

Berlin retains same tax rate as last year

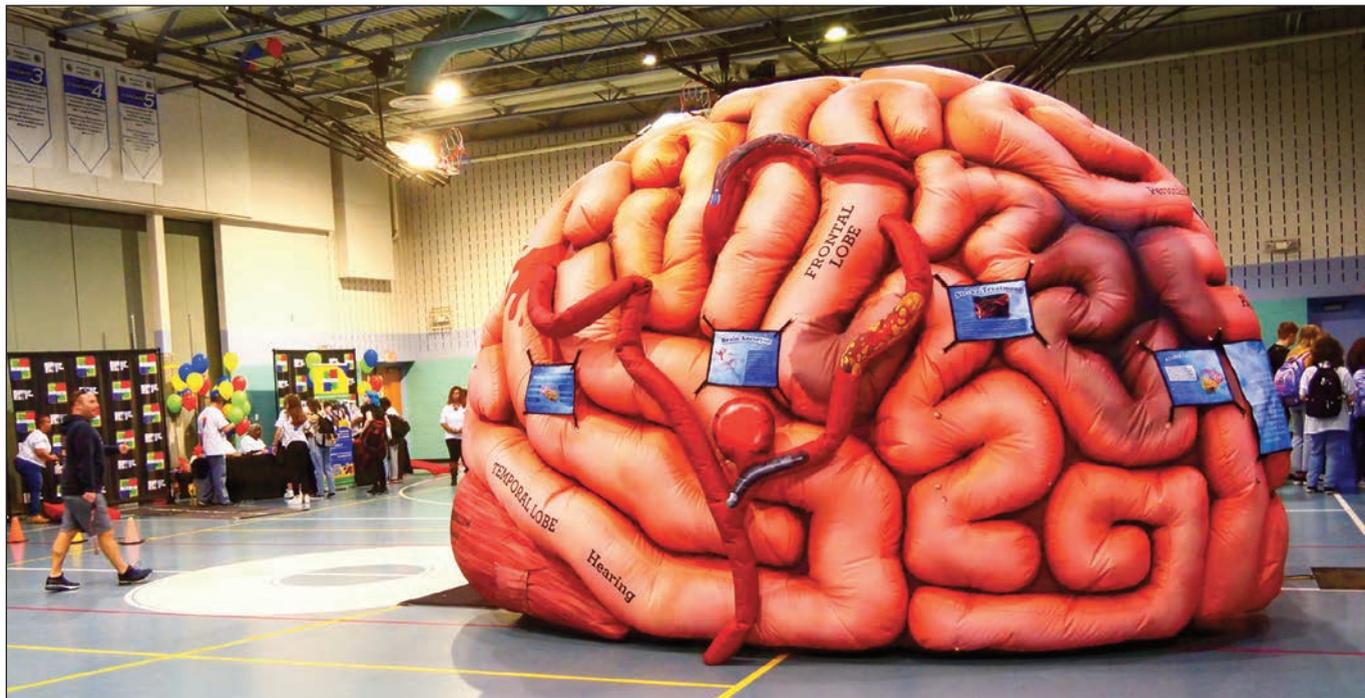
Discussion suggests levy will go up in years ahead

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(April 14, 2022) The Berlin Town Council's discussion Monday of where to set the property tax rates in the new fiscal year resulted in an airing of concerns by department heads who said their needs are being ignored again.

During first reading for the proposed FY23 tax rate on March 4, the council opted to reschedule its consideration of maintaining the FY22 rate of 81.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value until its meeting on April 11.

One resident, Robert Fisher, offered comments during the public See BUDGET Page 6



GREG WEHNER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

BIG THINKER

Stephen Decatur Middle School hosted the MEGA Brain on Tuesday to show students the effects of drugs and alcohol on the central nervous system organ. See story on page 11.

Berlin acquires lot from county

Another piece of puzzle falls into place for plans to build community center

By Jack Chavez
Staff Writer

(April 14, 2022) The no-cost transfer of 3.4 acres of land on Flower Street from Worcester County to the Town of Berlin was approved by the county commissioners last Tuesday after a public hearing drew no comment for or against the action.

The acquisition is part of the town's plan to construct a community center on Flower Street, where the Flower Street School once stood and is now used by SHOREUP! Inc. The project has included the necessary procurement of multiple adjoining properties on the site, with this one — Parcel 0854 — being the latest.

"We requested the transfer of that parcel so we can make the four parcels of that area into one which would house the future community center for Berlin, making it in total



JACK CHAVEZ/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Worcester County transferred a parcel of land on the grounds of the former Flower Street School and SHORE UP! Inc. to the Town of Berlin for a proposed community center last week.

between six and seven acres," Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall said.

"The transfer was a vital component to make sure the site is in one contiguous parcel. We're grateful for the commissioner's willingness to transfer it to the Town of Berlin."

The parcel includes an offline wetland on its southern end, which the

county allowed the town to construct to help reduce flooding in the adjacent neighborhood. The rest of the property is open land, according to a memo from Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Joe Parker.

Tyndall added that the project still appears to be in its early stages, but See COMMUNITY Page 7



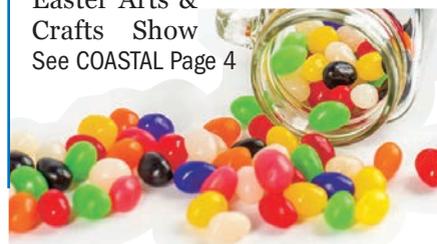
Easter activities listed for Pines, Berlin, resort

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(April 14, 2022) Bunny meeting and candy hunting activities abound over Easter weekend in Ocean City, Ocean Pines and Berlin.

Ocean City

The Roland E. Powell Convention Center on 40th Street will host both a "Kids Fun Fair" and Easter Arts & Crafts Show See COASTAL Page 4




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Coastal communities list events for Easter

Continued from Page 1

on Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Kids Fun Fair offers a range of diversions, games and contests for youth. Highlights include Easter egg hunts, magic shows, juggling performances and an appearance by Beanny the Easter Bunny.

Cost for adults is \$5, with seniors and attendees 18 or younger costing \$4.

Children ages three and under are free, as well as military, police or firefighters with proper identification.

Northside Park on 125th Street will host an "Easter Bunny Funshop" egg hunt for children ages 2-10 on Saturday at 1 p.m.

Cost is \$8 per child, with Ocean City resident property owners costing \$6 for each kid.

Participation is limited to hunt down prize-filled eggs and advance registration is highly encouraged.

For more information call Ocean City Recreation and Parks at 410-250-0125.

To honor the religious holiday, Ocean City Baptist Church is holding an Easter Sunrise Service from 6-7 a.m. on Sunday.

Worshippers should meet on the Boardwalk at North Division Street.

Easter fun is also on tap for the

Boardwalk, including the grand re-opening of Trimper's Rides on Saturday with holiday-themed celebrations.

To add some spark to a day filled with fun, food, games and, obviously, amusement rides, Radio Ocean City will broadcast from the location between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Following a ribbon-cutting ceremony at noon children can catch the Easter Bunny, who will be on site for an egg hunt.

Creative juices will be emboldened from noon to 4 p.m. when the Art League of Ocean City offers an array of art projects.

In addition to the Feet of Fire Dance Troupe performing at 2 p.m., other highlights will include Easter crafts, photo opportunities, a duck pond and food menu with \$3 items.

In addition, Trimper's Rides will see the return of the "OC Big Wheel" to its amusement lineup for the summer season.

The Ferris wheel is one of two Big Wheels in the United States, reaching 149 feet in the air. Guests will enjoy panoramic views of the coast in 36 enclosed gondolas that spin for 10 minutes.

The "OC Big Wheel" grand opening will take place on Saturday at noon.

For more information, visit trimperrides.com/events.

Jolly Roger Amusement Park at the Pier will have rides and games in operation for the entire weekend.

Jolly Roger will open at noon on Friday and Saturday and at 11 a.m. on Easter Sunday.

The Easter Bunny will be on hand to take pictures for free, along with gifts for kids, on Friday from 2-4 p.m. and from noon to 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Jolly Roger's Speedworld go-karts and Treasure mini-golf on 30th



Ocean Pines White Horse Park will again be filled with children scouring the hay for prize-filled Easter Eggs on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Street will also be open on Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For more information, call 410-289-3477 or visit jollyrogerpark.com.

Berlin

The Town of Berlin will host its annual Spring Celebration on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The event is sponsored by the Berlin Chamber of Commerce.

The full-day slate of activities will include holiday-themed games and crafts with food options for all ages.

Downtown will be abuzz with businesses and vendors, with special features including the Celtic Pierogie family-friendly variety show from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Scales and Tales from 1-4 p.m. and select readings from children's author Katie Ruskey, who is known for works such as "The A B Seas of Ocean City" and "How to Plant a Jellybean."

The Taylor House Museum will host an egg hunt on its lawn at 1 p.m.

The "Easter Bonnet Parade" will start at 4 p.m. and head south on Main Street from Worcester Youth and Family to the Atlantic Hotel.

Winners will be selected for most original, eco-friendly and best overall, with those selected taking home a Dolle's Candyland gift basket.

Also, the Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt will run through Sunday. Lists of participating businesses can be obtained from the Visitors' Center. Find all 30 eggs and be entered into a contest to win one of four \$50 gift cards to World of Toys.

For more information, call the Town of Berlin at 410-641-2770.

Ocean Pines

Holiday activities are planned for Saturday at White Horse Park. Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks is sponsoring an Easter/Spring Celebration from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The all-ages event is free to attend and includes an egg hunt for children ages 10 and under, carnival games, moon bounce house, bonnet contest and, of course, candy.

Coinciding with the celebration, the Ocean Pines Farmers and Artisans Market has special offerings for Easter feasts from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Market Manager David Bean said Brightman Egg Farm will be vending naturally colored eggs from its flock of "Easter Egger" hens. The eggs are available in shades of blue, brown, pink or yellow.

In line with the season, Synder's Produce & Beautiful Things will have potted flowers and hanging baskets.

Country music artist Sarah Campbell will perform starting at 9 a.m. Other highlights will include the Poddar Brothers making balloon animals for kids.

For more information, call Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks at 410-641-7052.

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GREG ELLISON/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Town of Berlin officials are weighing investing \$1 million to update the Broad Street Lift Station that plant blueprints date to 1936.

Berlin utility funds capital requests reviewed by town

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(April 14, 2022) The Berlin mayor and Town Council reviewed roughly \$3.5 million in FY23 capital budget requests on Monday for utility funds, including electric, water and wastewater.

Electric Utility Director Tim Lawrence said FY23 expenditures totaling \$695,000 would be covered by estimated operating revenues of \$458,000 and \$237,000 from new development services and materials.

Lawrence said roughly \$310,000 would be required for several power plant projects, which include \$130,000 to replace a cabinet of relays that monitor the health of the transformers and delivery system.

“Some of this equipment dates to the 1950s or ‘60s,” he said.

“It’s rusting through the top of the cabinet and water is getting in,” he said.

Lawrence said the structure was slated for replacement last year but funding was unavailable.

“We actually painted the top of the cabinet to try to keep it from rusting,” he said.

Replacing switch gear at the power plant is estimated at \$60,000.

Lawrence said the current switch box, which dates back roughly a half-century, is rotting and would be eliminated in favor of burying it underground.

The cost of replacing substation transformer fans is estimated at roughly \$50,000.

Lawrence said the fan system, which dates back several decades, helps cool oil that travels through transformers.

“On hot days, it kind of acts like an AC system for transformers,” he said.

Updating cooling tower valves that date back to 1999 is slated to cost \$70,000

“We have to do that during the shoulder months when we’re not peak shaving because we have to de-energize the transformers,” he said.

Turning to power distribution, Lawrence said FY23 budget requests are roughly \$330,000, with the bulk of these expenses later recovered from developers who cover costs for system installations.

Lastly, the electric department is requesting a Ford F250 4x4 truck for \$55,000 to replace a 2010 Ford F150 with 110,000 miles.

Lawrence said the 2010 model has seating problems and mechanical issues.

“We would also have a snow plow with the vehicle,” he said.

In addition to snow clearing capacities, the F250 handles heavier duties, which Lawrence said would be useful when transporting larger materials such as transformers.

Town Administrator Jeff Fleetwood said Lawrence has taken measures during his dozen years in the position to significantly reduce power outages, while also noting costs per kilowatt that hovered around 18 cents in 2008 are currently at 12 cents.

Flipping the spigot to Water Resources, Superintendent Jamey Latchum said roughly \$1.8 million in requested FY23 expenditures would be covered by \$78,000 from estimated operating revenues, \$438,000 from special connection revenues and \$1.3 million in grants funds from the American Rescue Plan Act.

The tally includes \$1.4 million for the water distribution department, with \$1 million of that sum earmarked for upgraded water meters.

“We just got bids back,” he said.

Latchum said the water meter project would be on the agenda at a forthcoming mayor and Town Council meeting for approval to proceed.

See BERLIN Page 8

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Budget contains one-time boost for workers

Continued from Page 1

hearing portion of the tax rate consideration.

Fisher asked if maintaining the 81.5 cents rate for FY23 would provide sufficient funds to balance the budget without the inclusion of American Rescue Plan Act funds or other grant sources in subsequent years.

“Not to do the things we know need to be done,” Councilman Troy Purnell replied. “We’ve been talking about an incremental [tax] increase forever.”

Fisher questioned budgeting impacts in the future.

“So next year there should be a substantial increase just to catch up?” he said.

Purnell agreed the potential exists for tax rates to jump significantly in

FY24.

After council member Jay Knerr introduced a motion to approve the 81.5 cents rate for FY23, Planning Director Dave Engelhart aired a list of concerns.

“I recall three to four years ago when we had this large tax increase, we were told by the previous mayor that employees had to share in the pain,” he said. “We did share in the pain, but we didn’t create the pain.”

Engelhart said the 12-cent increase enacted during the town’s financial crisis at that time was the result of short-sighted planning.

“That was because previous may-

ors and councils had not raised incrementally the real estate tax rate, which is a planning tool for any municipal body for their future spending,” he said.

Despite the recent receipt of American Rescue Plan Act funds, Engelhart said the grant source would likely be diverted for pending infrastructure issues.

Engelhart stressed the need to learn from past mistakes.

“Unless you make a concerted effort to consider a 1.5 or 2.5- or 3-cent tax rate each year, you’re never going to catch up,” he said.

Engelhart said delaying the inevitable would likely lead to circumstances similar to those suffered in the past.

“If it had been done a penny at a time for the previous 12 years, we wouldn’t be here today having this discussion,” he said. “You have to replace moneys in the town coffers.”

Engelhart asked if the current draft budget accounted for employee pay increases.

“The only items in our budget that we prepared that is not getting funded is our request for 10 percent [raises],” he said.

Mayor Zack Tyndall apologized for sending the draft budget to council members but not to department heads.

“The 10 percent is not there, but there is a value of 5 percent for the general fund for our employees,” he said.

Engelhart asked if a tier increase was being proposed.

Tyndall said a 5 percent increase for staff as a one-time payment is being proposed as a transitional measure.

“That increase is designed to offset what we’re going to work toward, which is a step system,” he said.

Engelhart said regardless of FY24 goals, the FY23 budget fails to factor in employee needs.

“This year’s the year we’re in pain,” he said.

Engelhart also asked why current draft budget figures were not shared with department heads prior to the meeting.

“These numbers these are a surprise to us,” he said. “I don’t think it’s fair treatment of the employee group.”

Tyndall countered that the proposal for employees is generous.

“It’s the value of a 5 percent increase in the general fund, which would be about \$130,000,” he said.

As proposed, that sum would be divided among 43 full-time staff and doled out bi-weekly.

“We need to see how the numbers break out,” Engelhart said.

Tyndall said the 5 percent one-

time allotment is intended for FY23, with an equitable step-system, developed for FY24.

“We’re not trying to [develop] that system in a month,” he said.

Engelhart said the move would negatively affect the staff.

“Are you thinking that inflation and the cost of living is not going to march on until July of 24 the way it is?” he said. “We are getting hammered and we need some help.”

Tyndall, while noting details on distributing the 5 percent increase would need to be fleshed out, stressed the need to focus on tax rate considerations.

“I would like to hear feedback on how we structure that, but this evening is about a tax rate,” he said.

Finance Director Natalie Saleh said with maintaining the 81.5 cent rate for FY23 the draft budget currently reflects a deficit of \$25,000.

Tyndall said the sum would be accounted for without future adjustments.

“We’ve got a pretty solid budget that’s framed up without a huge deficit,” he said.

Purnell countered that assertion. “But you stripped so many things out of the original proposal that everybody said was a need,” he said.

Purnell asked Saleh if increasing tax rates by three cents would accrue sufficient funds to cover a 10 percent pay raise for staff.

“It would put us closer,” Saleh said.

Purnell noted the importance of following financial guidance provided by Saleh and internal auditors.

“I don’t think we need to be cutting out an incremental tax increase that everybody swore we need to do,” he said. “We’re not listening to the employees.”

After council member Jack Orris seconded Knerr’s motion to retain the 81.5 cents rate, the measure failed by a vote of 3-2 with Purnell, and council members Dean Burrell and Shaneka Nichols opposed.

Purnell made a subsequent motion to increase tax rates to 84.5 cents which died after failing to garner a second.

Saleh reiterated that the discussion was about tax rates, with employee raises still open for future consideration.

“Going forward today, we’re fine because we’ve got a big grant on the table and we can advance funds from reserves that we set aside,” she said.

Still, Saleh said without an incremental tax increase, the town would face budgeting challenges in the future.

“We need to look at least three years down the road to see what we need,” she said.

Knerr, however, was hesitant to

See TAX Page 7



Dave Engelhart



Jeff Fleetwood

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Community center project discussed for last 20 years

Continued from Page 1
considering how long it's been in the works, the progress is substantial.

"The project is moving along," he said. "It doesn't appear that it's moving quickly perhaps, but in the spectrum of the fact that a community center has been discussed on this site for the last 20 years, I think we're making progress quickly."

The vision for the facility includes community services, a community kitchen, "potentially" recreation space, Shore Up! classroom space and meeting space for communities, organizations and nonprofits, Tyndall said in February.

The short-term outlook for development includes addressing other parcels of land — specifically combining two that are owned by the Berlin Community Improvement Association to put the entire property at about 6.5 acres, which Tyndall said would offer the opportunity to

start the design and construction phases.

"I hope some of those things are achievable in this fiscal year (and the next)," Tyndall said back then, pointing out that FY23 is fast approaching.

"In order to have a community center, it takes a community effort. I think Berlin is ready for it, ready to see this through and I think we can stay on track."

Plans for the community center ramped up in December, when representatives from the town, county, the community association and Shore Up! met to discuss it. In total, the project calls for combining four parcels into one. The town purchased a 0.57-acre parcel in October.

County offices will be closed Friday, open on Monday

(April 14, 2022) Worcester County Government offices, including all five branch libraries, will be closed Friday, April 15, in observance of Good Friday.

Normal business hours will resume Monday, April 18.

Worcester County Recreation and Parks (WCRP) will be closed April 15-17 and resume standard operating hours on April 18.

The Central Landfill and Homeowner Convenience Centers (HOCCs) will be closed Friday, April 15, and open during standard hours of operation Saturday, April 16.

The Central Landfill and HOCCs, will also be closed Sunday, April 17, for Easter and will resume standard operating hours on April 18.

Tax rate retained for FY23 budget

Continued from Page 6
raise the rate.

"It's very real for residents of this town who are already paying more from assessments," he said.

Knerr again moved to retain the 81.5 cents rate that was passed with only Purnell opposed.

The next budget work session is scheduled for April 18, prior to budget introduction on May 9 and adoption on May 23.

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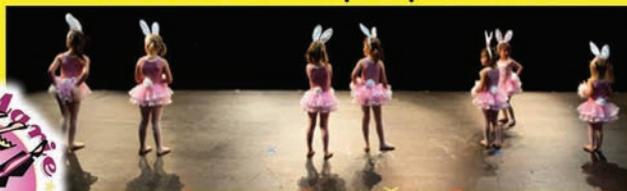
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OP Rec. Cmte. talks kayak launches, plus future events

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(April 14, 2022) The Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks Committee previewed upcoming community hikes and bike rides, while also discussing instructional classes for kayaking during its meeting on Monday.

Committee member Laura Scharle reported on an introductory class for kayaking held on March 29.

About a dozen participants were introduced to safety essentials from Scharle, who is a certified American Canoe Association instructor.

Committee chair Patti Stevens said

the class mostly attracted unexperienced kayakers.

"A number were brand new to kayaking," she said.

Stevens said an introductory class on kayaking techniques is slated for late May, with two group water excursions planned on June 14 and June 22 from the Swim and Racquet Club site.

For more information contact Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks at 410-641-7052.

Stevens said plans to install a new kayak launch site, which is being proposed at Pintail Park, are continuing

See PINES Page 9

Berlin utility fund capital needs

Continued from Page 5

Envisioned as a two-year project, the installation of a water crossing under Route 113 near Germantown Road is estimated to cost \$300,000 in FY23 with a comparable sum required in FY24.

"Right now, the town is limited to water crossings on four [points] across 113," he said.

Latchum said the additional crossing would permit looping to improve water quality.

Currently, Berlin has water traversing under Route 113 at Route 346 and Bank, Branch and Decatur streets.

Replacing water valves under Schoolfield, Elizabeth and South Main streets is slated to cost \$120,000.

Valves located on Schoolfield and Elizabeth streets would be done prior to pending pavement work.

Latchum said the valves are aged and have become challenging to turn.

Water treatment costs include \$300,000 to replace the well house on Powellton Avenue.

Latchum said the building dates to approximately 1946.

"The roof leaks and it is not effec-

tive for heating in the winter," he said.

Mayor Zack Tyndall asked about previously allocated funding for the Powellton project.

Latchum said the building replacement had been requested in past years, while also noting previous funds for the project were used for emergency expenses.

Fleetwood, who noted the current site is inadequate for material storage, said the ideal would be to have a larger building constructed around the existing structure before the latter is razed.

"It would give us more room to store chemicals," he said.

Switching to the wastewater department, Latchum said roughly \$1.01 million in requested FY23 expenditures would be covered by \$1 million in grants funds from the American Rescue Plan Act and \$17,500 from estimated operating revenues.

The total includes \$1 million to rebuild the lift station on Broad Street.

Latchum said the last updates were performed about 50 years ago, with plant blueprints dating the site to 1936.

"It doesn't have breakers, it has fuses," he said. "I don't know when that was outlawed, but it's still in there."

In the same vein as the Powellton Avenue project, Latchum said \$300,000 budgeted for the lift station rebuild last year was later reallocated for emergency expenses.

Also, Latchum said updating a SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition) system would cost \$17,500

The control system provides alerts for malfunctions and if not operational would require staff to be onsite at the treatment plant 24 hours daily.

"Pretty much this is the brains of the treatment plant," he said. "If this crashes we would have to manually operate everything."

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Throng of bicyclists prepare for departure from the Racquet Sports Center in Ocean Pines during the inaugural community ride held last May.

Pines community ride in May

Continued from Page 8 to move forward.

“We are talking with vendors to get pricing for a floating dock and launch area,” she said.

Stevens said Scharle recently consulted with A Plus Marine Services owner John Aniunas to assess if Pintail Park would be a suitable site.

“He confirmed Pintail would be an ideal location,” she said.

While agreeing the waterways by Pintail Park would provide sufficient depth for kayaks, Aniunas suggested the launch area should be situated to avoid blocking boat traffic along the canal.

Stevens said cost estimates and site data was forwarded to Director of Recreation and Parks Debbie Donahue, who will consult further with General Manager John Viola.

Viola has previously said the kayak launch equipment would be included in the next budget cycle if not sooner.

“A number of people have expressed strong interest,” she said.

On a similar note, Stevens said kayak storage racks, which were ordered last year but just arrived this

winter, would soon be installed by the beachhead at the Swim and Racquet Club. Annual rental for storage slots is anticipated to cost \$100.

Stevens said the committee has discussed installing more storage racks elsewhere if the addition proves popular.

Committee members also reviewed the status of repair work along hiking trails, including Robin Hood Park and the Route 90 pond.

Stevens said Public Works has distributed wood chips at the sites and filled in low spots caused by soil erosion, all in time for an upcoming community walk.

“We are working to coordinate a walk in early June,” she said.

Looking ahead, Stevens said a community bike ride is scheduled on May 21.

Replicating the route from the inaugural Ocean Pines ride held last year, bicyclists will start and end by the ballfields next to the Racquet Sports Center on Manklin Creek Road.

Stevens said the community ride is one of four bike jaunts sponsored by the Worcester County Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition during May to mark National Bike Month.

The next Recreation and Parks Committee meeting is set for May 9.

Berlin offers free bulk waste pickup April 20 and 27

(April 14, 2022) The Town of Berlin will provide free curbside bulk waste collections in April for residents.

For those neighborhoods that have Tuesday and Wednesday trash collection, bulk waste collection will be on Wednesday, April 20; for Thursday trash collection customers, collection will be on Wednesday, April 27. Collection is for improved, occupied, residential properties and will be by request only.

Residents must contact the town no later than 4:30 p.m. the day before See BERLIN Page 10

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Berlin Parks Commission looks to week of spring fun

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(April 14, 2022) Berlin Parks Commission members previewed a series of upcoming seasonal events last week, starting with the “Spring Celebration” this Saturday and closing with “Clean-Up Day” on April 23.

Deputy Town Administrator Mary Bohlen said the downtown area would be enlivened by Saturday’s Spring Celebration from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Family-friendly activities include crafts, games and face painting.

“The weather always plays a big part,” she said. “Who knows what it will be? It could be 80 degrees; it could be 50.”

Other highlights include an “Easter Bonnet Parade” at 4 p.m. and an “Egg

Hunt” on the Taylor House Museum lawn starting at 1 p.m.

The Saturday extravaganza is sponsored by the Berlin Chamber of Commerce.

Parks Commission member Bruce Hyder quipped that windy conditions are possible, as Bohlen concurred that the event was cancelled previously due to heavy gusts.

Bohlen said the opening shot of the weeklong slate would also serve to promote the Clean-Up gathering on April 23.

“We will hand out flyers,” she said.

Clean-Up Berlin Day closes out the eighth annual “Take Pride in Berlin Week” that begins this Sunday.

Take Pride week opens with a scavenger hunt that starts on Sunday.

The “Berlin History Hunt” will provide a reason to explore the downtown vicinity, as numerous establishments will offer locals-only promotions and discounts.

Details on participating merchants are available at the Berlin Welcome Center or Town Hall, or online at the Take Pride in Berlin Week Facebook page.

Bohlen said commission members would be leading the charge for Clean-Up Berlin Day on April 23 from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

“We’re going to have folks at Decatur Park, Henry Park, Heron Park and downtown,” she said.

The Berlin Parks Commission has sponsored the annual spruce-up event for more than two decades as a way to celebrate Earth Day, which falls on

See PARKS Page 12



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Berlin bulk waste curbside pickup held during April

Continued from Page 9
the scheduled collection date. A form is available online at berlinmd.gov under “Departments/Public Works” or can call 410-641-2770, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. A maximum of four items will be collected.

All fabric items must be bagged or wrapped in plastic and sealed; bags for large items such as mattresses are available at local retailers and a limited supply is available at Town Hall.

Additional regulations may apply. Details are available online or a copy of the special collection policy may be emailed or picked up at Town Hall prior to collection day.

Spring yard waste collections will be held in May. For more information visit the town website at berlinmd.gov and go to the Public Works page under Departments.

Inflatable brain helps teach effects of drugs and alcohol

By Greg Wehner
Staff Writer

(April 14, 2022) Stephen Decatur Middle School gave students a look inside a massive inflatable brain on Tuesday to help them understand the effects of substance abuse.

Dubbed the MEGA Brain exhibit, the walk-through inflatable allowed students to tour the central nervous system's most critical organ and see how drinking alcohol or using drugs affects its different parts.

"This is a part of the Stephen Decatur Middle School Substance Abuse Campaign," Mindy Ouellet, a health educator at the school said on Tuesday. "Kids are struggling. They're really struggling with what the right decisions are."

Ouellet played a key part in organizing the event, which took place in the middle school's gym.

With an inflatable brain as the centerpiece, students were given just under 45 minutes – the length of a classroom period – to move between the brain and exhibits from Students Against Destructive Decisions, or SADD, the Worcester County Health Department, Worcester Goes Purple, and the Berlin Prevention Works Coalition.

The latter gave students the chance to experience what it feels like to be under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or opiates.

Using goggles that distorted the students' vision, they were tasked with things like walking a straight line and throwing a beanbag into a hole.

"The students are realizing they don't like how it feels," Darlene Jackson Bowen, the program director for Berlin Public Works said. "They don't like the distortion, the hand-eye coordination is off, and they don't like the feeling that happens. Together, we brought Medical Inflatables here...to drive home what's happening in their body, and we're happy to be part of it."

Bowen said she is the president and CEO of building Mosaic Solutions Inc., a nonprofit that sponsored the MEGA Brain exhibit for \$8,000. The money was paid with a federal grant, she said.

Medical Inflatables is a Houston, Texas-based company that provides large-scale and interactive models of the human anatomy to instruct people about the risks, symptoms, and causes of diseases.

The brain that was inflated in the gym allowed students to pass through the organ while looking at the different parts of it, all marked with signs. An expert was also inside, who explained what the students were seeing.

Educating students early on is important to Bowen because, as she

said, parts of the brain develop until a person reaches the age of 25, and drugs can stunt that growth.

She said the exhibit also aims to prevent students from engaging in risk behavior, resulting in destructive decisions.

"They're engaged and making risky decisions, and that's all affected by their brain," Bowen said. "We want to prevent any further damage and help make them wise choices to continue to reach for their goals."

The Berlin Prevention Works Coalition works other schools such as Stephen Decatur High School, where it does monthly activities with students to show them alternatives to drugs.

See SUBSTANCE Page 12

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Parks group vets upcoming events

Continued from Page 10
April 22 this year.

In addition, pollinator gardens at Heron Park are planned.

Bohlen said Lower Shore Land Trust Executive Director Kate Patton would be present to survey planting beds.

"She's most likely going to get some plants and will need some mulch dropped off," Bohlen said.

Bohlen said the duo agreed that while future development plans at Heron Park remain hazy, beautification efforts would still be worthwhile.

"It's just unknown at this point, but we may as well make it look good," she said.

Bohlen said participants are encouraged to bring supplies such as gloves, rakes and shovels.

"Public Works will drop mulch at various locations," she said.

Volunteers can put in a few hours of planting, weeding and mulching at any or all of the focus areas.

"The last couple of years we did do it, Henry Park got a fantastic turnout, but Stephen Decatur Park not so much," she said. "If it just doesn't seem like we're getting people out there. Maybe next year we'll redirect a little bit."

Additionally, adult volunteers are needed to clean up Hudson Branch. Participants should wear heavy clothing and boots. Hudson Branch work assignments can be obtained that morning at Henry Park.

In terms of gathering help, Parks Commission Chair Mike Wiley said local organizations and businesses had signed on in prior years.

Commission member Patricia Dufendach mentioned the advent of a new community organization.

"We Heart Berlin has a broad reach," she said. "They're great about getting the word out."

Public Works Director Jimmy Charles said dump trucks and tractors would be at the various parks.

"I'll probably designate a chain saw operator," he said.

Bohlen said Clean-Up Berlin Day would close with a free lunch sponsored by SonRise Church at Henry Park about noon.

Substance abuse focus of exhibit

Continued from Page 11

But getting the MEGA Brain and activities setup wouldn't have been possible without the efforts of a few faculty members.

"Ms. Ouellet and her team here at Stephen Decatur Middle school have done an amazing job of making sure that this experience was successful and impactful for students," Tamara Mills, the district's coordinator of health education said. "Her hard work and efforts do not go unnoticed, and the community is grateful to have a teacher like her here."

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A new vending machine at Buckingham Elementary School in Berlin dispenses books to students instead of snacks and drinks. Pictured, from left, are Chief Academic Officer Denise Shorts, Curriculum Resource Teacher Laura Arenella, Chief Academic Officer Annette Wallace, students Selvin Carcoma-Diaz and Oliver Woodward, Superintendent of Schools Lou Taylor, Chief Financial Officer Vince Tolbert and Principal Christina Welch.

Vending machine at school dispenses books, not candy

By Greg Wehner
Staff Writer

(April 14, 2022) Buckingham Elementary School in Berlin took steps toward going the extra mile of promoting literacy last week, after a book vending machine was installed in the school's front lobby.

Unlike most vending machines that usually are filled with potato chips, candy, and pastries, this one is filled with between 200 and 300 books, which are dispensed using special tickets.

The school held a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the arrival of the new contraption on Tuesday.

"We are so excited to make reading a reward at our school in our mission to build literacy," Buckingham Principal Christine Welch said. "Seeing the student's faces light up as they received their book from the vending machine says it all."

The machine was funded with a \$5,000 grant from the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore. See PROGRAM Page 14



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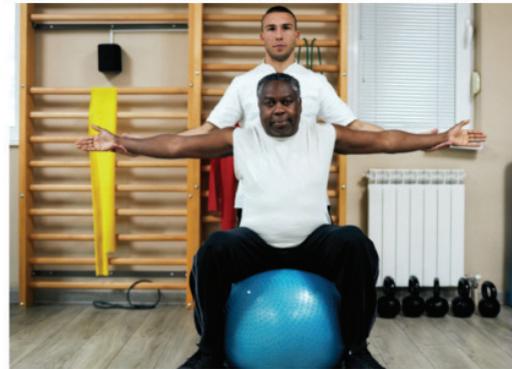
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Annual Take Pride in Berlin Week runs from April 17-23

(April 14, 2022) The eighth annual Take Pride in Berlin Week will be April 17-23, and will end with Clean-Up Berlin Day on Saturday, April 23.

Beginning Sunday, April 17, participants will be invited to explore Berlin with the "Berlin History Hunt" scavenger hunt and visit downtown Berlin businesses for locals-only specials and discounts. A full list of participating merchants can be found at the "Take Pride in Berlin" Facebook event, or at the Welcome Center or Berlin Town Hall.

On Saturday, April 23 the end of Take Pride in Berlin Week will be capped off by Berlin Clean-Up Day from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Clean-up day has been sponsored by the Berlin Parks Commission for more than 20 years. In it, volunteers dedicate a few hours on an April Saturday to celebrate Earth Day by giving Berlin's Parks and neighborhoods a spring cleaning. Individuals and teams are needed to help with low maintenance planting, weeding, raking, mulching and whatever else needs attention.

Event organizers also point out that students can use the opportunity to earn service hours.

The main clean-up areas are

Stephen Decatur Park on Tripoli Street, Henry Park on Flower Street, Heron Park on Old Ocean City Boulevard, and the downtown commercial district.

Some supplies will be available for use, but participants are encouraged to bring their own. Rakes, shovels, and wheelbarrows are always needed.

Clean-up of Hudson Branch will also be needed. This activity is not for young children. Heavy clothes and boots are recommended. For general park clean-up, sign up at any of the parks starting at 8:30 a.m.; Hudson Branch sign-up is at Henry Park.

Lunch will be provided by SonRise Church at no cost to volunteers.

Volunteers can also choose to spend their time wherever they feel attention is needed. Trash pickup will be available. Items for pickup will need to be placed in one location at the clean-up area and the town must be contacted so that crews are aware of the need.

For more information on Clean Up Day, contact Mary Bohlen at 410-641-4314 or mbohlen@berlinmd.gov. For information about Take Pride in Berlin Week, contact Ivy Wells, 410-629-1722 or iwells@berlinmd.gov. Information can also be found on Facebook at "Take Pride in Berlin Week."

New names enter Worcester County election contests

By Jack Chavez
Staff Writer

(April 14, 2022) With the deadline to file for election in Worcester County pushed back once again, individuals are still throwing their hats in the ring for various offices. The deadline is Tuesday, April 19.

The registered candidates as of Tuesday, April 12 are:

In District 1, Caryn Abbott (R) will challenge incumbent Josh Nordstrom (D).

In District 3, Eric Fiori (R), Thomas Gulyas (R) and Tim VanVonne (R) will face off in the in the primary.

In District 4, in what has now grown into a four-way contest, the Republican primary race pits incumbent Ted Elder against Worcester County Fire Marshal Jeff McMahon, former commissioner Virgil Shockley and newcomer Nancy K. Bradford. McMahon retired from his Fire Marshall position at the end of March.

In District 5, Grant Helvey (R) will challenge incumbent Chip Bertino (R) in the primary.

In District 6, Richard Addis (R) will challenge incumbent Jim Bunting (R) in the primary.

Commissioners Diana Purnell and See DEADLINE Page 18



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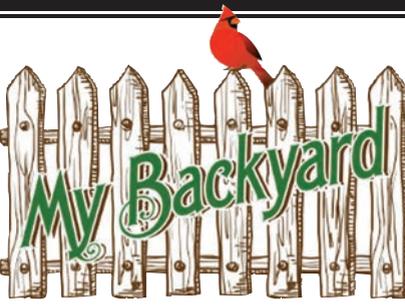
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Program fits into literacy initiative

Continued from Page 13
\$300 from the Buckingham Elementary School PTA, and an in-kind donation of books from the Briddle Foundation.

Buffalo, New York-based Global Vending Group sells the "Inchy's Bookworm Vending Machine," and in the company's description, it says books are vending using a golden ticket.

The company's goal is to reward students for good behavior, good grades, and good attendance, and it believes the combination of vending books using a personalized reward system can bridge the gap between engagement and literacy.

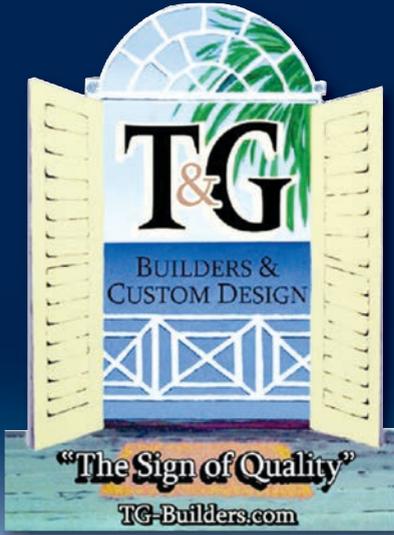
"We are proud for utilizing our resources and directing them towards literacy for all students," the company said on its website. "This program is a great way we can prepare children for the future."

The elementary school's PTA also played a part in making the vending machine become a reality.

"The PTA was happy to be able to help with the purchase of the book vending machine thanks to the generosity of our community," PTA President Donna Pelling said.

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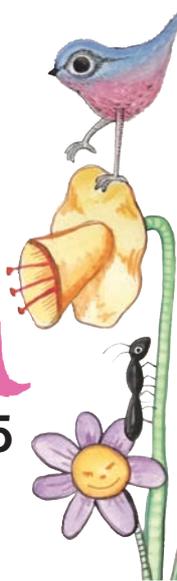
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Worcester County is inviting residents to a public hearing this Tuesday at 6 p.m. at Stephen Decatur High School to share their opinions regarding a potential sports complex site located directly west of the school, between Route 50 and Flower Street. Supporters say it will be a new revenue stream for the area while skeptics say it'll be a traffic nightmare and financial burden.

Hearing on potential site for athletic complex on Tuesday

By Jack Chavez
Staff Writer

(April 14, 2022) Worcester County residents will have their chance to sound off on the proposed purchasing of land next to Stephen Decatur High School for an athletic complex on Tuesday, occurring at the school itself.

The hearing will begin at 6 p.m. in the Decatur auditorium and will be the first wide-open public discussion of the county's plans to buy the 95.6-acre parcel of land to the west of Decatur between Route 50 and Flower Street.

A majority of Ocean City and county officials are fervent supporters of the complex, which they believe represents one of the keys to expand-

ing business opportunities well into the offseason.

"This is an opportunity for county residents to speak in favor of a project that will benefit all Worcester County residents, visitors, and businesses," Mayor Rick Meehan said in a statement issued by the Town of Ocean City.

"The proposed sports complex will provide the opportunity for all local children to play at a first-class facility. It is time for travel tournaments to take place in Worcester County instead of our local families having to travel over 150 miles away. Worcester County families need to attend the public hearing to support those (County) Commissioners fighting for this project and the future. Together we can make Worcester County the amateur sports capital of Maryland!"

Local officials are hopeful that an athletic complex will give the county access to the growing sports tourism market by attracting major amateur sports tournaments and entertainment events to the area.

Not everyone sees eye-to-eye on the endeavor, however. Skeptics have opined that on top of the possibility that the burden for funding falls on county taxpayers, an athletic complex will worsen summertime traffic woes that are already an issue along routes 50 and 589.

Some people, such as former Ocean City Councilmember Vincent Gisriel, say that the market may already be oversaturated and that Worcester County's isolation — about two hours away from Baltimore, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. —

See RESIDENTS Page 19

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Deadline to file for election Tuesday, new names join in

Continued from Page 14
Joe Mitrecic are running unopposed in Districts 2 and 7, respectively.

Vying for spots on the non-partisan Board of Education are:

In District 1, John Abbott will challenge incumbent Bill Buchanan.

In District 4, Jamie Marie Rice will challenge incumbent Bill Gordy.

In District 6, Katie Ann Addis will challenge incumbent Nate Passwaters.

In other races, State's Attorney Kris Heiser (R) is running unopposed, Jeffrey Buhrt (R) will challenge incumbent Sheriff Matt Crisafulli (R) in the primary, and Mike Diffendal (R) and Linda Hess (R) will challenge Orphans' Court incumbent Judge Cheryl Jacobs (R) in the primary.

Great Pocomoke Fire blazes town 100 years ago in April

(April 14, 2022) On Easter Monday, April 17, 1922, a fire destroyed 15 acres in the downtown section of Pocomoke City. The conflagration left 250 residents homeless, devastated scores of businesses and homes, and resulted in a loss of \$25 million in today's dollars.

For three hours, Maple, Clarke, Second and Market streets were a sea of flames. High winds then whipped the fire up Front Street where it destroyed numerous homes in the residential section.

During the early stages of the fire, the town's telephone exchange building was in extreme danger. Yet, the phone operators maintained their posts and called for aid from fire companies across the peninsula.

The phone exchange was eventually destroyed, but not before help was on its way. The Pennsylvania Railroad dispatched special trains to convey fire apparatus and firefighters to Pocomoke City.

Fire companies from Seaford, Laurel, Delmar, Salisbury, Snow Hill, Berlin, Ocean City, Cambridge, Princess Anne and Crisfield answered the call to assist the Pocomoke Fire Company in battling the blaze.

As quoted in the New York Times on Tuesday, April 18, 1922, "but for the splendid teamwork of the fire

companies the entire town would have been destroyed".

To commemorate the centennial of the Great Pocomoke City Fire of 1922, the Pocomoke City Volunteer Fire Company will host an open house and ceremony on Saturday. Those fire companies listed above have been invited to attend and will be recognized for their assistance in containing and extinguishing the fire.

The open house, which will feature antique fire equipment and historical materials regarding the fire, will be held at the Pocomoke City Volunteer Fire Company, 1410 Market Street, from 1-4 p.m. on Saturday. The recognition ceremony will take place at 3 p.m.

According to Lt. Chip Choquette, chairperson of the centennial, Pocomoke City experienced three devastating fires prior to 1922.

The fire of December 1888 led to the establishment of the Pocomoke City Volunteer Fire Company. The fire of April 1922 led to the purchase of more advanced fire-fighting equipment and the rebuilding of the town's downtown section with masonry buildings and wider streets to prevent fires of this magnitude from recurring in the future.

Residents for and against sportsplex will be heard Tues.

Continued from Page 18 would work against the aspirations of a complex's supporters.

Gisriel has routinely referenced studies completed for Worcester County and Ocean City in 2017 and 2020, respectively, that say that drive-time from major markets, local population, age distribution and income distribution are factors that local officials need to pay close attention to.

"The 2020 Ocean City study specifically points out that we may face market challenges and threats since we have a small year-round population, a high median age base and a low population base under the age of 18," Gisriel wrote in a Letter to the Editor in Ocean City Today earlier this month.

A proposed athletic complex some 110 miles away in Elkton could also stiffen competition regionally, Gisriel said.

Elkton is about 60 miles north of Baltimore and 50 miles south of Philadelphia, considerably closer than Worcester County is to either city.

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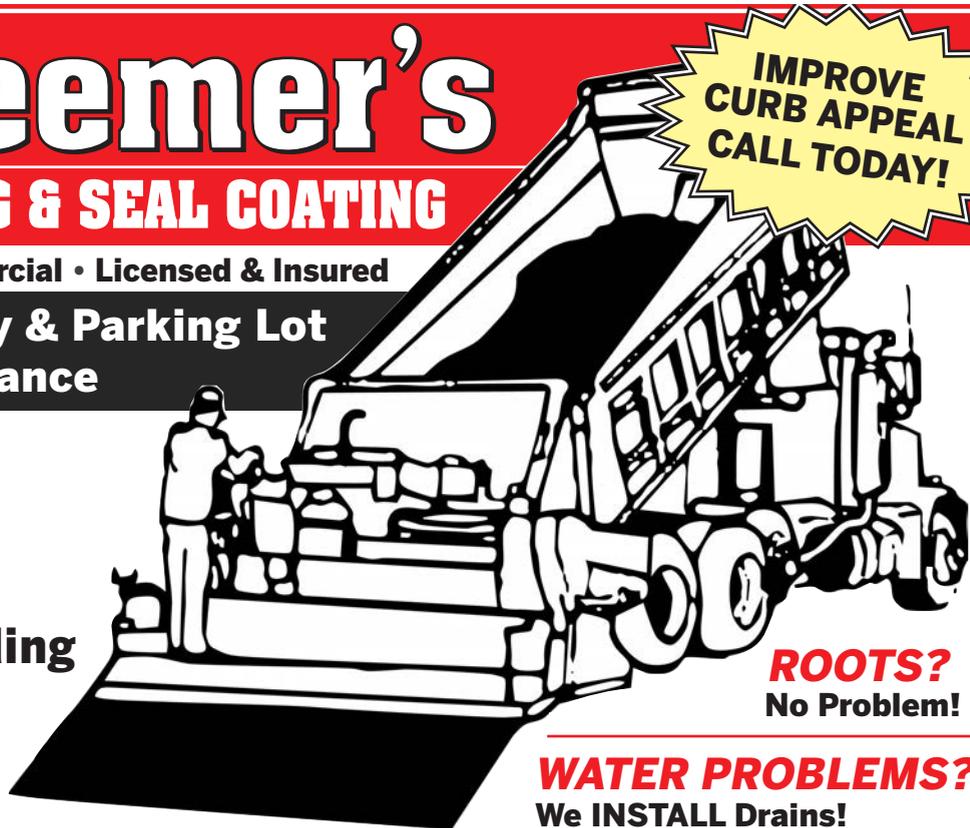


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OP Board election filing, candidate forums

(April 14, 2022) The Ocean Pines Elections Committee has announced the key dates for the 2022 election process. These include filing and voting deadlines, and dates for two candidate forums.

This year, three seats on the board of directors will be up for election. They are currently held by directors Larry Perrone, Amy Peck and Josette Wheatley. The seven-member volunteer board is the governing body of Ocean Pines.

Ocean Pines' Resolution M-06 calls for at least two more candidates than open seats, meaning the Association is

seeking five or more candidates in 2022. The deadline to file is by 4 p.m. on Tuesday, May 10.

"If you're thinking about applying as a candidate for the Ocean Pines Board of Directors, there's a wealth of information at oceanpines.org," Elections Committee Chairperson Carol Ludwig said. "We also recommend that you establish contact with the Ocean Pines Search Committee, and educate yourself about the Ocean Pines community and governance through the bylaws and Book of Resolutions.

"Pay particular attention to Resolu-

tions C-08 and M-06, as they pertain to candidate activities and elections procedures. Previous board of director meeting agendas, meeting materials and minutes are available at oceanpines.org, and videos of previous board of director meetings can be viewed via YouTube and oceanpines.org," Ludwig added.

Applications are available at the administration building or on the Ocean Pines website at <https://www.oceanpines.org/documents/10184/53744/OPA+Board+candidate+registration+for+m.pdf>.

Important upcoming election dates are:

Eligible Candidate Draw and Workshop (to determine ballot order and seating during candidate forums) - Tuesday, June 7 at 2 p.m. in the East

Room of the Ocean Pines Community Center

First Candidate Forum - Wednesday, June 22 at 6 p.m. in the Clubhouse Meeting Room

Second Candidate Forum - Saturday, June 25 at 10 a.m. in the Clubhouse Meeting Room

Voter eligibility deadline - Payment of annual dues, per bylaws Section 3.01(c) - Wednesday, July 6

Ballot deadline - Wednesday, Aug. 10 by 4 p.m.

Ballots counted and vote totals announced - Thursday, Aug. 11 starting at 10 a.m. in the Clubhouse Meeting Room

Annual Meeting - Saturday, Aug. 13. Time and Venue TBD

For questions about the election, contact elections@oceanpines.org.

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Snow Hill election held May 3

(April 14, 2022) The Town of Snow Hill will hold its general election, in-person, on Tuesday, May 3, at its previous polling place, the Train Station on Belt Street, Snow Hill.

Up for election this year are the offices of mayor and Eastern District Council.

On the ballot for mayor are current Eastern District Council member, Rob Hall and former Council mem-

ber Mike Pruitt. On the ballot for Eastern District Council are Dave Burt and Janet Simpson.

Those who wish to vote by absentee ballot can call Town Hall or email Margot Resto at mresto@snowhillmd.com to request an absentee ballot application. The deadline to apply for an absentee ballot application is Friday, April 22.

For more information, call Resto at 410-632-2080.

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Delmarva Birding Weekend stretches wings April 20-25

(April 14, 2022) The 2022 Delmarva Birding Weekend has evolved into birding week, when hundreds of nature enthusiasts will flock to the shore April 20-25 to enjoy the full array of mid-Atlantic birds as the region welcomes warblers, tanagers and other spring migrants and prepares to say goodbye to its loons, falcons and waterfowl as they head north.

Registration is open at www.delmarvabirding.com.

New this year is a walk into the depths of the 60,000-acre Nassawango woodlands, where songbirds still cling to the vestiges of the once-mighty eastern forest.

Trips will again include birding the Harriet Tubman Byway, a jaunt around the wildlands by Phillips Landing near Laurel, Delaware, and a stroll through the Delaware Botanic gardens where folks will be fascinated by the profusion of feathers and flowers.

As always, the Shorebird Explorer will traverse the coastal bays behind Ocean City and Assateague from Talbot Street in Ocean City, and a day-long trip to Smith Island will include its world famous cakes in the form of crab and confection.

Spring Birding Weekend staples continue to include an Ocean City inlet and Berlin Heron Park trip, the Chincoteague Bay Landings trip, and Ayers, Pocomoke and Nassawango paddles. Nature lovers can register for just one

field trip, or multiple ones each day.

Guided by local, fun-loving birders with decades-long experience, the trips will accommodate visitors from the curious nature lover to fowl fanatics. Every year, birdwatchers from surrounding states descend on Delmarva for the event.

"This is one of our biggest nature-oriented weekends," said Melanie Pursel, Worcester County tourism director. "People go crazy over the number of warblers and shorebirds, but they will see a lot more than that birding with our guides around Assateague Island and our cypress swamps near Snow Hill. Newport Farms and Ayers Creek are especially beautiful this time of year."

Social events for new and experienced birders are scheduled throughout the weekend. These socially-distanced "Tally Rallies" are held at local breweries, bars and restaurants, and allow participants to add to the species checklist and swap nature stories with new friends.

Indeed participants recount the event in terms of experiences rather than simply observing birds – a majestic Bald Eagle soaring over the marsh, a Tri-colored Heron in breeding plumage catching fish, or the eerie hoot and shadow of a Barred Owl at dusk. An outdoor experience is the true draw.

The Delmarva Peninsula is one of the See BIRDING Page 26

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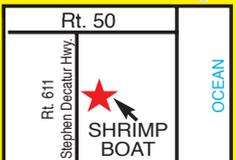
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Opinion

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

Religious messages agree on having hope

Ramadan began April 2, Ram Navami was on April 10, Passover begins at sundown today (Friday) and Easter is Sunday.

This confluence of religious observances by followers of Islam, Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity make this April the holiest month of the year for more than five billion people, or well more than half the world's population.

These celebrations either follow or are influenced by the lunar calendar rather than the Gregorian version we use, and because the lunar year is 11 days shorter than the solar year on which Pope Gregory XIII established his calendar in 1582, the dates of these observances will change from one year to the next, and some more than others.

While these memorializations are the cornerstones of the world's great religions, it is not entirely a coincidence that most of them occur around the arrival of spring.

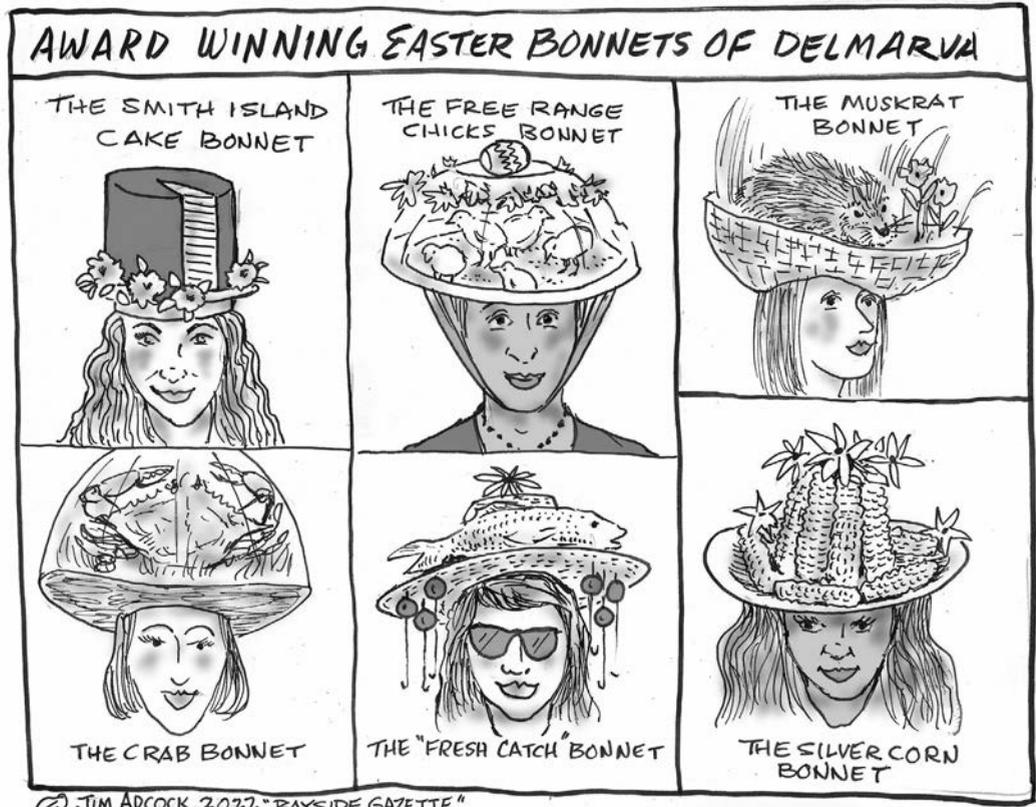
Most cultures make special note of spring's promise of new beginnings, just as these religions mark the occasions of their people's deliverance, salvation and spiritual awakening.

For Judaism and Christianity, these events occur just before or just after spring. The name Easter, in fact, is derived from Eostre, a pagan goddess of spring who promised renewal, rebirth and fertility.

Obviously, spring would have occurred on its own without assistance from paganism, yet the missionaries attempting to convert the heathen Anglo-Saxons found their audience more receptive if these new Christian holy days were made to coincide with these ancient pagan festivals.

But regardless of the differing philosophies, traditions and rituals of these religions, they do have one common message: renewed hope for the future.

Considering the events of the past two years with the pandemic, the seeming abandonment of the Golden Rule principle that most religions subscribe to and the world's current crises, these expressions of hope seem particularly resonant, amplified as they are, or should be, by a chorus of five billion people.



Letters

Views on Sports Complex Project

Editor,

I applaud our commissioners' leadership and dedication to helping Worcester County continue to prosper. However, their recent 4-3 vote in favor of the sports complex project compels me to publicly share my perspective on this large capital investment.

I would have also voted NO because of the chosen funding approach and lack of important decision-making information. Let me elaborate on these two points.

1. Funding: If the majority is convinced in the project's economic success, then why fund it via general obligation bond? The chosen method appears to pass multi-million dollar financial risk to us, the taxpayers.

Therefore, I have asked our commissioners to explore alternative financing.

Since the sports complex is expected to generate a long-term revenue stream, the project is ideally suitable for a joint venture (JV).

This approach, if properly structured, will spread the

business risk to each JV member according to their investments and roles.

2. Lack of important decision-making information: Worcester County is the only county in Maryland that borders the Atlantic Ocean. It also has beautiful natural resources, i.e. Assateague Island.

Establishing the right Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) criteria is becoming a broad priority for many governments and businesses.

And, many of us know that ESG initiatives are gaining a greater importance by many in the public and private sector including coastal communities.

To my surprise, when searching the county's website, I was unable to find any information on its ESG efforts.

Therefore, I have encouraged our commissioners to develop an ESG policy/strategy and make sure the proposed sports complex complies with it.

Integrating ESG into the county's investment planning process will ultimately facilitate the right decisions,

secure long-term benefits and sustainability.

I hope my views and concerns, along with others who decide to speak out, will give the commissioners reason to pause.

Conducting additional due diligence on this expensive sports complex is a textbook case of what I would call good governance.

Slobodan Trendic
Ocean Pines

Opposes second guessing librarians

Editor,

I attended the March WCPS meeting in support of WCPS library/media specialists. I agree with "Supporting intellectual freedom in schools" published in your March 31 edition, Letters to the Editor section.

Having spent 46 years as a teacher at Stephen Decatur High School, and through my outreach to elementary, intermediate, and middle schools as part of my theatre program, I came to know many of our school librarians/media specialists.

I knew them to be de-
See LETTERS Page 23

BAYSIDE GAZETTE

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The Bayside Gazette is available by subscription at \$75/year or \$40/6 mos.
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Calendar

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

Thurs., April 14

STORY TIME 'HOP LIKE A BUNNY'

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and rhymes. For ages 2-5 years. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

STORY TIME: CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES!

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. These books celebrate our differences and what makes us special. Take home activity included. For ages 2-5 years. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

CHAIR YOGA

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. Join

yoga instructor Nicole Long as she stretches and de-stresses using a safe and gentle method. Registration required: www.worcesterlibrary.org. 410-632-2600

TRIVIA NIGHT (DURING THE DAY)

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 3:30 p.m. Test your knowledge and win prizes. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

FREE SPEC TENNIS LESSON CLINIC

Ocean Pines Racquet Center, 11443 Manklin Creek Road, 4 p.m. This paddle sport is played on a fenced court 1/3 the size of a tennis court. All abilities welcome and equipment is provided. Ladies, mens and co-ed groups. Reserve your spot: op-paddle2020@gmail.com.

ZUMBA FOR ALL LEVELS

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 4:30-5:30 p.m. Join certified Zumba instructor Joyce Landsman for an hour of movement. These classes uplift and improve mood. Register: www.worcesterlibrary.org under "Events." 410-632-2600

MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP SERVICE WITH COMMUNION

Bethany United Methodist Church, 8648 Stephen Decatur Highway, Berlin, 6:30 p.m. All are welcome. 410-641-2186, bethany21811@gmail.com.

BEACH SINGLES

Thursdays - Beach Singles join us 55 plus

at Harpoon Hanna's, 39064 Harpoon Road, Fenwick Island, DE, 4-6 p.m. Info: 302-436-9577 or BeachSingles.org

Fri., April 15

EASTER ART & CRAFT SHOW AND KIDS FUN FAIR

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission includes Arts & Crafts Fair and Easter activities for kids including Beanny the Easter Bunny, Cascading Carlos, Easter egg hunts, crafts and games. Schedule: www.oceanpromotions.info. 410-213-8090

Continued on Page 24

Letters

Continued from Page 22

voted professionals dedicated to ensuring that all students in their respective buildings had access to materials that would represent them as individuals and as members of larger communities. That remains the mission of all of the WCPS librarians to this day.

As a former teacher, I believe the job of those who work in our schools is to help every child feel accepted, welcomed, and valued.

To that end, and using clear protocols, WCPS librarians choose materials that represent the lives, needs, and interests of all students, making certain that no child is left, not behind, but out.

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A library, whether in a school or in a community, offers every reader the

opportunity to choose not only to further their knowledge, but to further their understanding of themselves and others, to develop empathy, and to know that whatever a person's struggles and victories, triumphs and fears, we are all part of a shared humanity, of one vast human family.

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CALENDAR

Continued from Page 23

EASTER BUNNY AT JOLLY ROGER

Jolly Roger Amusement Park at the Pier will have rides and games in operation for the entire weekend. The Easter Bunny will be on hand from 2-4 p.m. to take pictures for free, along with gifts for kids. 410-289-3477

OYSTER FRITTER SANDWICH SALE

American Legion #123, 10111 Old Ocean City Blvd., Berlin, 2 p.m. Cost is \$9. Public is welcome.

Sat., April 16

EASTER ART & CRAFT SHOW AND KIDS FUN FAIR

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission includes Arts & Crafts Fair and Easter activities for kids including Beanny the Easter Bunny, Cascading Carlos, Easter egg hunts, crafts and games. Schedule: www.oceanpromotions.info. 410-213-8090

EASTER BUNNY FUNSHOP

Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City, 1 p.m. Featuring an egg hunt for children ages 2-10 years. Cost is \$6 for Ocean City residents and \$8 for non-residents. Advance registration is highly encouraged: 410-250-0125.

EASTER BUNNY AT JOLLY ROGER

Jolly Roger Amusement Park at the Pier will have rides and games in operation for the entire weekend. The Easter Bunny will be on hand from noon to 2 p.m. to take pictures for free, along with gifts for kids. 410-289-3477

SPRING CELEBRATION

Historic Downtown Berlin, 124 N. Main St., 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Featuring pancake breakfast, egg hunt, bonnet parade, Scales and Tales, performance by Celtic Pierogi, games, crafts and more. Schedule: <https://berlinchamber.org/events/spring-celebration/>. 410-641-4775

EASTER/SPRING CELEBRATION

White Horse Park, Ocean Pines, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. All-ages event includes an egg hunt for children ages 10 years and younger, carnival games, moon bounce house, bonnet contest and candy. 410-641-7052

SPECIAL EASTER OCEAN PINES FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET

White Horse Park, Ocean Pines, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Featuring Brightman Egg Farm's colorful eggs, potted Easter flowers and hanging baskets, balloon animals and country music artist Sarah Campbell (9 a.m.). www.oceanpines.org

TRIMPER RIDES GRAND REOPENING

Trimper Rides of Ocean City, 700 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 12 p.m. Featuring ribbon cutting, Easter bunny and Easter egg hunt for those who purchase a \$20 wristband (free for those under 2) beginning at noon. Arts and crafts from 12-4 p.m. www.trimperrides.com/event.

CENTENNIAL OF THE GREAT POCOMOKE CITY FIRE OF 1922

Pocomoke City Volunteer Fire Company, 1410 Market St., 1-4 p.m. A recognition ceremony will take place at 3 p.m. to honor all fire companies that assisted with the fire. The open house will feature antique fire equipment and historical materials regarding the fire. 410-957-2310

VIRTUAL WALK WITH A DOC

Join on the Atlantic General Hospital Facebook page for a short presentation, 9 a.m. Then walk and share your selfie on social media, #walkedwithagh. Tina Simmons, tsimmons@atlanticgeneral.org.

FREE PLATFORM TENNIS LESSONS

Saturdays - Ocean Pines Racquet Center, 11443 Manklin Creek Road, 9:30 a.m. All abilities welcome and equipment will be provided. oppaddle2020@gmail.com or 516-508-0313.

Sun., April 17

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

Ocean City Boardwalk at N. Division Street, 6-7 a.m. Sponsored by Ocean City Baptist Church.

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

Assateague State Park, 6915 Stephen Decatur Highway, Berlin, 6:30 a.m. All are welcome. Bring a chair. Breakfast available (love offering basket) from 8-9:30 a.m. at Bethany United Methodist Church. 410-641-2186, bethany21811@gmail.com

EASTER WORSHIP SERVICE

Bethany United Methodist Church, 8648 Stephen Decatur Highway, Berlin, 8 a.m. Free breakfast available (love offering basket) from 8-9:30 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt at 9 a.m. Easter Worship Service at 10 a.m. 410-641-2186, bethany21811@gmail.com

EASTER BUNNY AT JOLLY ROGER

Jolly Roger Amusement Park at the Pier will have rides and games in operation for the entire weekend. The Easter Bunny will be on hand from noon to 2 p.m. to take pictures for free, along with gifts for kids. 410-289-3477

8TH ANNUAL TAKE PRIDE IN BERLIN WEEK

Historic Downtown Berlin, 124 N. Main St., April 17-23. Explore Berlin with the "Berlin History Hunt" scavenger hunt and visit downtown Berlin businesses for locals only specials and discounts. <https://www.facebook.com/TakePrideInBerlinWeek>. 410-629-1722

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

Sundays - Berlin Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, 212 West St., Berlin, 10 a.m. www.jw.org

Mon., April 18

SPRING ADVOCACY MEETING RSVP DEADLINE

Held via Zoom on April 20 from 10-11:30 a.m. The topic this meeting will be summer resources. RSVP by April 18:

<https://forms.gle/JkpVVLrzqXHno6Bn8>.

DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB OF WORCESTER COUNTY MEETING

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 10 a.m. Coffee served at 9:30 a.m. Featuring a special presentation on "Allyship" with SU Professors Erin Stutelberg and Rebecca Anthony. All members and prospective members welcome.

GREAT BOOKS DISCUSSION

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2:30 p.m. The discussion will focus on the essay Distributive Justice from the Collected Papers of political philosopher John Rawls. The group meets twice a month. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

SUPER POWERED STEM: BUILDING CHALLENGE

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 4:30 p.m. Craft sticks, clothespins and clips. Use these and more to conquer some fun building challenges. For children ages 7 years and older. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

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

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

DELMARVA WOMEN'S A CAPELLA CHORUS

Mondays - Ocean Pines Community Center, 239 Ocean Parkway, 7:00-9:00 p.m. All ladies that love to sing invited. Contact Mary, 410-629-9383 or Carol Ludwig, 302-242-7062.

Tues., April 19

STORY TIME 'NURSERY RHYMES'

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and fingerplays. Take-home activity included. For ages 2-5 years. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

OUTSIDE PLAY DAY

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 10:30 a.m. Activities, games and crafts outside. Weather permitting. For children ages 2-5 years. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

BLACKOUT POETRY

Meeting via Zoom for some innovative and creative writing using the "blackout" technique to write poems, 2 p.m. www.worcesterlibrary.org

SENSORY STORY TIME 'RAIN'

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 4 p.m. Stories, songs and fun all about rain. Offering an inclusive story time for children ages 3-7 years who have multi-sensory needs or who are on the autism spectrum. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

HEARING ON SPORTS COMPLEX PROPOSAL

Stephen Decatur High School Auditorium, 9913 Seahawk Road, Berlin, 6 p.m. Public hearing for a proposal to purchase 95.521 acres of property in the Berlin area to create a premier indoor and outdoor athletic complex. The County Commissioners encourage the public to attend.

DELMARVA DANCING

Tuesdays - Selbyville Elks Lodge 2173, 13324 Worcester Highway, Bishopville, 5:30-9 p.m. Dance to the sounds of the '50s, '60s and more. A \$5 donation to benefit Veterans. Everyone is welcome. Charlie, 410-465-0445

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

Tuesdays - Berlin Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, 212 West St., Berlin, 7 p.m. www.jw.org

Wed., April 20

BERLIN BULK WASTE COLLECTION

Free curbside collection for those with Tuesday and Wednesday trash collection. By request only: 410-641-2770 no later than 4:30 p.m. the day before; or berlinmd.gov under Departments/Public Works.

BARIATRIC SUPPORT GROUP

Meeting via Zoom on the third and fourth Wednesday of each month. For surgical patients. Contact the Atlantic General Bariatrics Center for more information at 410-641-9568.

STORY TIME: 'RAIN'

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and crafts all about rain. For ages 2-5 years. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

John H. 'Jack' Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center, 9707 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 1-2 p.m. For survivors and current patients battling breast cancer. Women Supporting Women, 410-548-7880

JOB SEARCH WORKSHOP

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 3-5 p.m. Drop in, any Wednesday, to receive one-on-one guidance from library staff to strengthen your resume and help with your job search. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

NOTES ON THE BEACH: TIN PAN ALLEY

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 6 p.m. Listen to popular music of the U.S. from the late 19th and early 20th century. Featuring Jeff Cooper and Glenn Pearson. Register: www.worcesterlibrary.org under "Events." 410-632-2600

FREE SQUARE DANCE LESSONS

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 7-9 p.m. Held Wednesdays, March 23 through April 20. New students, singles and couples welcome. 908-229-8799, 302-436-4033, barbcroos@gmail.com

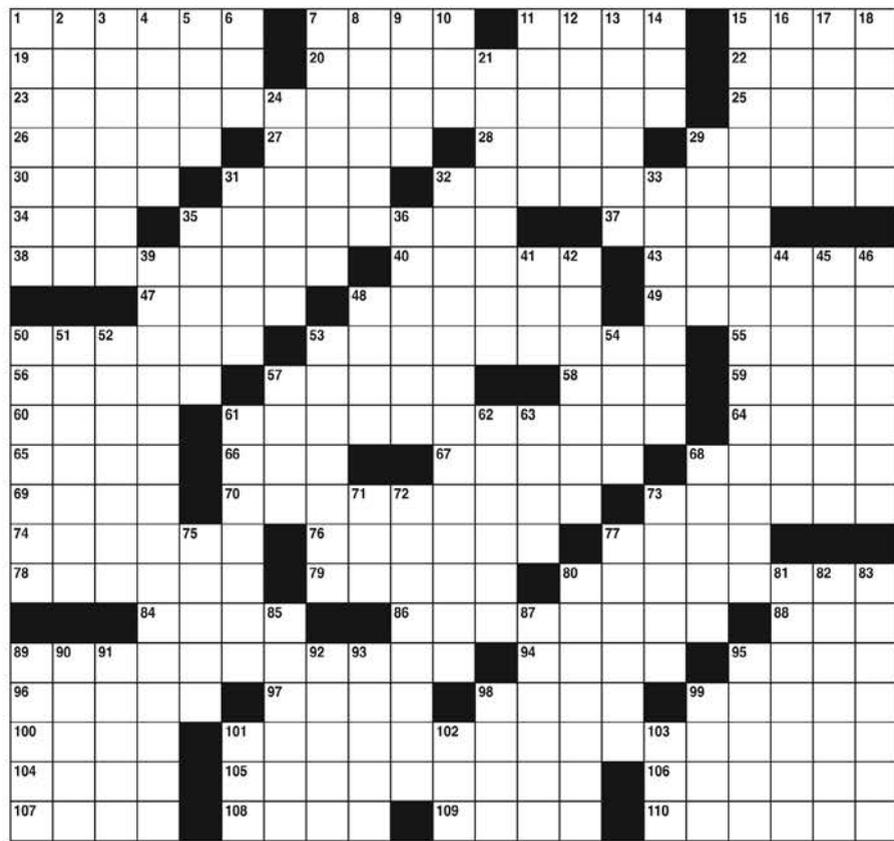
Puzzles

SOFT OPTIONS

BY BYRON WALDEN / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Byron Walden, a math and computer-science professor at Santa Clara University, is a regular crossword contributor to The Times. He says the idea for this puzzle started with the title. "I learned the phrase 'soft option' from the 1980s Pet Shop Boys hit 'West End Girls,'" and everything sprang from there. Byron packs his grids with fresh vocabulary, like 20A, 35A, 53A, 70A, 86A, 105A, 51D and 61D, none of which have ever appeared in a Times crossword before. — W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Hearten
 - 7 "... and it flopped"
 - 11 Attack with snowballs, say
 - 15 Graceful bird
 - 19 Crossword header
 - 20 Clearer in hindsight?
 - 22 ___ Winans, 12-time Grammy-winning gospel singer
 - 23 Apollo 11 landing spot
 - 25 Eligible receiver?
 - 26 Quickly maturing security, for short
 - 27 Helps
 - 28 Flying terrors of myth
 - 29 With 42-Down, Oscars category from 1963 to 2019
 - 30 Misfortunes
 - 31 Semicircular recess
 - 32 Items used by barkeepers, barbecuers and blacksmiths
 - 34 Wackadoodle
 - 35 Enhanced tape format released in 1987
 - 37 Beat poet Cassidy
 - 38 Spewed forcefully
 - 40 Take off the board
 - 43 À la ___ (spit-roasted)
 - 47 Spree
 - 48 Black-___ albatross
- DOWN**
- 49 Knee-jerk response
 - 50 Remove cargo from
 - 53 Describing the 32-Down's image
 - 55 Milk source
 - 56 Impends
 - 57 Inscribed with some ancient characters
 - 58 Whirling toon, familiarly
 - 59 Order, in a way
 - 60 Nonfiction films, informally
 - 61 Metaphor from an hourglass
 - 64 "Come ___!"
 - 65 This: Sp.
 - 66 Sitcom planet of the '70s and '80s
 - 67 Animal life
 - 68 Pondered
 - 69 It's probably over your head
 - 70 One star, typically
 - 73 Relentless go-getters
 - 74 Carl XVI ___ (king of Sweden beginning in 1973)
 - 76 Little bump
 - 77 Eve's third son
 - 78 Soccer chant
 - 79 ___ 3000, half of the hip-hop duo Outkast
 - 80 Persuade with patter
 - 84 A majority
 - 86 Offensive football positions
 - 88 Ruby of "The Jackie Robinson Story"
 - 89 Edgar Rice Burroughs novel, with "The"
 - 94 Talk Like a Pirate Day outbursts
 - 95 Dormer section
 - 96 Turn aside
 - 97 Actress Amanda
 - 98 Taking a bow at the symphony?
 - 99 Waif
 - 100 "A warehouse of facts, with poet and ___ in joint ownership" ("The Devil's Dictionary" definition for "imagination")
 - 101 Its motto is "Agriculture and Commerce"
 - 104 Opposite of exo-
 - 105 Woe for a speeder
 - 106 ___ Blinken, Biden's secretary of state
 - 107 Bit of "kit chat"
 - 108 1974 spoof with the tagline "Would you buy a used secret from these men?"
 - 109 Bits of machinery
 - 110 Latin phrase meaning "based on forecasts"
- ACROSS**
- 6 SFO setting: Abbr.
 - 7 Sang hosannas to
 - 8 Car part the Brits call a "wing"
 - 9 Heading for commonly sought info
 - 10 Capote nickname
 - 11 ___ light
 - 12 Sweeping works
 - 13 Reveals
 - 14 Don't give up
 - 15 Intellectual movement
 - 16 Tyke
 - 17 Performing well on
 - 18 Candy with two flavors in one box
 - 21 Flexible cutters
 - 24 Kid Cudi or Lil Baby, e.g.
 - 29 Fixed look
 - 31 Enveloping atmospheres
 - 32 Pope Pius XII called it "a holy thing perhaps like nothing else"
 - 33 Odor-fighting spray brand
 - 35 Parts of some brackets
 - 36 "Yankee Doodle" has 16 of them
 - 39 Entertainers with bright futures
 - 41 Partner of poivre
 - 42 See 29-Across
 - 44 Juice regimen
 - 45 Like épées vis-à-vis foils
 - 46 Stretches out
 - 48 Curve



- 50 Experience
- 51 Music genre for Erykah Badu and D'Angelo
- 52 Many people find it intolerable
- 53 About 98% of the human genome
- 54 Word meaning "desire" in a classic Sanskrit text
- 57 ___ avis
- 61 Big tear-jerker
- 62 Went under
- 63 Word with fine or signature
- 68 Hands, in slang
- 71 1980s White House nickname
- 72 Dilute something, in a way
- 73 Battery parts?
- 75 Up in the air
- 77 Maker of the Ring in "The Lord of the Rings"
- 80 Surgical instrument with thumbholes
- 81 Joy who wrote "Born Free"
- 82 Forgiving
- 83 Talent for discernment
- 85 Mic-check noise
- 87 Cattle-ranch identifier
- 89 "The Crucible" setting
- 90 Sheepish?
- 91 "Swell!"
- 92 "I can do this. Hit me."
- 93 Some 10-pointers in Greek Scrabble
- 95 Dish made from durum, say
- 98 Prefix with futurism
- 99 Kids of boomers
- 101 Grads-to-be: Abbr.
- 102 Not prescription, in brief
- 103 Scottish negative

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 © Puzzles by Pappocom
HARD - 47

Fill in the blank spaces in the grid so that every vertical column, every horizontal row and every 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9, without repeating any. There is really only one solution to each puzzle.

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

Answers to last week's puzzles

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

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

Obituaries

ROSE MARY BOTELER MCALEER

Ocean Pines

Rose Mary Boteler McAleer passed on to Eternal Life on Friday, April 8, 2022, at home surrounded by her children after a short battle with pancreatic cancer.

Rose Mary will be fondly remembered, not as a celebrity on the movie screen, although she had the beauty of a screen idol, but for her selfless giving of her time and talents with her family, friends and church community.

She was a lector extraordinaire at Sunday Masses and many other church services at St. John Neumann Catholic Church in Ocean Pines, as well as main-

taining the church library.

As a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary, her volunteering at Atlantic General Hospital and at Joseph House with the Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary, it was a wonder that she kept so busy, but never missed writing thank you notes, letters and all those birthday cards, some of which were home made with her artful talent.

Rose Mary was lay Carmelite and lived her life with a strong Catholic faith, alongside her husband, "Jack," of 60 years rearing and educating a large close-knit family.

Born in Washington, D.C., on March

1, 1929 to Bernard Lamar and Kathrine Rose Boteler, the eldest of three in a home of faith, hard work and love during the Depression.

Rose Mary graduated in 1947 from St. Anthony Catholic School in N.E., growing up on Shepherd Street in Brookland. Rose Mary was athletic and could be found playing tennis on the courts at Turkey Thicket with the Franciscan Brothers.

She married Jack in 1949 and moved to Wheaton, Maryland, to raise their family.

St. Catherine Laboure was the family parish, school and hub of activities from the fifties through the eighties.

Rose Mary was active with many of her children's activities at school and served as Prefect of the Sodality.

In 1989, they move to Ocean Pines, Maryland, brought her much joy, loving the sunshine and the ocean, as well as her natural yard-scape and habitat.

Rose Mary was predeceased by her parents, Bernard L. and Kathrine; her husband, John (Jack) H. McAleer; infant daughter, Bernadette Marie McAleer; brother, Bernard Boteler; and step-mother, Alma Boteler.

Rose Mary is survived by her children, John Kevin, Thomas Michael (Kathy), Patrick Bernard (Sally), Janet Marie Bradford (Alan), Andrew Joseph (Barbara), James Arthur, Robert Francis (Kathy), Michael Anthony, Stephen Jerome (Beverly) and Kathleen Marie Lorance (Keith); her brother, John Stanton Boteler; brother, Robert Eugene

Boteler (Mary); sister, Mary Elizabeth DeMattia (Anthony); 32 grandchildren, 23 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces, nephews and dear friends.

Arrangements: Tuesday, April 19, 2022, 11 a.m. Christian Mass St. John Neumann, Berlin, Maryland; Wednesday, April 20, 2022, 10:30-11:30 a.m.; Viewing, Memorial Mass, 11:30 a.m. at St. Patrick Catholic Church, Norbeck, Maryland. Burial at Gate of Heaven Cemetery following Mass.

Donations can be made in Rose Mary's name to The Joseph House, The Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary <https://thejosephhouse.org/the-little-sisters/>, or 401 N. Poplar Hill Ave., Salisbury, Maryland 21801.

Birding fans hit Delmarva in April

Continued from Page 21

country's premier birding areas, thanks to an extensive variety of habitat protected by coastal parks, refuges and wildlife management areas. More than 400 bird species have been recorded in the region and previous Weekend tallies have topped 200 species.

If boasting that many species isn't enough, participants should feel even better knowing that they've helped Delmarva's birds by promoting birding and habitat conservation.

Birders, both novice and experienced, make an important statement about the economic value of birds and their habitats through the money they spend in local hotels, restaurants and shops. Participants are encouraged to remind local businesses that they are here to enjoy Delmarva's natural areas and the birds that inhabit them.

"It's our vast shallow bays and large tracts of protected marshes and bald cypress forests that make the Delmarva Peninsula one of the finest birding regions in the nation," said guide and organizer Dave Wilson. "During the Weekend, our guests will hike on private farmland and woodland that are normally off-limits to birders, and our waterborne trips go where the birds are."

Wilson added that most trips are not physically taxing and that the event provides a rare opportunity to tally 100 species in a day in places that are normally inaccessible to the public.

Sponsors for the events include the Dogfish INN, Maryland's Coast (Worcester County Tourism), Southern Delaware Tourism, the Boardwalk Hotel Group, Jolly Roger Amusement Park, the Maryland Coastal Bays Program, the Delaware Center for the Inland Bays, and Somerset County (MD) Tourism. Special thanks also go to the private property owners who allow access to their properties for this weekend.

Additional sponsor and registration information, field trip descriptions and other resources for Delmarva Birding are available at www.delmarvabirding.com, call 443-614-0261 or email dmvbirds@gmail.com.

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Cuisine

Present dry-aged meatloaf on gougères

I have been up since 2:38 this morning. I can't remember any particularly startling dreams, but I knew that I was up for the day. That happens sometimes when you have a mind that runs marathons daily.



By Paul Suplee,
MBA, CEC, PC-3

Sadly, though, these marathons are never accompanied with any tangible health benefits. No, I simply wake up and know that my day has begun.

With significant changes abound in my near future, my mind is a non-stop whirlwind; restaurant renovations definite in one location and mostly certain in another at the top of my list.

Parting ways with my job in education as I wait patiently and hopefully for another opportunity to rear its head, I am bracing for changes to lifestyle, extra time on my hands and exploring the possibility of getting back into competition, videos and sponsorships. I am even toying with the idea of bringing the ever-popular truffles back, but there are a few phone calls that I need to make first. Only time will tell.

As I sit here thinking about the myriad challenges and blessings that I have had over the past 10 years at the college, I smile as I think of how many things I have learned from my students.

I went into the field 14 years ago (you simply could not pay me enough money to teach high school again), and I have kept in touch with a great many of my former students, both from high school and college.

It has been an honor to watch students grow and succeed, smashing everyone's expectations, especially their own self-limiting ones.

It has been delightful to receive emails, messages and phone calls from former students who are doing anything from catering dignitaries to running restaurants and hotels, to serving our great nation in the military.

But, at the end of the day, I know that I have learned more from them than they ever learned from me. I guess that is the point of all of those "teach the teacher" moments in our field.

Just over the last two weeks, I



learned two invaluable, practical things that will serve me well for the remainder of my short time here on earth, and they were both from students.

I have been dry-aging beef for about nine years now, as fascinating to me as making cheese, beer and bread. That is a glorious thing.

However, I was always taught to discard the bark as it can be a festering playground for bacteria. When a student questioned me on this, I simply stated "You can't use it."

However, when I got home, I researched it and found that if it is dried in a curing cabinet in a safe environment (ours is), then you can use the bark with all its rich and sharp flavors and nuances.

Fast forward to this past week, and that is where the meatloaf came in.

Then this week when the students were making profiteroles (cream puffs), one of my students walked up and asked if he could make gougères. I said "Sure. What the hell are those?"

He told me and I was hooked before I even tasted them. Savory, cheesy, doughy puffs? Yes, thank you. And using them as a slider roll? I'm dead. I am a new man, truly a new man, indeed.

So get out there, learn in your heart of hearts that you know nothing, and try new things. And stop waking up so damn early.

Dry-Aged Meatloaf Sliders on Gougères

makes about 30 sliders

1 batch dry-aged meatloaf (recipe follows)
30 ea. Fresh gougères (recipe follows)
1 ½ c. Spicy Mayo (or your favorite topping)

1. Cut the gougères like burger buns
2. Spread spicy mayonnaise on the top and bottom
3. Place burgers on the gougères & serve

Dry-Aged Meatloaf

makes one decent loaf

8 oz. Ground chuck
8 oz. Ground short rib
8 oz. Ground dry-aged beef scraps
1 c. finely processed panko breadcrumbs
2 fresh eggs (duck eggs are astonishing in this)
¾ c. Whole milk (don't skimp now!)
½ ea. Medium yellow onion, diced
2 ea. Roma tomato, skinned, peeled and diced
½ ea. Yellow bell pepper, diced
1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
3 Tbsp. Granulated garlic
1 Tbsp. Onion powder
1 tsp. Dry mustard
1 tsp. Celery seed
Salt and Pepper to taste

1. Combine all ingredients in a bowl and make a tester to make sure

that it is good (cook a little piece to make sure the seasonings are correct).

2. Form into a loaf or cram it into a loaf pan.

3. Bake in a 375F oven until the internal temperature is around 150F.

4. Top the loaf with ketchup (I like homemade but store-bought will suffice) and return to the oven.

5. Cook until the internal temperature reaches 165F and the ketchup has turned into a nice, caramelized glaze.

6. Remove and allow to cool and set a bit before slicing it.

7. You can slice and serve immediately, or refrigerate and reheat at service time.

Fresh Gougères

makes about 30

1. I thought about this long and hard, and if I write this recipe out, there would simply be no room for my insightful musings.

2. As such, I am going to give you a homework assignment; look it up. Find a pâte à choux recipe and add cheesy cheese to it, and you will be fine.

—Paul Suplee is a Professor of Culinary Arts at Wor-Wic Community College and owner of boxcar40 and boxcar on main. Visit him at www.boxcar40.com; www.boxcaronmain.com

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