood Drive on an annual basis.

To book an appointment, call 1-888-8-BLOOD-8 or visit www.delmarvablood.org. Donors are asked to only make an appointment if they are feeling healthy and well, with no cold or flu-like symptoms and no fever. Donors' temperatures will be taken upon entry to the blood drive, per covid-19 protocol.

Blood Bank of Delmarva is a not-

for-profit 501(c)(3) community blood bank with a simple mission: saving lives. The Blood Bank of Delmarva achieves its mission every day by providing safe blood and blood products to all 19 hospitals in Delmarva and relies on about 80,000 volunteer blood donors each year to ensure patients' needs are met.

The Blood Bank of Delmarva distributes over 130,000 blood products annually and operates four donor centers. Each year, the Blood Bank of Delmarva hosts over 600 blood drives. These blood drives would not be possible without the commitment of community organizations that volunteer to serve as sponsors or coordinators, which provides opportunities for blood donors to give blood and help patients in need.

For more information, visit delmarvablood.org or follow at [facebook.com/delmarvabloodbank](https://www.facebook.com/delmarvabloodbank).

OPA honors employees for service

(Jan. 14, 2021) Ten Ocean Pines employees were honored for their service time of five, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years during a virtual ceremony last month.

Honorees:

Five years:

Tammy Cherrix (Police)
Katelynne Hunt (Recreation and Parks)

Nate Wilkins (Public Works)

10 years:

Debbie Donahue (Recreation and Parks)

Lisa Jarman (Public Works)

15 years:

Earl Hall (Public Works)

20 years:

Jessica Conaway (Recreation and Parks)

Nobie Violante (Public Works)

25 years:

James Brasure (Police)

Robert Grant (Public Works)

Department heads weighed in on what each veteran worker has meant

to their staff.

Police:

Chief Leo Ehrisman said Cherrix finished a full career in the emergency communications field before joining Ocean Pines Police.

"She currently serves as a full-time emergency dispatcher, our departmental secretary, and office administrator and records clerk, as well as the chief's administrative assistant," he said.

Ehrisman said Brasure has taken on many rolls during his 25 years with the Association.

"Brasure is one of the department's senior officers that aids in field training and instructions for new graduate officers, as well as being a crime scene tech," he said. "Brasure has been trained in many fields, such as advance interview and interrogation methods and other advanced training that makes him a great asset to the department and the community."

Public Works:

Public Works Director Eddie Wells said Wilkins started on the grounds crew and worked his way up the ladder.

"He makes signs in our sign shop and has done some IT work for us. Most recently he was moved to CPI as an inspector, where he is doing a great job," Wells said.

Wells said Jarman previously worked at the Administration front desk and now handles phone calls and purchase processing for Public Works.

"She always has an upbeat attitude," he said.

Hall serves on the drainage crew and previously worked on mowing in Ocean Pines easements, Wells said.

"He is very dependable," Wells added.

Violante is the Public Works operations manager and Wells' second in command.

"Nobie has been here longer than



PHOTO COURTESY OCEAN PINES ASSOCIATION

James Brasure, left, was among the 10 Ocean Pines employees honored for their service time during a virtual ceremony last month. Brasure has been with the police department for 25 years. He is pictured with Chief Leo Ehrisman.

I have and he is one of the most reliable and dedicated employees I have," Wells said. "He is in charge of the daily operations, scheduling the work that needs to be done. He is also in charge when I am out. He is knowledgeable in all aspects that Public Works is responsible for."

Grant has been with the Associa-
See STAFF Page 15

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SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

MONTHLY CRAFTER

The Pine'eer Craft Club of Ocean Pines has announced Barbara Papavero Loffler as the January Crafter of the Month. Loffler, a resident of Ocean Pines since 1996, recently joined the Pine'eer Craft Club and has combined her love of flowers and nature with expressions of inspiration and transferred that into photographs. She enjoys taking pictures, mostly outdoors at the beach or in a park, and loves to mark the change of seasons. View her photographs and other crafters' handmade items at the Artisan Gift Shop in White Horse Park, 239 Ocean Parkway in Ocean Pines. The shop is open every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Staff recognized in ceremony

Continued from Page 14
tion for 25 years and started under the food and beverage operation, later moving to Public Works, Wells said.

"Now, he is a very big part of taking care of the Racquet Sports complex," Wells said. "Bob always does what is asked of him."

Recreation and Parks:

Recreation and Parks Director Debbie Donahue said Hunt "has been here five years working directly with the customers, handling day-to-day processing of registrations and Marina processing, and she has taken on new responsibilities with our new software program."

"She welcomes everyone with a smile," Donahue said.

Donahue said of Conaway, "Jessica has been here for 20 years working directly with the customers." She also handles registration and Marina processing.

"Jessica has a great working relationship with the Ocean Pines community organizations," Donahue said.

"I am lucky to have both employees, with their experience and dedication to my department and to our community," she added.

Ocean Pines General Manager John Viola said Donahue worked her way up from program supervisor, to managing a busy and complex operation at Recreation and Parks.

"We are grateful for the service of everyone on our team, and Debbie has definitely been one of the standouts," Viola said. "Debbie has taken on a lot of responsibility and accomplished a great deal during her time

as a director, and I appreciate all the hard work she's put in. She's a wonderful asset to our team."

Obituary

JOHN DALE SMACK, JR.
Berlin

John Dale Smack, Jr., 86, of Berlin, departed this life on Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021, at Tidal-Health Peninsula Regional in Salisbury.

Born in Berlin, he was the son of the late John Dale Smack, Sr. and Rosie Henry Smack.



John Smack, Jr.

The Town of Berlin's first Black council member, Mr. Smack served the town from 1980-1988. A veteran of the United States Air Force, he was a bus contractor for 52 years.

He was a member of St. Paul United Methodist Church, in Berlin, where he served as a member of the United Methodist Men and Men's Ministry and past trustee.

He was also a member of the American Legion Duncan Showell Post No. 231, Lily of the Valley Eastern Star No. 47, SHORE UP! Inc., and Board of Directors of the Berlin Heritage Foundation Inc.

He was a former member of the Booker T. Washington Lodge No. 87 F. & A.M. and past detachment commander of the Sons of the American Legion.

Loving memories will be cherished by: his wife, Leola Smack; a son, John Dale Smack III (Sheryl); a daughter, Velda Henry (Patrick); four grandchildren, one niece, several cousins, other relatives, in-laws and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was also preceded in death by a son, Kevin L. Smack.

Mr. Smack will lie in repose on Saturday, Jan. 16, 2021, from 10 a.m. to noon at First Baptist Church Family Life & Cultural Center, 528 Booth Street, Salisbury. The funeral service will begin at noon. Rev. Peggy Briggs will officiate.

Interment will follow at St. Paul's Cemetery, 10543 Assateague Road, Berlin. If you wish to sign the guest-book, please do so online.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in memory of John D. Smack, Jr. to: Duncan Showell SAL Squadron #231, 104 Showell Street, Berlin, Maryland 21811; or the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, 1324 Belmont Avenue, Suite 401, Salisbury, Maryland 21804.

To send a flower arrangement to the family of John Dale Smack, Jr, visit www.lewiswatsonfuneral-home.com/obituary/john-smack-jr.

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Opinion

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

Hold that excess cash until picture clears up

Budget projections for the year ahead are about as solid as unset Jell-O, given the great unknowns of an economy crushed by the pandemic and the erratic nature of this society's commitment to controlling its spread.

When it comes to forecasting revenues for 12 months, broad assumptions are about the best anyone can do in these volatile times, as accountants must rely on what-if scenarios based on opinions and guesses.

In many respects, revenue budgets for the year ahead have become more of a numbers hunch than a numbers crunch.

This is why the Ocean Pines Board of Directors should hold onto its excess cash from this year instead of applying against any increase there might be in assessments in the new fiscal year.

These days, no one can assume when this pandemic misery might end, or how a long-sequestered citizenry might react when it does.

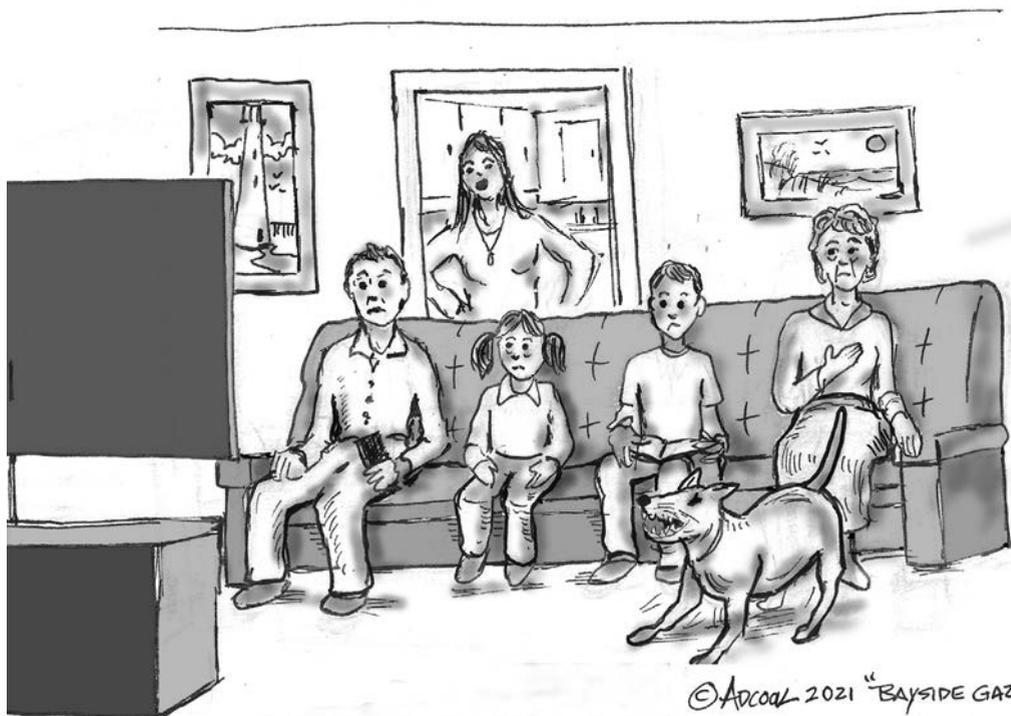
One theory goes that if the vaccination program can be completed by June, the situation might return to normal by summer, just in time to catch the seasonal wave of business. Other disagree and believe another year will pass before economic stability is restored.

Choosing between these two beliefs is more a matter of faith and instinct and optimism versus pessimism. The evidence doesn't exist to support either line of thinking.

As a result, exercising caution and not earmarking cash for a specific purpose when it may be needed for more critical problems later is a hedge against the possibility of unforeseen circumstances arising later in the year.

Ratepayers aren't going to want to see assessments increase and doing something about that is certainly attractive. Still, they also expect the board to be prepared to meet the challenges that might lie ahead without troubling them about it.

Being ready and not needing the money is what everyone hopes for, but needing the money and not having it would be the worst of all possible outcomes.



"Dan, turn off the news. You're scaring the children...and my Mother...and the dog."

Letters

Writer suggests Harris resign

Editor,

On Jan. 6, we watched in horror when a terrorist mob stormed the Capitol attempting to overturn the result of the November election.

The mob was incited by false claims about the election and the Jan. 6 process in Congress from both President Trump and Representative Andy Harris.

Even after the attack on the Capitol, Mr. Harris continued by raising his second objection in voting to challenge the Pennsylvania results.

The next day Mr. Harris continued to voice support on his Facebook page for searching for evidence of voter fraud.

The Jan. 8 *Ocean City Today* editorial, laid out a factual, easy to understand explanation why the federal government has no authority to establish a commission to look at results of elections held in any particular state in an attempt to look for fraud (because it would "federalize elections, blow apart the concept of state's rights,

etc.)

With both words and actions Mr. Harris and others have led supporters to falsely believe that the election results are not true and that there is a reason to take action to keep the current administration in power.

The results of these words and actions led to much destruction in the Capitol and on the grounds, to offices of elected officials, to scores of injuries and sadly even to several deaths of those same supporters.

Mr. Harris has proven that he does not consider the intelligence or personal safety of the citizens of his district, and he has also proven that he does not represent the values and principles of this district. Mr. Harris should resign.

*Gail Jankowski
Berlin*

Asks GOP leaders to be accountable

*** The letter was sent to senators Ted Cruz, Josh Hawley, Mitch McConnell and Cindy Hyde-Smith, as well as Congressman Andy Harris, and forwarded to Bayside Gazette***

Dear Senator,

Don't dare excuse yourself from taking action to hold Trump accountable for this insurrection by claiming it will further divide the country.

How can we get any more divided?

This president put Mike Pence and Nancy Pelosi and every single legislator, staff and policeman in harm's way.

Five people died as a direct result of Trump's actions and your own actions. And Trump left you all stranded, and never even asked about Pence or Pelosi's safety.

For God's sake and the sake of your soul, condemn Trump and the actions of the radical right extremist factions that you have all emboldened and encouraged.

Let us be clear that the majority of the 70 million people who voted for Trump do not support the insurrection of the government.

They support conservative Republican values. You knew the truth from the day of the election that there was no voter fraud.

By not acknowledging
Continued on Page 17

BAYSIDE GAZETTE

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Comptroller extends business tax deadlines

(Jan. 14, 2021) Comptroller Peter Franchot announced this week that his agency has extended filing and payment deadlines for certain Maryland business taxes and quarterly estimated income tax returns and

payments that would be due in January, February and March 2021 until April 15.

The action is similar to an extension granted last year to businesses during the early stages of the covid-19 pandemic. No interest or penalties will be assessed and there is no need to file a request for extension.

“My directive for a tax forbearance that is interest- and penalty-free is a direct and immediate economic stimulus for Maryland businesses and

workers — a decision that we estimate keeps more than \$1 billion in consumers’ pockets and helps businesses keep their lights on,” Franchot said.

Businesses and self-employed individuals or independent contractors with estimated income tax returns and payments due on Jan. 15, 2021 also will be granted an extension until April 15.

“As businesses await approval of applications for grants and loans, re-

ceipt of funds and additional federal government action, these tax extensions immediately alleviate financial pressures during challenging times,” Franchot said. “Just like last year when we gave businesses a breather, after 90 days, taxpayers will remit what is due, ensuring this action is budget neutral for the State of Maryland.”

Employers must complete their 2020 withholding tax returns and payments due by Jan. 31, 2021, ensuring that W-2s will be delivered on time for taxpayers to file when the tax season begins at the end of January.

Any state withholding returns and payments originally due between Feb. 1, and April 14, 2021 may be submitted by April 15, 2021 without incurring interest and penalties.

Employers must still file and pay Federal withholding taxes.

The extension applies to business taxes administered by the comptroller: sales and use, admissions and amusement, alcohol, tobacco, and motor fuel tax, as well as tire recycling fee and bay restoration fee returns and payments with due dates between Jan. 1, and April 14.

Franchot also sent a letter to IRS Commissioner Charles Rettig requesting the same forbearance period for federal monthly business tax payments.

Letters

Continued from Page 16

Biden as President-elect you validated the fears and concerns about voter fraud. You are supposed to be a leader.

Your job is to explain the facts to your constituents, not to remain mute to pacify them. And you have done this for self-serving reasons: fear of Trump’s wrath, and fear of being primaried.

The GOP and Mitch McConnell are the sources of much of the misinformation provided to your constituents. Every time one of you repeated any of the numerous false claims made by Trump, you violated your oath and you contributed to the demonization of all Democrats and the division of our country.

Our enemies couldn’t have harmed us more.

*Jan Adamchak
Berlin*

Worcester Youth & Family to delay ‘Winter Blues’ offering

(Jan. 14, 2021) Due to the rise in concern for covid-19, Worcester Youth & Family Counseling Services will be postponing its Nominate a Family for a “Winter Blues Staycation.”

The organization wishes to continue encouraging mental wellness and self-care however, it must put the safety of the community members first.

Worcester Youth will continue to prepare its Parent Survival Toolboxes, filled with items to help par-

ents relax and cope at home during these tough winter months. Some of the items included are movie rental gift cards, snacks and at-home spa items.

Worcester Youth and Family Counseling Services’ mission is to empower all people, of all ages, toward leading capable, purposeful, responsible, fulfilled lives in healthy families and communities.

For more information, visit <http://gowoyo.org> or call the Berlin office at 410-641-4598.



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2021 - 2022 SCHOOL SYSTEM CALENDAR
CALENDAR PROPOSAL #1: EARLY RELEASE



Month	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
AUGUST		1	2	3	4	5	6
SEPTEMBER			1	2	3	4	5
OCTOBER					1	2	3
NOVEMBER						1	2
DECEMBER							1
JANUARY							
FEBRUARY							
MARCH							
APRIL							
MAY							
JUNE							

CALENDAR LEGEND
 Yellow - New Teacher Orientation
 Red - Schools/Offices Closed
 Blue - Early Dismissal for Students
 Green - Schools Closed for Students
 Orange - Inclement Weather Make-Up Days (if needed)
 End of a Marking Period

NOTES
 Worcester County Public Schools has identified three (3) inclement weather days in this calendar. Beyond those three days, the school system will not close for inclement weather, but will transition to distance learning.

2021 - 2022 SCHOOL SYSTEM CALENDAR
CALENDAR PROPOSAL #2: LONGER/MORE FREQUENT BREAKS



Month	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
AUGUST		1	2	3	4	5	6
SEPTEMBER			1	2	3	4	5
OCTOBER					1	2	3
NOVEMBER						1	2
DECEMBER							1
JANUARY							
FEBRUARY							
MARCH							
APRIL							
MAY							
JUNE							

CALENDAR LEGEND
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NOTES
 Worcester County Public Schools has identified three (3) inclement weather days in this calendar. Beyond those three days, the school system will not close for inclement weather, but will transition to distance learning.

The Worcester County Board of Education has two academic calendar proposals to consider for 2021-22.

COURTESY WORCESTER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

WCPS seeks feedback on calendar proposals

(Jan. 14, 2021) The Worcester County Board of Education is seeking feedback from parents, students, staff and the Worcester County community on the two school system calendar proposals for the 2021-2022

school year. The first proposal features an early release in June, while the second proposal has more frequent and longer breaks, resulting in the extended summer break starting on June 21.

Anyone wishing to participate in the survey can do so through Jan. 29. To participate in the survey, visit the school system website at www.worcesterk12.org. At the conclusion of the survey, all

results will be compiled and presented to the superintendent and the Board of Education at its regular meeting in February. At that time, the Board of Education will vote on the superintendent's recommended calendar.

Arts Council hosts contest about healing through art

(Jan. 14, 2021) The Worcester County Arts Council is hosting an art contest to promote mental health and well-being awareness during the pandemic.

offerings this year will be to create opportunities, build connections and to provide resources that will help communities stay resilient and begin the process of healing through arts and creative experiences.

Virtual boating safety course

(Jan. 14, 2021) The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is offering a virtual Maryland Basic Boating Safety Course, Feb. 2-4, from 6-9 p.m.

regulations, and common marine maintenance.

Although public health actions such as social distancing are necessary, it can make people feel isolated and increase stress and anxiety. The Arts Council believes that art is a great motivation for a positive change.

For the Arts & Healing Contest, the Arts Council is seeking artists to share their stories about art and healing through the arts.

The Maryland Safe Boating Certificate is required for all boat operators born after July 1, 1972, and is awarded after successful completion of the course.

The cost is \$20 for all three evenings. Checks should be made payable to: "US-GCAUX 12-05" and mailed to: USCGAUX 12-05, P.O. Box 1682, Berlin, Maryland 21811. Payment via PayPal is also accepted.

Throughout time, one of the fundamental responsibilities of arts and artists has been to create art that shines a light on the issues of the day in a way that helps make sense of the world around us, Anna Mullis, Arts Council's executive director, said.

To enter the contest, artists should submit an image of an original piece of artwork that sends a positive message of healing, along with a written story that gives context to their artwork, written from a positive perspective that will serve as inspiration and hope.

The class includes piloting in local waters, tying nautical knots, foul weather tactics, legal issues, updated Maryland

Register or get more information by calling Barry Cohen at 410-935-4807, or email CGAUXOC@Gmail.com

The main focus of the Worcester County Arts Council's programming and

The written piece can be a short statement or full-length personal story.

Send all submissions to HealingArtsWCAC@gmail.com. Artists should include their name and contact information.

guest artist to select three winners that leave the biggest impact to the theme of Mental Health and Healing through the Arts.

All submissions will be displayed and shared on the Arts Council's website and social media platforms. Submission deadline is Jan. 27. After all submissions are collected, the council will have a

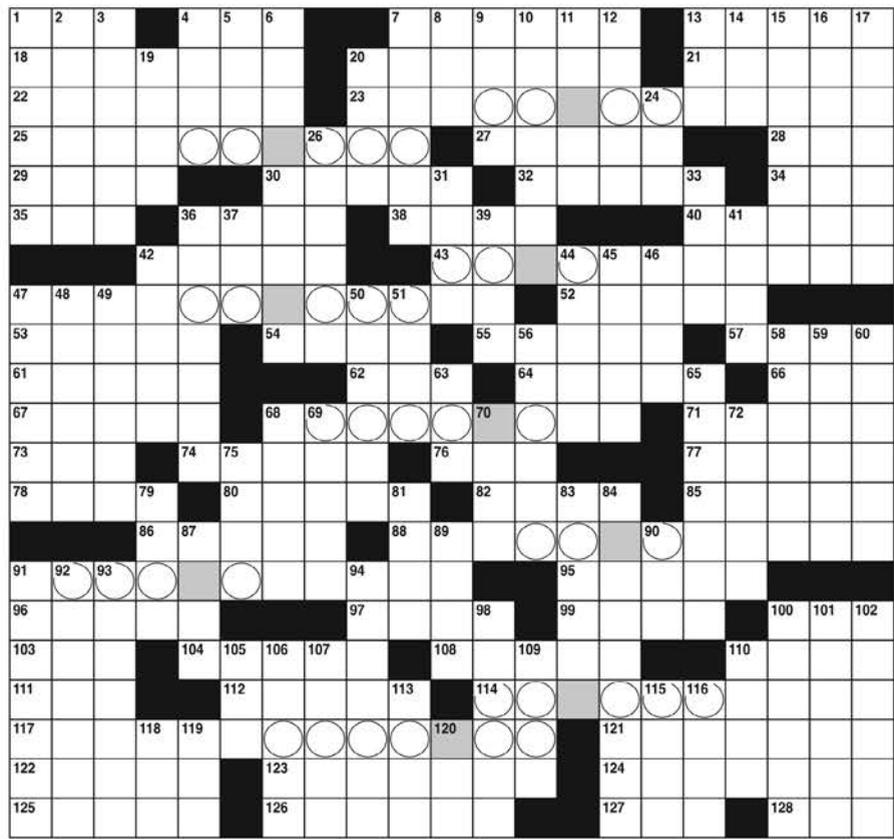
The winners will receive monetary awards and will be announced by Feb. 13. For more information about the contest, visit www.worcestercountycouncil.org.

Puzzles

BUSTING MOVES BY PAOLO PASCO / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Paolo Pasco, of San Diego, is a junior at Harvard studying computer science. He sold his first crossword to The Times five years ago, when he was 15. With this being his 20th puzzle for the paper, the number of his Times puzzles has already reached his age. Paolo's crosswords have appeared in many places, including The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, the crossword-specific Fireball and his own blog, Grids These Days. — W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Ocean motion
 - 4 [I expected better from you!]
 - 7 Tracking systems
 - 13 Makes out, in Manchester
 - 18 Stuffed and fried cornmeal pocket, in Mexican cuisine
 - 20 Lizzo or Lorde
 - 21 ___-hole
 - 22 Amazon, e.g.
 - 23 Title for Iran's Ali Khamenei
 - 25 Tailored blouse style
 - 27 Pieces of pentathlon equipment
 - 28 Piece of biathlon equipment
 - 29 Outdoor wedding rental
 - 30 Some reusable bags
 - 32 Give a refill
 - 34 Poet Limón
 - 35 Yearbook sect.
 - 36 Item lugged up a hill
 - 38 Gardener's supply
 - 40 Alphabetically first member of the Baseball Hall of Fame
 - 42 Dull yellowish brown
 - 43 Subject of some teen gossip sessions
 - 47 Sure-footed alpine climber
- DOWN**
- 1 Discharges
 - 2 Hassle
 - 3 Genius
 - 4 Not be on the level
 - 5 Anxiously worry
 - 6 Title nickname in a 1984 sports movie
 - 7 Courses
 - 8 WeChat or KakaoTalk
 - 9 Very serious
 - 10 With skill
 - 11 Shakespeare character who cries "Then I defy you, stars!"
- ACROSS**
- 52 React to, as an online joke
 - 53 "I wish I could ___ that" ("Ick")
 - 54 Document that never lacks a title
 - 55 Divert
 - 57 Solid green ball in un juego de billar
 - 61 It's ground-breaking
 - 62 Way overcharge, so to speak
 - 64 Vape shop inventory
 - 66 Sci-fi's Dr. Zaius, for one
 - 67 Even a bit
 - 68 Bakery item that's often messy
 - 71 Lavishes love (on)
 - 73 Part of R.S.V.P.
 - 74 Business that might hold a blowout sale?
 - 76 Common food drive donation
 - 77 "Julius Caesar" role
 - 78 Lhasa ___
 - 80 Necklace components
 - 82 Parts of volcanoes
 - 85 2007 No. 1 Alicia Keys album
 - 86 Not keep
 - 88 Caribbean capital
 - 91 Kind of test question
 - 95 Some video-making devices
 - 96 Rod who won four Wimbledon
 - 97 "The very ___!"
 - 99 Yellow bills in Monopoly
 - 100 Lobster-catching aid?
 - 103 Holiday preceder
- DOWN**
- 104 Choose to participate
 - 108 Award won twice by Hammerstein, fittingly
 - 110 Horror director ___ Saul Guerrero
 - 111 Contraction that omits a "v"
 - 112 0 to 60, e.g.
 - 114 Proceeds breezily
 - 117 What a spike goes over
 - 121 Not black and white
 - 122 Early computer
 - 123 "Encore!"
 - 124 "The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up" tidying method
 - 125 Take care of
 - 126 "Well, so's your face!," e.g.
 - 127 The antagonist Bellwether from Disney's "Zootopia," e.g.
 - 128 Ask for a treat, say
- ACROSS**
- 12 Power-saving mode
 - 13 "___ Used to Be Mine" (song from "Waitress")
 - 14 Long of Hollywood
 - 15 "My guess is ..."
 - 16 Realm for comic-book fans, say
 - 17 Damascenes, e.g.
 - 19 Gardener's supply
 - 20 "Over here!"
 - 24 "Geaux Tigers!" sch.
 - 26 Liquid in a first-aid kit
 - 31 Noodles sometimes served with tsuyu sauce
 - 33 Onetime sunscreen ingredient
 - 36 Small Jewish communities of old
 - 37 SoCal baseball team, on scoreboards
 - 39 Scintilla
 - 41 Secondary social media accounts, in brief
 - 42 Mournful sound
 - 44 Fiddle with a ukulele?
 - 45 Woman on W.W. II-era posters
 - 46 Cassini who created the so-called "Jackie look"
 - 47 Simba's father in "The Lion King"
 - 48 How detectives may act
 - 49 Orders from regulars
 - 50 Breaking or entering, say
 - 51 Leslie ___ Jr., member of the original "Hamilton" cast
 - 56 Not joke around
 - 58 Enjoys a home-cooked meal
 - 59 Poison-treating plant
 - 60 Bagel choice
 - 63 ___ World Service
 - 65 Digital camera memory holders
 - 68 G-rated, say
 - 69 You might pass on them
 - 70 Apt surname for a mechanic
 - 72 Palm Springs, e.g.
 - 75 Group with the hits "Honey, Honey" and "Money, Money, Money"
 - 79 Big brute
 - 81 Went fast
 - 83 Cocktail with a rhyming name
 - 84 Tinder action that expresses strong interest
 - 87 Other: Sp.
 - 89 Certain pie crust flavor
 - 90 Wok, e.g.
 - 91 Covers of vintage music?
 - 92 "Try it!"
 - 93 Sit on
 - 94 Part of an aircraft that helps reduce drag
 - 98 Put forward
 - 100 H.S. class with dissections
 - 101 Tune out
 - 102 Semi
 - 105 Stick one's nose in
 - 106 Small drum
 - 107 Cockamamie
 - 109 Actress Blanchett
 - 110 Latch (onto)
 - 113 Muppet who sings in the "Try, Try Again" song
 - 115 When it's driving, you might not want to drive
 - 116 Unwanted breakout
 - 118 Back muscle, in brief
 - 119 Prefix with warrior
 - 120 Negative conjunction



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

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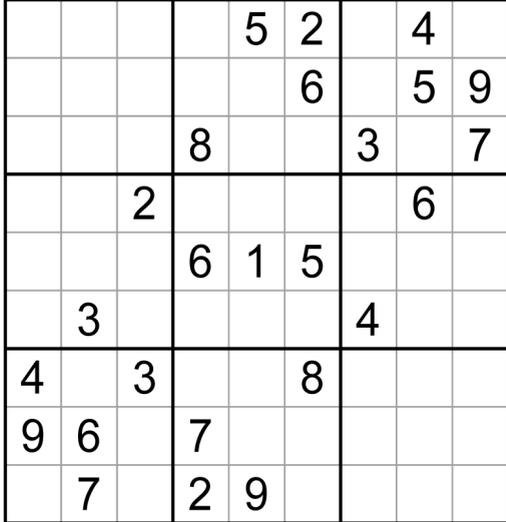
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HARD - 12

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

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



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., Jan. 14

CPAP MASK FITTING

Atlantic General Hospital Sleep Disorders Diagnostic Center, 9733 Healthway Drive. Free mask fitting clinic for patients who are having trouble adjusting to their CPAP equipment. By appointment only: Robin Rohlffing, 410-641-9726.

BERLIN RESTAURANT WEEK

Many restaurants will be offering carry-out options to keep participants safe. Check the event on Facebook for menus as they come in. Dine 3 Times to Win is back. Staple copies of 3 receipts from 3 different participating restaurants to the entry card and drop into the collection box located at the Berlin Welcome Center. Prizes are restaurant gift cards and \$100 cash. Entry cards are located at each participating restaurant and in the Berlin Welcome Center vestibule.

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU, NEW EARTH

Meeting via Zoom, 2:00 PM. Join licensed therapist, Bevin Jones, as she leads participants through an hour of mindfulness exercises. Start the year being mindfully present. Register: www.worcesterlibrary.org.

TEEN DISCORD HANGOUT

Held via Discord, 7:00 PM. The library's Discord server is a moderated, virtual hangout space for teens ages 13-17, to connect and chat with other teens. Register: <https://www.worcesterlibrary.libguides.com/discord>.

Fri., Jan. 15

BERLIN RESTAURANT WEEK

Many restaurants will be offering carry-out options to keep participants safe. Check the event on Facebook for menus as they come in. Dine 3 Times to Win is back. Staple copies of 3 receipts from 3 different participating restaurants to the entry card and drop into the collection box located at the Berlin Welcome Center. Prizes are restaurant gift cards and \$100 cash. Entry cards are located at each participating restaurant and in the Berlin Welcome Center vestibule.

BOOK DISCUSSION: 'THE LYING LIFE OF ADULTS' BY ELENA FERRANTE

Meeting via Zoom, 2:00 PM. Copies of the books are available on Hoopla (hoopla.digital.com). Register: www.worcesterlibrary.org under events.

Sat., Jan. 16

BERLIN RESTAURANT WEEK

Many restaurants will be offering carry-out options to keep participants safe.

Check the event on Facebook for menus as they come in. Dine 3 Times to Win is back. Staple copies of 3 receipts from 3 different participating restaurants to the entry card and drop into the collection box located at the Berlin Welcome Center. Prizes are restaurant gift cards and \$100 cash. Entry cards are located at each participating restaurant and in the Berlin Welcome Center vestibule.

COVID-19 TESTING

COVID-19 testing is available at Atlantic ImmediCare urgent care clinic on 10th Street in Ocean City on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. No appointment necessary. <http://www.agh.care/COVID19>

VIRTUAL WALK WITH A DOC

Beginning at 9:00 AM, join the group for a virtual Walk with a Doc on the Atlantic General Hospital Facebook page, where there will be a short presentation by Craig Mullen, CRNP on the topic of the flu versus COVID. Participants can then walk wherever they like and share a selfie on social media with the hashtag #walkedwithagh.

FRIED CHICKEN DINNER

New Hope United Methodist Church, 7338 New Hope Road, 11:30 AM. Drive thru pickup only. Menu includes mashed potatoes, greens, string beans, biscuit and dessert. Cost is \$13 for adults. 410-543-8244 or 443-235-0251

FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET

Saturdays - White Horse Park, 239 Ocean Parkway, 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM. Shop for everything from fresh local produce to unique handmade artisan goods. Open to the public.

Sun., Jan. 17

BERLIN RESTAURANT WEEK

Many restaurants will be offering carry-out options to keep participants safe. Check the event on Facebook for menus as they come in. Dine 3 Times to Win is back. Staple copies of 3 receipts from 3 different participating restaurants to the entry card and drop into the collection box located at the Berlin Welcome Center. Prizes are restaurant gift cards and \$100 cash. Entry cards are located at each participating restaurant and in the Berlin Welcome Center vestibule.

'HOPE & HEALING' OPENS

Hope & Healing, showcases artwork and events as it ties in with the Town of Ocean City's Winter Wellness theme. The event runs Jan. 17 through Feb. 27 and includes an in-person art exhibition at the Arts Center and special classes both in-person and online. There will be free heART & Soul classes on Jan. 28 and Feb. 25. Reservations are required.

410-524-9433, <http://ArtLeagueOfOceanCity.org>

ART SHOW OPENING

The annual Shared Visions show opens in the Thaler Gallery, where visual artists and writers collaborate and inspire each other. The show opens during regular hours at the Arts Center and will also be previewed on Facebook. The show will be on exhibit until Feb. 28. Admission is always free. On Jan. 19 at 6 p.m., the Ocean City Writers Group will read their work and discuss what inspired them during a free Zoom event. 410-524-9433, <http://ArtLeagueOfOceanCity.org>

COURAGEOUS ARTS SHOWCASE

Worcester Connects and the Art League of Ocean City have teamed to present the Courageous Arts Showcase on Zoom for middle school students, 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM. Ash'iz Cuffee will guide students through Expressing Your Voice Through Spoken Word Poetry. Pre-register: 410-641-4598.

Mon., Jan. 18

STRONG BONES VIRTUAL WORKSHOP ON FACEBOOK

During the week of Jan. 18-22, Atlantic General will be hosting a Strong Bones Virtual Workshop with a series of engaging and educational posts on the Atlantic General Hospital Facebook page. AGH providers will be presenting on a number of osteoporosis-related topics. Visit www.facebook.com/atlanticgeneralhospital to view the videos.

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY MEETING

Meeting via conference call, 6:00 PM - 6:30 PM. Dial 605-472-5789, wait for voice command, then press 944874. TOPS is a weekly support and educational group promoting weight loss and healthy lifestyle. Berlin group No. 169. Rose Campion, 410-641-0157

Tues., Jan. 19

ANNUAL OCEAN CITY BLOOD DRIVE

Ocean City convention center, 4001 Coastal Highway, 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM. To book an appointment, call 888-8-BLOOD-8 or visit www.delmarvablood.org. Donors are asked to only make an appointment if they are feeling healthy and well, with no cold or flu-like symptoms and no fever.

DOC & TALK - A MAN NAMED PEARL

Meeting via Zoom, 2:00 PM. Join the Doc & Talk Film Group for a discussion of a thought-provoking documentary available on Hoopla with you library card. January's film is 'A Man Named

Pearl," which tells the inspiring story of self-taught topiary artist Pearl Fryar. Register: worcesterlibrary.org under events.

CREATIVE JOURNALING: PART 2

Meeting via Zoom, 6:00 PM. Sacred, creative and fun ways to stimulate your brain to bring forth truth on the tip of your soul pen. Preserve your memories of 2020. No experience necessary. Register: worcesterlibrary.org under events.

Wed., Jan. 20

ANNUAL OCEAN CITY BLOOD DRIVE

Ocean City convention center, 4001 Coastal Highway, 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM. To book an appointment, call 888-8-BLOOD-8 or visit www.delmarvablood.org. Donors are asked to only make an appointment if they are feeling healthy and well, with no cold or flu-like symptoms and no fever.

MAKING PUPPETS AND PUPPET STORIES

Meeting via Zoom, 10:30 AM. Learn how to make a puppet with materials you may have at home. Then listen to a puppet story or two. For children 3-9 years old. Register www.worcesterlibrary.org under events.

GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

Meeting via Zoom, 11:00 AM. The workshop starts with a 20-minute lesson on genealogy research by Tom Dempsey followed by a question and answer session. Register: www.worcesterlibrary.org under events.

LOOKING AT ART: PART 3

Meeting via Zoom, 6:00 PM. The series will end by examining art history, in brief, and explore its language, such as what are contrapposto, one point and linear perspective. For beginners. Register: www.worcesterlibrary.org under events.

ONGOING EVENTS

'SAVE OUR STORIES'

The Ocean City Life-Saving Station Museum is asking community members to send in their accounts as to how COVID-19 has impacted them. The submissions can be a specific experience, direct answers to the prompt questions, or a combination. No story is too long or too short. To submit, visit www.ocmuseum.org. Info: Christine@ocmuseum.org.

WINTER READING CHALLENGE

Beginning Dec. 1, log your books, attend virtual programs and explore activities to earn badges and chances to win the grand prizes. Sign up for free at <https://www.worcesterlibrary.beanstack.org>.

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MARKETPLACE

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Classifieds now appear in Ocean City Today & the Bayside Gazette each week and online at oceancitytoday.com and baysideoc.com.

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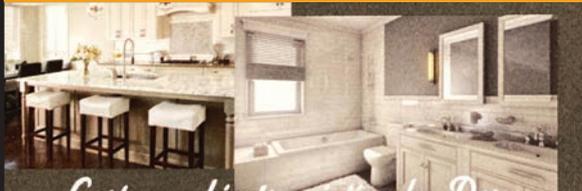
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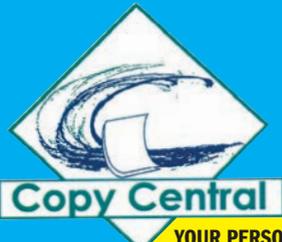


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