

## OPA assessments could increase significantly

Ocean Pines Association (OPA) members could see a \$127 (13.4%) increase in property assessment if the proposed OPA budget for Fiscal 2019-2020 announced Friday is approved by the Board of Directors.

In a statement OPA said the proposed budget “will accomplish many things that will be new to the Association’s budget and very good for the long-term health of the Association.”

That is the upside, according to General Manager John Bailey’s executive summary; but the downside is that to fund those items, there is now recommended to be a significant increase in the annual assessment. Excerpts of Bailey’s executive summary are on page 3.

“In order to understand these major considerations, and to generally understand the entirety of the budget, one must look strategically at what the recommended budget accomplishes and how it creates a foundation for a healthy future – financially and for an improvement in the maintenance, and thus value, of the community’s assets,” Bailey explained in the executive summary.

The Recommended Budget for FY19-20 includes the “full, properly calculated reserve contributions; updated and current depreciation calculations; funding of over \$600,000 in new capital (for the Police Department/Admin building; and a room addition at the Sports Core pool); deferred operational maintenance; and drainage,” according to Bailey.

The recommended assessment for FY19-20 is \$1,078, a \$127 increase or 13.4% over the current amount of \$951.

Bailey reminds the Membership that “as the budget schedule indicates, this is a process, a collaborative one. We started with staff and the Gen-

please see *budget* on page 15



**Teacher of the Year** - Jen Spicer was recently named the Teacher of the Year for Ocean City Elementary School (OCES). Ms. Spicer received her undergraduate teaching degree from Salisbury University and Master’s Degree in Applied Technology from Wilmington University. She has been part of the OCES family since 2012, teaching kindergarten and third grade. Ms. Spicer is committed to providing all students with a strong educational foundation for a lifetime of learning. She has great passion for teaching and works hard to ensure that all students feel cared for and understand their full potential. Pictured left to right **Julie Smith**, assistant principal and **Jen Spicer**, the 2019 OCES Teacher of the Year.

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# Community Calendar JANUARY



## Monday

### Ocean Pines Poker Club

Poker players wanted in Ocean Pines area for Monday evenings. Call 410-208-1928.

### Delmarva Chorus

The Delmarva Chorus meets every Monday evening at 7PM at the Ocean Pines Community Center in Ocean Pines, Md. Women of all ages are invited to sing with us. Please contact CAROL at 410-641-6876.

## Monday/Tuesday

### Sanctioned Duplicate Bridge

Open bridge games Monday at 12 p.m., Tuesday at 10 a.m. at OP Community Center. Call Mary Stover 410-726-1795.

## Tuesday

### Families Anonymous

From 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at room 37 in the the Community Church at Ocean Pines on Rte. 589. For more information call Carol at 410-208-4515.

## Tuesday/Thursday

**Poker Players** wanted for Gentlemen's Poker in North Gate area Ocean Pines. Game played every Tuesday & Thursday evening 5:45 p.m. to 10:45 p.m. on Pinehurst Rd. Ocean Pines. Call 410-208-0063 for more information.

## Wednesday

### Kiwanis Club Meeting

Weekly meetings at 8 a.m. on Wednesdays in the Ocean Pines Community Center. Doors open 7 a.m.

### Elks Bingo

Ocean City Elks in Ocean City (behind Fenwick Inn) open at 5:30 p.m. Early birds at 6:30 and bingo at 7 p.m. Call 410-250-2645.

### Rotary Club

Ocean City/Berlin Rotary Club meetings are held at 5:45 p.m. at the Captains Table in Ocean City. Contact Stan.Kahn@carouselhotel.com.

### Square Dancing

The Pinesteppers have introduction to square dancing at the OP Community Center at 7 p.m. Call Bruce Barrett at 410-208-6777.

### AL-Anon/OP-West OC-Berlin

Wednesday Night Bayside Beginnings Al-Anon family meetings are held at the Ocean Pines Community Center at 7:30 p.m.

## Second Wednesday

The Polish American Club of Delmarva meets at the Columbus Hall, behind St Luke's Church, 100th St & Coastal Hwy, Ocean City, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. the second Wednesday of the month. Come join us if you are of Polish or Slavic descent. No meetings.

June, July, August. Call Helen Sobkowiak 410-723-2639 or Maryann Lula 410-250-2548 for more information.

## Thursday

### Story Time

Stories, music and crafts at 10:30 a.m. for children ages 3-5 at Ocean Pines library. Call 410-208-4014.

### Beach Singles

Beach Singles 45 for Happy Hour at Harpoon Hanna's at 4 p.m. Call Arlene at 302-436-9577 or Kate at 410-524-0649 for more activities. BeachSingles.org.

### Legion Bingo

American Legion in Ocean City opens doors at 5:30 p.m., games begin at 7. For information call 410-289-3166.

### Gamblers Anonymous

Group meets at 8 p.m. at the Atlantic Club, 11827 Ocean Gateway, West Ocean City. Call 888-424-3577 for help.

## Friday

### Knights of Columbus Bingo

Bingo will be held behind St. Luke's Church, 100th St. in Ocean City. Doors open at 5 p.m. and games begin at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments available. Call 410-524-7994.

## First Saturday

### Creative Writing Forum

Every first Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. at the Berlin Library. Novice and established writers gather to share their fiction, non-fiction, and creative writing projects. Program includes critiques and appreciation, market leads, and writing exercises.



On this date in the House chamber of the U.S. Capitol, President Andrew Jackson, the seventh president of the United States, survives the first attempt against the life of a U.S. president.

During a funeral service honoring the late Representative Warren R. Davis of South Carolina, a man identified as Richard Lawrence discharged two separate pistols in the direction of President Jackson. Both weapons misfired, and Lawrence was promptly subdued and arrested. During the subsequent criminal investigation, the suspect was found to be insane and was sent to a mental prison. Three decades later, President Abraham Lincoln would become the first president to be assassinated.

## Taco Night is February 5

It has been a decade since Stephen Decatur High School (SDHS) began hosting \$1 Taco Night. The event has become a tradition.

"While Taco Night has consistently been one of our biggest school fundraisers, it has also grown into a special community night for many of our parents, business partners, and alumni," said Thomas Sites, SDHS principal.

Typically, over a thousand people attend the event.

SDHS also owes much of the event's success to Sunrise Church, whose congregation has organized and volunteered for the event since its inception.

The event will be held Tuesday, February 5 from 2:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the SDHS cafeteria.

In addition to chicken and beef tacos, there will also be sides, drinks, and desserts. Reservations are not necessary. Patrons can dine in or carry out. All proceeds benefit Stephen Decatur High School.

For questions, please call Stephen Decatur High School at (410) 641 - 2171.

## AYCE breakfast offered

The Grace Parker All You Can Eat Breakfast will be held on Wednesday, February 6 between 7 a.m. and noon at First Presbyterian Church of Ocean City located at 13th St. and Philadelphia Ave. Eggs any style, pancakes, buckwheat pancakes, sausage, ham, biscuits, hash brown potatoes, grits, coffee and tea will be available. The cost is \$9. Carry out is available for \$7. Milk, soda and orange juice will also be available. For more information call 410-289-9340 and leave a message.

## Buddy Holly program slated at library

February 3, 1959, will forever be known as "the day the music died," when a plane crash killed three of the top musical entertainers of the time: Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, and J.P. Richardson, otherwise known as "The Big Bopper." The Ocean Pines Branch of the Worcester County Library will mark the 60th anniversary of the tragic event with a lively discussion on Friday, February 1, at 2 p.m. in the

library's main meeting room.

Buddy Holly and the Crickets enjoyed a long series of hits including "That'll Be the Day," "Peggy Sue," and "Not Fade Away" during an amazingly brief 18-month period. His unique vocal style, the driving rhythm of his guitar-playing, and his insistence on writing his own songs inspired "The Beatles" and "The Rolling Stones," and influenced most rock performers of the 1960s and beyond.

The deaths of Holly and Ritchie Valens, who was dominating the

charts with hits such as "Donna" and "La Bamba," are believed to have stalled the momentum of rock 'n' roll at the end of the 1950s. Since that time, all of their songs have become standards.

Presenters Frank DeLucco and Harry Burkett will detail how the lives of these three men converged, and the incredible series of events that led to their demise in a farm field in Clear Lake, Iowa. For more information, call the Ocean Pines library at 410-208-4014.

## Free film to be shown

Wor-Wic Community College will host a free showing of the film, "Suicide: The Ripple Effect," on Tuesday, February 5, at 6 p.m., in Guerrieri Hall on the college campus in Salisbury. This event is sponsored by Wor-Wic's counseling office and the Student Government Association. For more information, call 410-334-2900.





**Happy Birthday** - Joe Green of Ocean Pines turned 90 years old earlier this month. The Parke Wine Appreciation Group and Montclair Court neighbors celebrated with him. Joe and his Betty are seated. Photo by David Carroll

## Bailey provides detail on proposed budget

What follows are excerpts from the executive summary prepared by John Bailey, general manager of the Ocean Pines Association, on the proposed community budget.

**Introduction:** The Recommended Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 will accomplish many things that will be new to the association's budget and very good for the long-term health of the Association. That's the upside; the downside is that to fund those items, there is now recommended to be a significant increase in the annual assessment. In order to understand these major considerations, and to generally understand the entirety of the budget, one must look strategically at what the recommended budget accomplishes and how it creates a foundation for a healthy future – financially and for an improvement in the maintenance, and thus value, of the community's assets.

It should be noted that this budget includes the full, properly calculated reserve contributions; updated and current depreciation calculations; funding of over \$600,000 in new capital (for the Police Department/Admin building; and a room addition at the Sports Core pool); deferred operational maintenance; and drainage. It does not arbitrarily attempt to avoid addressing OPA issues in favor of assessment calculations. This approach provides the community with the op-

portunity to participate in the decision process and allows the Board of Directors to specifically identify which areas will not be funded, if any, and why, in the next fiscal year.

The budget development process is one of collaboration – by many of your fellow members, in addition to the OPA staff. The Budget & Finance Committee members, those who are specifically dedicated to helping manage the financial affairs of the community, have spent many hours of volunteer time reviewing the operating budget and the reserves. The B&F Committee conducted three days of intense and detailed budget meetings. Their effort was followed by two days of budget discussions by the Board of Directors. Those five work sessions yielded a lot of modifications and questions that created further significant changes to the Proposed Budget and have now led to the Recommended Budget.

### The Details – Interim Changes

The original Proposed Budget, issued January 4, 2019, began with an assessment of \$951. As a result of many review meetings and discussions with the Budget & Finance Committee, we increased the proposed assessment by \$31 to \$982, a 3.3% increase. This figure was presented at the membership budget hearing on January 12. What changes caused the \$31 increase?

please see **summary** on page 4

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**summary**  
from page 3

- Added net revenue to Marina (\$ 10,000) (\$ 1.18)-
- Fire / EMS Capital Replacement Contribution \$133,000 \$15.74+
- Add for Legal Services \$ 50,000 \$ 5.92+
- Additional Funding for Deferred Maintenance \$ 40,000 \$ 5.37+
- IT Redundancy, Depreciation \$50,000 \$ 5.90 \$31

**Recommended Budget Changes** Conversations and discussions have continued over the last two weeks at the Board level and with additional input from the General Manager, the B&F Committee, the Treasurer, and the Assistant Treasurer. As a result of everyone's collaborative effort, we have made some additional recommended changes to the budget as of January 24, 2019.

- Deficit Recovery**
- \$237,038 Capital Reserve Contributions
  - \$650,136 Replacement Capital Reserve
  - \$ 89,548 Road Reserve
  - \$400,000 Road Depreciation
  - \$225,000 Road Contribution
  - \$175,000 Bulkhead Reserve
  - All Lots \$160,000
  - Waterfront Lot Bulkheads \$465
  - New Capital Debt Service \$ 25,000
  - \$200,000 for Room Addition to Sports Core Pool – Borrow from 3rd Party @ 6%
  - \$400,000 for Expansion of the Police/Administration Building – Borrow from Reserves @ 3%

**Deficit Recovery**  
The complete recovery of the deficit of \$1.6 million (as of April 30, 2018) from the prior two fiscal years is desired to be completed as soon as possible, and practical. The current fiscal year will see the deficit reduced to approximately \$1 million. The Recommended Budget includes a plan to apply \$337,098 to deficit recovery and thus eliminate the debt that we owe ourselves in three years.

This approach is financially healthy and very worthwhile, however, this level of funding for deficit recovery does have a corresponding impact on the recommended budget. While there is no additional increase to the assess-

ment for deficit recovery, the amount of funding available for the new items in the recommended budget had to be off-set by cuts in other line items or paid for through increased assessments, or a combination thereof.

The Recommended Budget provides new spending in the operating fund for:

- Drainage +\$178,000
- Deferred Maintenance (non-reserve funding) +\$160,000
- Pay Study Adjustments, 2% labor increase, 10% benefit inflation +\$275,000

The Recommended Budget also includes the following increases in spending:

- Drainage (Road Reserve funding) \$620,000
- Deferred Maintenance (Replacement Reserve funding) \$305,000
- Total spending on Drainage is proposed to increase by \$798,000; from \$117,000 in FY18-19 to \$915,000 in FY19-20.

Total spending on Deferred Maintenance for this coming fiscal year of 2019-20 is proposed at \$465,000.

**Deferred Maintenance.**  
This is to cover many repair and maintenance projects that have not been addressed over the years. It includes \$305K worth of capital items to be paid from the Replacement Reserve Fund. This effort also includes \$160K to be paid for out of the Operating Fund.

Examples of Deferred Maintenance are:

- The guard shack at the Beach Club Parking Lot
- Many exterior signs throughout the community
- Mulch for all of the playgrounds
- Additional stone dust for trails
- Small playground equipment
- Basketball goals and backboards

If approved, many of these deferred maintenance projects are desired to be completed by Memorial Day weekend, 2019. Obviously, however, with so much to do, the completion of these long-deferred items will be accomplished on a rolling basis throughout the year.

**Replacement Capital Reserve Contribution**

The annual contribution to the Replacement Capital Reserve is recommended to increase by \$185,404. Depreciation for FY19-20 will be in-

*please see summary on page 12*



**Donation** - Members of the Democratic Womens Club (DWC) **Doris Fields, Sandy Sribnick, and Debbis Shuster** present a donation of \$1,175 to the Diakonia food pantry. Accepting the donation are Diakonia Executive Director **Claudia Nagle** and Food Pantry Manager **Michelle Ascoli**. Donations were collected at the Ocean City Women's March sponsored by the DWC and Indivisible Worcester County, and at the DWC January meeting.

## Safe boating course offered

It's never too soon to take a Safe Boating Course. Summer will be here before we know it. Understanding the rules of the water are more important than ever, with more boaters, faster boats, and unfortunately more accidents on the water, safety is everyone's responsibility.

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary will offer the Safe Boating Class at the Ocean Pines library on the evenings of February 5, 6 and 7.

Perhaps you are starting out in boating, or coming back to it. Regardless, the Maryland Basic Boating Class is a great opportunity to satisfy Maryland requirements and to get practical boating knowledge from state certified Coast Guard Auxiliary Instructors.

The Maryland Boating Safety Education Act requires that anyone born after July 1, 1972 must possess a Maryland Basic Boating Safety Certificate to operate a boat in the state of Maryland. Those attending the class who pass the test will receive a Maryland Boating Certificate which is NASBLA approved and valid in all states and required for all ages when operating a boat in Virginia, New Jersey, and other states.

The course will be held at the Ocean Pines library. The three-

evening course will begin at 6 p.m. and end no later than 9 p.m. each evening. Space is limited.

A fee of \$15 is required to cover the cost for the course and all course materials. To register, or if you have questions, please contact:

Barry Cohen at 410-935-4807 or E mail CGAUXOC@Gmail.com

Future classes: March 5-7, April 23-25, Saturday, May 11 (all day), June 4-6, July 9-11, Saturday Aug. 3 (all day) and September. 3-5.

*The Courier* welcomes letters for publication. Preference is given to letters addressing community and county topics and have not appeared in another publication.

Letters must be signed and include a phone number where the author can be reached to verify authenticity. Letters are not corrected for spelling or grammar and can be no more than 300 words.

E-mail letters to:

[thecourier@delmarvacourier.com](mailto:thecourier@delmarvacourier.com)



# Heels, soles and laces

This week some thoughts about shoes.

Chaos. Disorder. A veritable scene of upheaval. And that's the polite way to describe the bottom of my closet



***It's All About. . .***  
By **Chip Bertino**

chipbertino@delmarvacourier.com

where my shoes are kept. Despite my best efforts at organization my shoes are kept in a mish mashed heap of heels, soles and laces.

Why is this? I do not know. It's a situation I've had to manage for as long as I can remember. It's not like I have a plethora of footwear. My collection can be divided into formal (one pair of black leather shoes), casual (two brown pairs, one black pair), play (an old pair of sneakers), summer (a pair of flip flops and a pair of sandals) and work boots (for when I work around the yard). There is also an old pair of casual shoes that have slipped to the level I call knockarounds. And that's about it. Yet, try as I might, I can never seem to maintain order. Shortly after I arrange things in an orderly, descending manner (formal down to knockarounds) I'll find a brown casual left shoe paired with a right summer sandal. And things go downhill from there.

After about a week or so the shoes at the bottom of my closet are arranged more poorly than the Lost and Found at a bus terminal. I just can't understand why.

Many years ago I tried one of those shoe bags that hang on the back of the closet door where there is a pouch for each pair of shoes. In principle the concept should have worked. In reality though, at least for me, it was a disaster. Not all my shoes fit in the sleeves. The left shoe fit but the right shoe not so much. And then where do work boots go? In short order I inadvertently ripped many of the pouches while attempting to insert and retrieve shoes. Within a week the bag was gone and I was no closer to gaining control of my wayward shoes.

Admittedly at the end of the day or when I need to make a quick shoe change I throw my shoes toward the bottom of the closet. Hitting the closet floor is of more interest to me than accuracy in situations like that. So I guess I'm partly to blame. Come to think of it, there are times when I'll slip off my shoes and place them under my bureau for quick retrieval. Although they're handy it doesn't mean they are any more organized. Eventually they get pushed farther under the bureau, usually by the vacuum cleaner. By the time I go looking for them they are encrusted in a multi-tiered layer of dust.

I'm not much of a shoe hound. My tastes are really simple. If find a pair of brown shoes I like I'll also purchase a pair in black. It keeps things simple. However this has led to at least two embarrassing situations over the years. I usually get dressed in near darkness so as not to disturb my sleeping wife during the early morning hours. As a result I've grabbed shoes from the dark closet, put them on and headed out only to

discover later that, you guessed it, one shoe was brown and one shoe was black. An organized shoe closet would not have necessarily avoided this situation but it could have. For the record I'd much rather walk around with different color shoes than bear the wrath of waking my wife during the early morning hours.

Another aspect of my shoe experience is that for the most part I am a creature of habit. I have no compunction over wearing the same shoes on consecutive days. If they're comfortable and match or at least complement what I'm wearing I'm fine. During warm weather, I prefer to wear flip flops. That's all I need. And if I could get away with it while working, I'd wear them then as well.

Suffice to say I have a problem with my shoes. Maybe at some point down the road I'll find a cure. But until that time arrives the best I can hope for is to be wearing the same shoes in the same color.



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# The Strange case of Nate Douty

Commentary by **Joe Reynolds**

On January 5, 2019, OPA Human Resources (HR) manager Nate Douty attended a closed session of the OPA Board of Directors as part of a board investigation into charges by an OPA employee against Director Slobodan Trendic. On Monday, January 7, 2019, OPA fired Nate



Douty. The story of how the Trendic investigation and the Douty firing are intertwined yet entirely separate is complex, and in many ways troublesome.

*OceanPinesForum.com* interviewed Nate Douty on January 18, 2019.

This story began when a complaint from an OPA Public Works employee about actions of Director Trendic came initially to Douty while he was at the Public Works Building and a supervisor brought the complaint from the

employee to Douty's attention to handle as an HR issue.

Since it involved a board member, Douty then informed General Manager John Bailey of the complaint. The GM took the complaint to OPA President Doug Parks.

Subsequently, Douty was asked to attend a private meeting with Directors Parks, Horn, and Tuttle, along with the GM. Those board members at that time had statements from the employee about the complaint against Trendic.

According to Douty, Parks asked Douty to also obtain statements from employees of a private contractor who were present when Trendic spoke to the complaining OPA employee in the field. Parks also told Douty, "You need to tell Eddie Wells (OPA Director of Public Works) and any employees involved that the HR department handled the issue in the proper way and the issue would be addressed at the board level."

Douty talked to the private contractor employees and asked for written statements but never received any. However, Douty reported the essence of those conversations to Parks.

The entire issue lay dormant until a special board meeting was called for January 5, 2019 with an agenda item for a closed session "to discuss an employee complaint regarding actions by Director Trendic."

Douty attended that closed meeting as OPA's HR manager. "When I entered the room the attitude in the room was not good. The situation accelerated and quickly turned hostile toward me," Douty told *OceanPinesForum.com*.

Douty said the complaining employee was not in the room during his time in the closed session. Only Douty, the board members, and OPA Treasurer, John Viola were in the room. The GM was not present.

After the closed session, Director Parks released a statement saying Director Trendic had done nothing

*please see commentary on page 15*



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[thecourier@delmarvacourier.com](mailto:thecourier@delmarvacourier.com)

## Bringing Maryland's education system in to the 21<sup>st</sup> century

**Editor:**

I write this letter in response to the editorial, "What Others Are Saying: Education Changes Would Be Alarming". Interestingly the writer discusses omissions regarding the state education funding formula while the writer himself has left out a glaring omission.

The Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education was established to review and make any needed recommendations to the state education funding formula and make policy recommendations that

would enable Maryland's pre-k-12 system to perform at the level of the best-performing school systems in the world. The Kirwan Commission concluded that in order to determine what adjustments in the education funding formula are necessary that they must first define for Maryland what constitutes a World-Class education system.

In its analysis the Kirwan Commission learned alarming data that suggests not only is Maryland's education system not globally competitive, it is

*please see education on page 15*

## The effect of technology on jobs

**Editor:**

I wonder if we as a nation are capable of learning from the past.

While politicians in our Nation's Capital play tit-for-tat over just about everything, there are important issues that need to be addressed.

An issue that is of particular concern to me is what technological advances are likely to do to the employment picture in the United States.

We know that one of the main contributors to the despair and hopelessness that fueled the Opioid Crisis was lack of employment in traditionally blue-collar jobs – these jobs went "overseas" or were just eliminated due in part to trade agreements and environment regulations (such as closing of the coal mines).

The next big tech break-through appears to be "driverless cars" or "automated vehicles."

Millions and millions of Americans, mostly blue-collar workers, drive for a living. Truck drivers, taxi and Uber drivers, parts deliveries, UPS

and Fed Ex and other overnight services, etc. I wonder if anyone in our government, or in private industry, has given any thought to what could be a tsunami of unemployment and its attendant hopelessness and despair. Is anyone finding ways to mitigate the damage to these workers and their families? Is anyone discussing ways to encourage transition to different kinds of work? We gain our self-esteem from work and accomplishment, from feeling needed. When the jobs go away and unemployment is rampant, despair sets in. The unspoken message is "We don't need you, you have nothing to contribute".

Although this technology is still in its developmental stage, I believe we need to start a conversation about this issue – because it's coming whether we like it or not.

Please encourage your elected representatives on the State and Federal level to work with private enterprise to address this issue.

**Carol Frazier**  
*Ocean Pines*

Social media has had a profound impact on various industries, and the restaurant business is no exception. According to the 2018 Dining Trends Survey from Zagat, 53 percent of the nearly 13,000 diners surveyed indicated they browse food photos on social media. Perhaps more interesting to



restaurant owners is that 75 percent of those who admitted to browsing food photos on social media indicated they have chosen restaurants based on such photos. Customers who take photos of the foods they order and then share those photos via social media are essentially providing restaurants with free advertising. In fact, Zagat notes that many new restaurants feature interior designs that include photo-friendly lighting, reflecting that restaurant owners recognize the benefits of their customers stopping to snap a photo before diving into their meals.

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## The Year of the Pig

More than one billion people across the globe celebrate Chinese New Year every year. In 2019, Chinese New Year officially begins on February 5, continuing for two weeks until celebrations draw to a close on February 19.

2019 is the Year of the Pig. The pig is the twelfth of the 12 Zodiac animals, and myths tell some rather amusing stories about how the pig earned its place in the pecking order. One such myth suggests Jade the Emperor invited 12 animals to his party, and the order of those animals would be determined by when they arrived. As the legend goes, the pig overslept and was the twelfth and final animal to arrive at the party.

Another myth suggests the pig was the last animal to arrive at the party because a wolf destroyed its house. Forced to rebuild the house before it could depart for the party, the pig was the last one to arrive.

But revelers should not mistake the

pig's placement for bad fortune. In fact, according to Travel China Guide, the pig has been regarded as wealth because it has no plan to harm others and can bring affluence to people. Chi-

n e s e -  
NewYear.net also notes that pigs' chubby faces and big ears are also symbolic of fortune.

Several characteristics distinguish men and women born in the pig year. Men born in such

years are optimistic, gentle and very focused. Though they are cool-headed, men born in the pig year are not considered financially savvy and are gullible because they are trusting of others and easily scammed. Men born

*please see year page 11*



**Helping** - Members of the Democratic Women's Club and Indivisible Worcester delivered coffee and donuts to the US Coast Guard Station in Ocean City and inquired about what else the community could do to support the USCG staff while they are working without pay during the government shutdown. From left to right: **Gail Jankowski, Dell Purell, Joe Jankowski, Joan Roache, Ron Jones, Toby Perkins, Cindy Dillon, Lyle Dillon, and Becky Simonds.**

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## Vascular lab earns accreditation

Early detection of life-threatening heart disorders, stroke and other diseases is possible through the use of vascular testing procedures performed within hospitals, outpatient centers and physicians' offices.

Cardiovascular diseases are the number one cause of death in the United States. On average, one American dies every 39 seconds of cardiovascular disease – disorders of the heart and blood vessels. Stroke, a disorder of the blood supply to the brain, is the third leading cause of death and the leading cause of disability in the country, with nearly 800,000 new strokes occurring annually.

There are many factors that contribute to an accurate diagnosis based on vascular testing. The training and experience of the technologist performing the procedure, the type of equipment used and the quality assessment metrics each facility is required to measure, all contribute to a positive patient outcome. IAC accreditation is a "seal of approval" that patients can rely on as an indicator of consistent quality care and a dedication to continuous improvement.

Atlantic General Hospital Vascular Laboratory, located in Berlin, has been granted a three-year term of accreditation by the Intersocietal Accreditation Commission (IAC) in Vascular Testing in the area(s) of Peripheral Arterial Testing, Peripheral Venous Testing, and Extracranial Cerebrovascular Testing.

This latest accreditation awarded to Atlantic General Hospital Vascular Laboratory demonstrates the facility's ongoing commitment to providing quality patient care in vascular testing.

Accreditation by the IAC indicates that Atlantic General Hospital Vascular Laboratory has undergone an intensive application and review process and is found to be in compliance with the published Standards thus demonstrating a commitment to quality patient care in vascular testing.

Comprised of a detailed self-evaluation followed by a thorough review by a panel of medical experts, the IAC accreditation process enables both the critical operational and technical components of the applicant facility to be assessed, including representative case

*please see lab on page 11*



**Evening of Blues - Victor Smack** (left), Germantown School Community Heritage Center vice president, introduces multitalented musician **Everett Spells** to a capacity crowd at the annual "Evening of Jazz & Blues" on January 19. Germantown School holds events periodically to promote community awareness of this historical building. For further information, call 410-641-0638.

## Essay contest winners announced

The General Levin Winder Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) recently sponsored two essay contests in area schools. The American History essay contest was open to all grade fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth students in a public, private, or parochial school, or those who are home schooled. This year's topic was "The Women's Suffrage Campaign." A panel of judges comprised of DAR members and nonmembers selected the following chapter winners: Grade 5 – Emily Skorobatsch, Pocomoke Middle School; Grade 6 – Ryan Mann, Worcester Preparatory School; Grade 7 – Case Tilghman, Worcester Preparatory School; and Grade 8 – Sajiv Satyal, Worcester Preparatory School.


The Christopher Columbus Essay Contest was open to students in grades nine through 12 in public, private, or

parochial schools, or those who are home schooled. The topic was "Comparing Ship Technology: The Ships Columbus Used Versus the Ships of Today." Daniel Chen, Worcester Preparatory School, was selected as the General Levin Winder Chapter winner.

The students will receive their awards and be invited to read excerpts from their essays during a luncheon at Worcester Technical High School on April 17th. Their essays have been forwarded for competition at the State level.

The DAR is a women's service organization dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history, and securing America's future through better education. For more information, visit [www.dar.org](http://www.dar.org) or <http://GeneralLevinWinder.marylanddar.org>.

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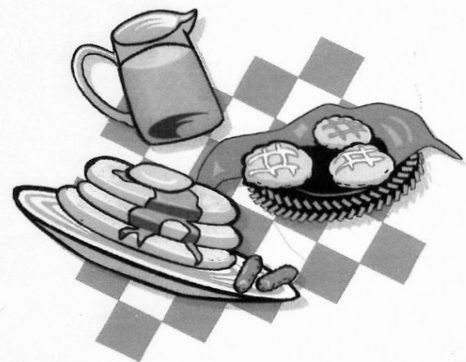


# PANCAKE BREAKFAST

**Saturday, February 23, 2019 ♦ 8 to 11 a.m.**  
**Ocean Pines Community Center Assateague Room**

**Donation:**

- \$6 Adults**
- \$3 Children Under 12**
- Children Under 5 FREE**



**Proceeds to benefit the youth of our community**

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OPA Admin Building, Bank of Ocean City (Ocean  
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All proceeds benefit the Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce





For the Love of Travel

# Introduction to Cambodia

By **Kelly Marx**

I relocated to Cambodia this month to start a job as a kindergarten teacher at an international school. I am currently living in the country's capital, Phnom Penh. Like most cities in developing countries, there is rapid and unrestrained growth. There is a large foreign presence in the capital city in most areas of business, including teaching.

Cambodia is still rebuilding from the genocide inflicted by the Khmer Rouge. Two miles from my apartment is the infamous Security Prison 21 (S-21), where more than 17,000 were held and tortured before being sent to the Choeung Ek killing fields.

Before Pol Pot came to power and turned the building into a torture chamber, it had previously served as Tuol Svay Prey High School. The Khmer Rouge targeted anyone they presumed to be educated and destroyed many schools. The site is now called the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum. It is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day. It is recommended that



you hire a guide to take you through what is bound to be a difficult experience. Something that was very surreal to me about this site is that, regardless of the atrocities that were committed there, life has continued on around it. There are shops, markets, and restaurants, all within walking distance. The site manages to seem completely out of place, yet it is unremarkable from the outside. My experience at Auschwitz was different in the fact that it was more desolated. In this case, you could quite literally stumble upon it without meaning to. This seems similar to how many Cambodians deal with the genocide in their everyday lives; it is always there as a reminder, but it is rarely spoken of as it is a given that no one has forgotten about it.

Other things to do in the capital include exploring the up-and-coming food scene which has some ties to French colonialism but is trying to recapture the true essence of Khmer food. The Royal Palace is open every day for a visit, but some of the buildings are off-limits, as it still serves as the royal residence of the king. Make sure you abide by the dress code and wear pants and

shirts past the elbow.

Near the Palace, you'll find the National Museum of Cambodia. This is the country's leading historical institution. The cost for foreigners is \$10 per person. The palace and the museum are very close in proximity and both have the same hours; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily). I suggest visiting both in the same day, especially if you are short on time.

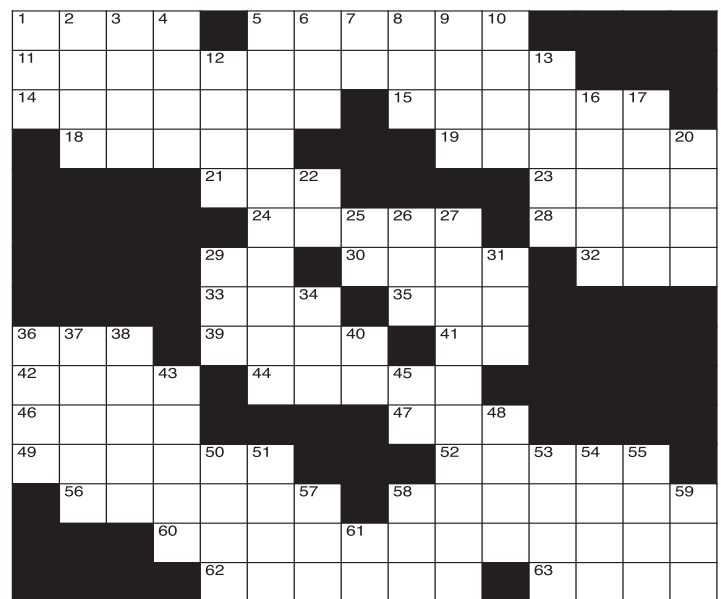
For striking views above the city spend a day catching some rays at one of the city's rooftop pools. My personal favorite spot so far is the rooftop pool at the Aquarius Hotel. It is \$12 for the

day to swim. You are treated to towels, poolside service, and panoramic views. Some trips I plan on making during my stay include to the beaches of Koh Rong, off the coast of Sihanoukville, further north to Battambang, and to the Mondulkiri Province to the northeast of the city. Cambodia has only recently started to catch the attention of travelers, who previously opted for Vietnam

and Thailand instead.

Before arriving in the country, make sure you download both the Grab and PassApp apps on your phone. Both of these are vital in ordering tuk-tuks, Cambodia's favorite mode of transportation. With Grab, you will know the cost of the ride ahead of time and will pay by card. With PassApp, you pay the driver in cash. Also, U.S. citizens require a tourist visa. You can purchase the visa on arrival at the airport or complete the process online before arriving. If you are planning to complete the process in person, make sure you bring two 4 cm x 6 cm passport photos. You will require one blank passport page and your passport must be valid for at least six months beyond your arrival date. You don't need to bother to exchange your dollars into riels if you are planning to stay in the city. Paying with dollars instead of the local currency is most preferred, although you will get riels back as change.

So far, I have loved the warm embrace I have gotten in this magical country and I can't wait to continue to explore my new home until mid-July when my teaching contract is up.

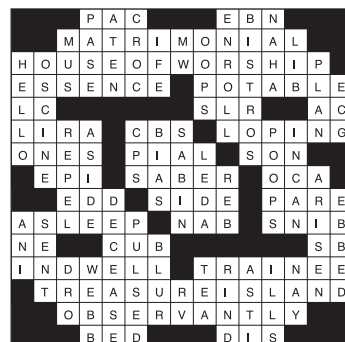


## CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Sheep sounds
- 5. Turn up
- 11. Statements of support
- 14. Spells
- 15. Evildoer
- 18. One-time baseball stadium staple
- 19. Activities
- 21. WWII-era US President
- 23. Soft, flexible leather
- 24. Proverb
- 28. Wish (Hindu)
- 29. Injury treatment
- 30. Red Sox ace
- 32. "Deadliest Catch" captain
- 33. Baseball stat
- 35. Where marine life lives
- 36. Heartbeat test
- 39. Signs on the dotted line
- 41. Atomic #24
- 42. Bind securely
- 44. Swiss Nobel Peace Prize winner
- 46. Fragrant brown balsam
- 47. Where you were born
- 49. Sells a ticket for more than its price
- 52. Where goods are presented
- 56. Jewish salutation
- 58. Fruits
- 60. Poorly educated
- 62. Microorganism
- 63. Depicted

## CLUES DOWN

- 1. Ballplayer's tool
- 2. Hairdo
- 3. From a distance
- 4. Belt one out
- 5. Revising a text
- 6. More (Spanish)
- 7. Beloved Spielberg alien
- 8. BBQ dish
- 9. Provoke
- 10. Within
- 12. Canadian flyers
- 13. Smugly smile
- 16. Buffalo
- 17. Lake in the Kalahari Desert
- 20. Grab
- 22. Rural delivery
- 25. Equally
- 26. It's sometimes passed
- 27. Citizens who are qualified to vote
- 29. Greek letter
- 31. Body part
- 34. Boxing result
- 36. Newts
- 37. Predatory semiaquatic reptiles
- 38. Cockatoo
- 40. The NFL's big game (abbr.)
- 43. Leguminous east Indian tree
- 45. News reporting organization
- 48. A nemesis of Batman
- 50. Legal term
- 51. Not all
- 53. A way to greet
- 54. Knot in a tree
- 55. Satisfy
- 57. Russian space station
- 58. A baby's mealtime accessory
- 59. Stitch together
- 61. \_\_\_ and behold



Answers for January 23



## PRMC nurse honored for efforts

Compassion goes hand-in-hand with excellent clinical care, and Celine Eisele, a registered nurse in Peninsula Regional Medical Center's Intensive Care Unit, is the perfect example of this.

A patient's family member nominated her, saying, "My family will forever be grateful for Celine Eisele. From the beginning of her time as my grandmother's nurse, she treated us with the utmost respect and care while serving as my grandmother's advocate and caregiver. During the week, in the midst of my grandmother's illness, I showed Celine a picture of my grandmother when she was well. The next morning, Celine had done her best to wash my grandmother's hair and fixed it the best she could to look like normal. Just that little act of kindness brought tears to my eyes. On the day my grandmother passed away, Celine was not her nurse, but made a point to check in from time to time. She prepared us for what was to come and stood by us during the most difficult

times. As I left that day, she hugged me one final time. With tears in her eyes, she offered her condolences to us. This wasn't a show. This wasn't just a job. This is her passion. Families of ICU patients are going through the most difficult times. Their hope is hanging on by a thread, their fears are real, their bodies are simply going through the motions. But nurses like Celine make this tolerable. They made the difficult days easier. I will never, ever forget Celine Eisele. As long as I live, I will be indebted to her."

Eisele was honored with the Daisy Award in a ceremony before her colleagues. She received a certificate commending her for being an extraordinary nurse. The certificate reads: "In deep appreciation of all you do, who you are, and the incredibly meaningful difference you make in the lives of so many people." She was also presented with fresh flowers on behalf of the Peninsula Regional Medical staff, and a sculpture called A Healer's Touch, hand-carved by artists of the Shona Tribe in Zimbabwe. To nominate an exceptional nurse, visit [www.peninsula.org/DaisyAward](http://www.peninsula.org/DaisyAward) and share a story.



Celine Eisele



**Fulfilling donations** - Another truck departed Stephen Decatur High School loaded with donations. This time it will be filled with toiletries for Believe in Tomorrow, thanks to senior Connections and National Honor Society member **Jude Al-Hamad**, who led the drive. The lot of toiletries was collected in a two-week period by the student body and several clubs.



### Donation

**Kiwanis Club presented \$500 to the Stephen Decatur High School Key Club. The money will be used for activities this year including sponsoring the second of two annual blood drives and attending the annual Key Club leadership conference in Washington, D.C. this spring.**

Above are (Back row): Advisor **Stella Malone, Kyla Scherlag, Nick Poist, Assistant Principal Dr. Curt Bunting.** Front row: **Lydia Woodley, Kiwanis liaison Roy Foreman, Zehra Mirza and Gabby Izzett.**

lab  
from page 8

studies and their corresponding final reports.

"All ultrasound staff at the Atlantic General Hospital Vascular Lab are registered vascular technologists with specialized vascular training. They are held to strict continuing medical education requirements, keeping them current with the most up-to-date standards. They are part of the vascular team, along with our radiologists," said Jill Todd, lead ultrasound technologist at Atlantic General. "Vascular exams can help reveal blocked or re-

duced blood flow in arteries and veins and assist with identifying problems that could potentially lead to issues such as stroke, poor arterial circulation in the extremities, or deep vein thrombosis (DVT), among other problems."

### Tides for Ocean City (Fishing Pier)

Day	High /Low	Tide Time	Sunrise Sunset
Th	31	High 4:17 AM	7:06 AM
	31	Low 10:51 AM	5:21 PM
	31	High 4:27 PM	
	31	Low 10:34 PM	
F	1	High 5:06 AM	7:05 AM
	1	Low 11:42 AM	5:23 PM
	1	High 5:14 PM	
	1	Low 11:22 PM	
Sa	2	High 5:50 AM	7:05 AM
	2	Low 12:24 PM	5:24 PM
	2	High 5:57 PM	
Su	3	Low 12:06 AM	7:04 AM
	3	High 6:31 AM	5:25 PM
	3	Low 1:00 PM	
	3	High 6:39 PM	
M	4	Low 12:46 AM	7:03 AM
	4	High 7:11 AM	5:26 PM
	4	Low 1:35 PM	
	4	High 7:19 PM	
Tu	5	Low 1:25 AM	7:02 AM
	5	High 7:49 AM	5:27 PM
	5	Low 2:09 PM	
	5	High 8:00 PM	
W	6	Low 2:04 AM	7:01 AM
	6	High 8:27 AM	5:28 PM
	6	Low 2:44 PM	
	6	High 8:39 PM	

Letters sent to The Courier for publication consideration must be signed and include a telephone number where the author can be reached to verify authenticity, if necessary. Letters are not corrected for spelling or grammar and priority will be given to letters of 300 words or less. Letters must be received by Friday at 5 p.m. They can be e-mailed to:



[thecourier@delmarvacourier.com](mailto:thecourier@delmarvacourier.com)

year  
from page 7

in the pig year are quiet and love learning, even though they do not know how to express their knowledge in conversation. Men born in a pig year have large social circles because they treat everyone warmly, and those within their social circles help when the going gets tough.

Women born in a pig year easily gain others' trust because they are easygoing and treat everyone genuinely. Because they are full of excitement, women born in the pig year can sometimes seem over-friendly. Women born in a pig year are organized and hard-working, which translates to wealth. They also love children.

The Chinese New Year is an interesting celebration with a rich history.

**summary**  
from page 4

creasing as a result of the amount of assets put in service this year and next.

The Replacement Reserve Fund consists of monies set aside to replace and preserve our community's physical assets; these are projects that need to be done and have needed to be done on a regular basis, but for which we have not followed the reserve expenditure plan in prior years. This has led to much of the deferred maintenance and lack of upkeep of our major assets.

Replacement Reserve Expenditure \$4,196,079

The depreciation calculation, plus an added inflation factor of 3.8%, indicated that the association should increase the annual assessment contribution from \$1,677,000 to \$1,862,749.

#### Road Reserve Contribution

Currently, the only revenue streams for funding the Road Reserve are the casino funds (\$325K per year) and a small amount of interest earned on the Road Reserve fund itself.

The Association has not been funding Road Depreciation, nor have we been making any other general assessment contribution to the Road Reserve. The cost to maintain, repair, and replace pavement has certainly risen over the years, just as our outside revenue stream has gone down. We need to be making an annual contribution from the assessment to Roads in order to meet this discrepancy.

Road Reserve Expenditure \$1,253,000

Roads \$633,000 Drainage pipes under roads \$620,000 (The Road Reserve allows for specific costs associated with road drainage to be paid from this reserve.) If approved, Requests for Proposals will be issued this spring, with work to commence based upon scheduling with the selected contractors.

#### Bulkhead Reserve Expenditure \$1,619,057

The Recommended Budget includes the \$19 contribution that was waived last year for common property bulkheads. The annual contribution only paid by those members with private bulkheads also will con-

tinue at \$465. If approved, the Requests for Proposals will be issued this spring, with work to commence after the boating season in the fall of 2019. A possible exception to that timeline would be for bulkhead improvements for general association-owned bulkheads.

#### New Capital

The Recommended Budget funds three New Capital items. There is \$6,500 for Police Department-specific software. The other two New Capital items are bold measures to improve the assets of the community.

First is a room addition to the Sports Core Pool. The idea for this addition is to build a room to generate new revenue streams by conducting after-school programming and other revenue producing activities. The business plan supporting this addition estimates an annual revenue stream on the investment such that the ROI will cover the full cost of the construction over a period of years. The estimated cost for this project is \$200,000 and it is recommended that we pay for it by borrowing the full amount from a third party, i.e.: the bank. We would be seeking a \$200,000 loan at approximately 6% interest with a 5-year term. Conversations are ongoing, and if approved, the Association would work to secure the funding and finalize plans such that construction could begin in the fall of 2019.

The second major new capital project that is recommended to be funded is an expansion of the Police/Administration building. The Police Department facilities are, and have been for quite some time, out-

dated and deplorable. The physical space for the PD is to be increased from 1,770 square feet to 5,300 square feet. Initial design for the PD facility has been done with advice from criminal justice facility design experts. To get the PD to the 5,300 square foot dimensions, the PD will take up most of the existing building; thus, the need to expand the building to provide for the displaced area used currently for Administrative Services. The estimated cost for the new, extension of the building is \$400,000. Funding for the new capital portion of this project is recommended to come from the Replacement Reserve as a loan to ourselves over a ten-year term at 3% interest. The Request for Proposals for this project was issued on January 24 and the deadline for submissions is Friday, February 22. The Board will consider action on this proposal on March 9.

It should also be noted that other New Capital requests totaling \$225,714 have not been funded. The issue that everyone needs to remember about New Capital is that we have no funding mechanism for anything new except for increases in the annual assessment, reductions in current spending, or borrowing – either by third party or internally from the reserves. Either approach only leads to fluctuations in an annual assessment and/or other consternation on how to fund such items. Thus, it is important for the Association to create a policy and procedure in FY19-20 on how to fund new capital projects.

#### Payroll

The Recommended Budget fully funds the pay adjustments identified

in the Pay Study. The study found that we had 35 positions that are currently under funded, thus the Recommended Budget includes approximately \$128,000 to bring those positions into better alignment with the competing marketplace. Payroll adjustments include a 2% labor pool increase to be distributed based on merit achievement. Medical benefit costs are budgeted to increase 10% based on the advice of the insurance professionals.

#### User Fees & Fee-Based Amenity Departments

The Recommended Budget increases most user fees an average of three percent. There are no subsidy level increases proposed for the fee-based amenity departments (Golf, Aquatics, and Racquet Sports). For more details on the budget, please see the attachments that are included with this summary. All of the above leads us to a recommended assessment of \$1,078. This would be a \$127 increase or 13.4% over the current amount of \$951. Recommended Assessment Increase of \$127

Major Components of New or Increased Expenditures Drainage \$178,000 \$21.06

Deferred Maintenance \$160,000 \$18.93

Bulkheads (all) \$160,588 \$19.00  
Road Reserve Contribution \$400,000 \$47.33

Legal Services \$ 50,000 \$ 5.91

New Capital Debt Service \$ 25,000 \$ 2.96

Payroll \$275,000 \$32.54

Offsets within Budget (\$175,210) (\$20.73)

Assessment increase: \$127

## OPA president releases statement on recommended budget

*Ocean Pines Association Board President Doug Parks released the following statement on Monday morning:*

OPA Members,

The budget that has been shared with the membership is the recommended budget presented by the GM for the Board's consideration and is by no means the final budget. The Board is evaluating a number of items included in the capital expenses, reserve contributions and salary adjustments. Other considerations are being given to the priorities of major projects and the expense associated with among other items, drainage, deferred maintenance, deficit recovery and road reserves. The intent is to determine what our operations team can realistically be expected to complete in the upcoming fiscal year, and only fund those initiatives in this budget. As a Board we fully expect additional changes to the recommended budget as we continue our review and make these determinations.

The hearing on February 2nd is to review the recommended budget, explain the projects and work associated with the noted expenses and get feedback from the membership. We encourage everyone to share their thoughts on the budget by attending the meeting on Saturday the 2nd or via email at [directors@oceanpines.org](mailto:directors@oceanpines.org)

Thank you.

Ocean Pines Board of Directors.



## Pines police urge motorists to stop for school buses

On the heels of recent complaints, Ocean Pines Police are reminding area drivers of the rules of the road when it comes to school buses.

“The goal is to keep students safe; and with that in mind, it’s important that drivers stay alert for children who are getting on and off school buses in Ocean Pines,” said Denise Sawyer, marketing and public relations director for the Ocean Pines Association.

Some residents have notified Ocean Pines Police of a few motorists who refuse to stop when approaching a stopped school bus with activated flashing red lights, according to Lieutenant Greg Schoepf.

“Lt. Schoepf tells me that those incidents reportedly took place along Ocean Parkway,” said Sawyer.

Under Maryland law, drivers approaching a stopped school bus with activated flashing red lights must stop for the bus. This applies to drivers in

both directions. Drivers approaching the bus from the opposite direction must also stop if there is no physical barrier, such as a grassy median.

Any violation of these laws can result in fines and citations.

“If an officer happens to witness a driver illegally passing a stopped school bus with activated flashing red lights, the driver could face a fine of as much as \$570,” said Sawyer.

## Dual enrollment information night

A free dual enrollment information session for parents of current high school sophomores and juniors will be held on Wednesday, February 20, at 6 p.m., in Guerrieri Hall at Wor-Wic Community College in Salisbury. High school sophomores and juniors are also invited to attend.

Presentations will be given by a former dual enrollment student and parent. Wor-Wic employees will provide information about how high school students can earn college credits while they are juniors and seniors in high school. Participants will have the opportunity to start the enrollment process and go on a campus tour.

“Wor-Wic’s dual enrollment program is an excellent opportunity for high school students to begin their college education early at a highly-reduced cost,” said Bryan Newton, vice president for enrollment management and student services at Wor-Wic. “Students can start early on their college education, save thousands of dollars on college costs and begin to learn how to succeed in a college setting.”

Visit [www.worwic.edu](http://www.worwic.edu) to RSVP, or contact Richard C. Webster at [rwebster@worwic.edu](mailto:rwebster@worwic.edu) or 410-334-2896 for more information.

## Haunted discussion offered

Haunted Eastern Shore will be the topic of discussion when local author Mindie Burgoyne recount tales of otherworldly occupants of the Eastern Shore. The discussion will take place on Saturday, February 2 at the Ocean Pines library starting at 11 a.m.

## Symptoms of heart valve disease

Heart disease is a blanket term that includes a variety of conditions and illnesses. Heart valve disease is one such condition that poses a significant threat, a threat that many people are unaware of.

A 2016 public opinion survey of more than 2,000 adults sponsored by the non-profit Alliance for Aging Research found that public awareness of heart valve disease, or HVD, is very low. Fewer than one in four survey respondents knew much about HVD at all. That is despite the fact that the AAR reports that as many as 11 million people in the United States have HVD.

Raising awareness of HVD, including its symptoms, can help people protect themselves from this potentially deadly disease.

What is HVD? HVD occurs when the heart’s valves, which maintain one-way blood flow through the heart, are not functioning properly. The heart has four valves that, when working properly, ensure the free flow of blood in a forward direction, preventing backward leakage. This process is essential to the successful and continuous flow of blood to the heart, lungs and body.

What causes HVD? HVD sometimes

*please see valve on page 14*



**Celebration** - The Ocean Pines Wednesday Bridge Club celebrated **Anna Fultz's** 93rd birthday with a surprise birthday cake featuring playing cards as part of the decoration.



**Speaker** - Worcester County Commissioner **Bud Church** spoke to the gathering of the Republican Women of Worcester County at their monthly luncheon meeting on January 24 at the Captain's Table Restaurant in Ocean City. Commissioner Church talked about issues and happenings in Worcester County.



valve  
from page 13

develops before birth, meaning some instances are congenital birth defects. In some such instances, people may be born with valves that are the wrong size. Some valve diseases are acquired during one's lifetime. Acquired valve diseases may be linked to conditions such as rheumatic fever or endocarditis, which occurs when germs enter the bloodstream and attack the heart valves.

What are the symptoms of HVD? The online medical resource Medicine.net notes that even people with no symptoms at all may have severe valve disease that requires prompt treatment. As a result, it is imperative that people prioritize annual health checkups. Annual physicals can be a person's best defense against various conditions, including HVD.

People who experience any of the following symptoms, which should be reported to a physician immediately, may be suffering from HVD.

Shortness of breath and/or difficulty

catching your breath: This can occur during daily activities or when lying down flat in bed. Some people experiencing this symptom during sleep may need to prop themselves up on pillows to facilitate breathing.

Weakness of dizziness: Some people with HVD pass out as a result of their dizziness. Some may be too weak to perform daily activities.

Chest discomfort: A pressure of weight in the chest when being active or going out in cold air may be indicative of HVD.

Palpitations: This symptom can feel like a rapid heart rhythm, irregular heartbeat, skipped beats, or a flip-flop feeling in the chest.

Edema: This swelling of the ankles, feet or abdomen can, when affecting the belly, make people feel bloated.

Rapid weight gain: Some people with HVD gain two to three pounds in a single day.

More information about HVD is available at [www.valvediseaseday.org](http://www.valvediseaseday.org).



**Performance** - Center front is **Paulette DeRosa Matrona**, director of the Ocean Pines Children's Theater surrounded by cast that put on "Fiddler On The Roof, Jr." in the Ocean City Convention Center the weekend of January 19. Photo by Anna Foulz.

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**commentary**  
from page 6

wrong and the matter was over. Asked if he ever believed Trendic was at fault for some ethics violation, Douty said, "The issue did not rise to the level of a hostile work environment." Apparently, the board came to the same conclusion.

Asked if the employee complaint included language that Trendic was causing employee morale issues with his public support for outsourcing, as has been reported, Douty said he would not discuss the details of the complaint. Asked if he had instructed the employee to include any such language, Douty replied he had not.

However, the matter was not over for Nate Douty. Two days later, the GM fired Douty. Douty said the GM gave no reason for the firing other than "Board no confidence." What happened during that closed session that led the OPA Board of Directors to instruct the General Manager to fire OPA's HR manager?

During the closed board session, Douty said he was told his "investigation was not thorough enough." Parks wanted to know why Douty had not involved legal counsel. Douty said he felt like he was the person charged during the closed session. It is uncertain why Parks felt Douty should have involved legal counsel. It must be noted that Parks and Trendic have been going after each other for years.

Douty said, "Until the moment I was fired neither the GM or any board member had ever expressed any displeasure with my work. Zero displeasure. I believe I was caught up in a political smackdown." He be-

lieves his firing was in retaliation for bringing the Trendic charges to the Board of Directors, and such retaliation, in and of itself, is a violation of Resolution B-08 regarding board ethics. "Part of the issue, in my opinion," Douty wrote, "is that the board realized that they should not have specifically outed Trendic (by name) in the (closed session) agenda. I became the convenient scapegoat."

Douty is angry over being fired and the manner it happened. He believes he was treated unfairly and his reputation damaged after a 40-year career in HR work. He said his goal was to bring OPA and OPA employees into the modern world of Human Resources. This could be the real reason for his firing and have nothing to do with the Trendic matter.

At the direction of the General Manager and the Board of Directors, Douty was working on a new employee handbook, following board guidance to possibly change how OPA medical insurance and other benefits are handled. Douty said he also uncovered what he believed was an uncomfortable degree of nepotism within the OPA employee ranks.

Douty said that prior to his revision of an employee employment contract, OPA did not even ask about family members employed by OPA. He said, "I think some employees were beginning to hear rumblings that I was beginning to focus my attention on this. Were some of these whisperings done to derail a potential whistleblower (Douty) in HR?"

Douty said he also identified one department where there should be some further investigation, in particular, a situation that he felt could result in actual favoritism and po-

tentially allow for "collusion/fraud." His greatest concern was employees who have "immediate family members and other relatives working under their chain of command." He also mentioned this issue to the internal staff handling the forensic audit but does not know if his concerns ever became a focus of the audit.

Several sources confirm this friction between Douty and employees. One usually reliable source wrote, "As I understand it, the real cause of low morale among employees is because of Mr. Douty who is generally disliked and not trusted by employees. Incredibly the very individual who employees need to trust and seek out for assistance in resolving issues is someone who is not trusted."

It should be noted these same sources indicate some employees have a certain level of concern about the capabilities of the General Man-

ager as well.

We will never know all the exact details of these two intertwined but separate issues, Douty and Trendic, because the board will not discuss them. However, at the very least the board members should have talked to Douty about why they wanted him fired and listened to any explanations he had to offer, even if the outcome remained the same. Adding insult to injury, Douty said he wrote a private letter to the board after his firing and someone leaked it to the press. Douty was not treated fairly in terms of process.

Douty's final words on the issue were, "I am so disappointed that I will not be a part of the future. I enjoyed the job and the people. I am passionate about trying to improve things that are important to me, and OPA is important to me. I was trying to make a positive difference. We can be and should be better."

**education**

from page 6

also moving backwards. Our state was the only state in the nation where students performance on the National Assessment Education Progress regressed. In Maryland only 8% of all Maryland high school graduates, graduate with an industry recognized certificate. Maryland's rate of absenteeism among students is the 10<sup>th</sup> highest in the country. And the list goes on in all of the ways we are not successfully graduating students who are college and career ready.

In response the Kirwan Commission has made a series of policy recommendations that include:

- expansion of early learning programming,
- resources to improve training and compensation for educators,
- enhanced career and college training aligned with the needs of business, and
- more resources for schools with concentrations of poverty so that schools where 55% or more are eligible for free and reduced meals will have resources to provide wrap around services to students and families through the community schools strategy and school based health centers.

Our students would benefit from all of these enhancements and more specifically benefit from career aligned training courses in our schools to introduce our students to tourism, maritime, agriculture, and other entrepreneurial opportunities. It is our job to communicate with the Kirwan Commission, and our elected legislative leaders. We should voice support for a World Class education and we must ensure that our unique needs as a county including our tourism business are considered when local wealth is determined and calculated.

The writer was correct there are significant questions that remain as it relates to the funding formula including the state and local cost share, the base amount per pupil, and how local wealth will be assessed. However, it is clear in the report that any accountability measures will not be implemented until the full funding is agreed to and passed in the legislature in 2020. Now is not the time to lament that these questions remain unanswered but rather to engage in the democratic policy making process and lay the foundation necessary not. Our kids can not wait another year for us to act.

It is my hope the legislature will endorse the policy recommendations this year and provide funding to begin the journey to a World Class education system for Worcester County and all of Maryland.

**Joan Roache**  
Ocean City

**budget**

from page 1

eral Manager to create multiple drafts leading to a Proposed Budget. We have had three Budget & Finance Committee budget work sessions, a member hearing on the Proposed Budget, two Board of Directors budget work sessions, and lots of effort by many members, committees, and staff. We now have a Recommended Budget. The Board of Directors will conduct a member hearing next Saturday, February 2, in the Assateague Room. The hearing will begin at 10 am. The Board of Directors will hear your comments and will then take two weeks to provide the General Manager with budget adjustments they would like to consider.

"Amendments to the Recommended Budget will be voted on by the Board on February 16, at which time the Board of Directors will adopt the Final Budget and set the annual assessment for the next fiscal year. Please do share your thoughts with the Board by attending the member hearing and/or by email at directors@oceanpines.org."





**Helping hand** - The Republican Women of Worcester County (RWWC) collected \$380 at their January luncheon meeting to be given to the Coast Guard Station in Ocean City to assist service members during the recent Federal government shutdown. RWWC member **Marlene Ott**, purchased nineteen \$20 gift cards and delivered them to Coast Guard personnel.

## Pancake breakfast tickets on sale

Tickets are now on sale for the Kiwanis Club of Greater Ocean Pines-Ocean City Annual Winter Pancake Breakfast. It will be held in the Asateague Room of the Ocean Pines Community Center from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Saturday February 23. Pancakes, sausages, scrambled eggs, orange juice, coffee and tea will be offered. Tickets are \$6 for adults, \$3 for children under age 12 and free for children under age five. Carryout is also available. For tickets call Ralph Chinn at 410-208-6719 or see any Kiwanis member. The price is the same at the door. Proceeds benefit youth of the community.

**The LORD will surely save me  
So we will play my songs on  
stringed instruments** Isaiah 38.20



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