

# Challenges ahead for FY 21-22 budget

Ocean Pines could finish the fiscal year roughly \$650,000 positive to budget, but there are plenty of challenges, and options, for the next fiscal period.

During his monthly report at a recent meeting, General Manager John Viola broke down the current and projected numbers, as well as what's been done so far in the process to craft the budget for fiscal year 2021-2022.

First, he said the Association projects to finish the current fiscal period ahead of budget by around \$650,000. He said federal Paycheck Protection Program grants of \$1.15 million and \$275,000, as well as \$125,000 from the federal Affordable Care Act, helped offset \$900,000 in loses.

Those loses, he said, were largely because of lost revenue caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It wasn't easy, without a playbook, to go through this," he said.

Breaking down the department forecast for fiscal 2020-2021, Viola said Administration (\$1.037 million), Public Works (\$81,000), Marinas (\$63,000) and other (\$85,000) projected to finish favorable to budget, while Aquatics (-\$270,000), Beach Parking (-\$202,000) and General Maintenance (-\$144,000) all projected to finish below budget estimates.

The large favorability in Administration was because of the Paycheck Protection Program, Viola said, while the losses in General Maintenance were because of money reallocated for a major drainage project.

"We have a top priority in drainage, especially the Bainbridge project that's been approved by the Board," he said. "It's the number-one initiative and we all support it."

Viola said the fiscal 2021-2022 budget was prepared using a "bottom-up" approach, with each department having considerable input.

He said the Association sent preliminary proposed budget binders to Budget and Finance Committee and Board members on December 18 this year. That's one day earlier than last year, which was the earliest date that Ocean Pines had sent out budget binders for review.

The committee will next review the budget draft during a series of public meetings, starting in January. Following that, the Board of Directors will review the document, also during public meetings.

"Everything will be spelled out – everything is spelled out," Viola said. "But there are challenges. There's variables this year [because of the pandemic]."

Viola said key items addressed in the preliminary proposed budget include drainage, depreciation, bulkheads, fire and EMS funding, Aquatics and Beach Parking loses incurred during the current fiscal year, and salaries, medical benefits and liability insurance for Ocean Pines workers.

Drainage funding was a challenge, Viola said. Because of a healthy drainage reserve a year ago, the Association did not budget any additional money for drainage. However, as Ocean Pines spent that reserve, any funds budgeted during the next period would affect assessments.

"We had a drainage reserve, we had money put away, and we had that money budgeted [for spending projects]. It was around \$500,000 to \$600,000," Viola said.

This year, he said Ocean Pines received \$549,000 in grant funding for the Bainbridge Pond project and added \$300,000 in reserve funding to that total. On top of that, there were plenty of other drainage projects to fund

"This current year, I needed to still fund the [drainage] pipes that we said we're going to do, separate from Bainbridge, and that's where you saw that reallocation of several hundred thousand dollars," Viola said. "Now, when we look at [fiscal year] 21-22, I don't have any money in drainage, and drainage is one of our top priorities."

He said the preliminary proposed budget had about \$350,000 to \$380,000 in new drainage funding.

"That alone would be an increase to last year's budget [assessment] of \$44," Viola said. "I'm just trying to show you all the challenges, all the items and the initiatives we have this year that wasn't there last year."

Medical benefit costs were also estimated to rise 30% this year, which could add another \$30 assessment increase. Rising salaries could add \$13 and liability insurance could add \$7, Viola said.

"You just look at salaries, medical please see **budget** on page 4



James Brasure with police Chief Leo Ehrisman

# **OPA honors workers for service time**

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

Honorees were:

**Five years:** Tammy Cherrix (Police), Katelynne Hunt (Recreation and Parks) and Nate Wilkins (Public Works)

10 years: Debbie Donahue (Recreation and Parks) and Lisa Jarman (Public Works)

15 years: Earl Hall (Public Works) 20 years: Jessica Conaway (Recreation and Parks) and Nobie Violante (Public Works)

**25 years:** James Brasure (Police) and Robert Grant (Public Works)

Department heads weighed in on what each veteran worker has meant to their staff.

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

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

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

"Brasure is one of the department's senior officers that aids in field train-

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

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

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

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

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

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

"He is very dependable," Wells added.

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

"Nobie has been here longer than I have and he is one of the most reliable and dedicated employees I have," Wells said. "He is in charge of the daily

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# Service to country and community

**By Josh Davis** 

Ocean Pines residents Maj. Trish Masterson and SMSgt. Mike Masterson, both retired U.S. Air Force, have more than four decades of military service between them.

More recently, both became involved with the Worcester County Veterans Memorial Foundation in Ocean Pines, an organization dedicated to honoring veterans from the Revolutionary War to the present.

Trish is originally from Tacoma Park, Maryland and is one of eight children. She served in the ROTC while attending college at the University of Maryland and was later commissioned by the Air Force.

She was stationed at Hill Air Force Base in Utah, where she worked in emergency management during four years of active duty.

Trish also served in the Air Force Reserve for 16 years, both at Edwards Air Force Base in California and Dover Air Force Base in Delaware. She retired in 2003.

Mike grew up in Cambridge, Mas-

sachusetts and joined the Air Force in 1972, right after graduating from high school. He's also one of eight children, including four brothers who served.

After training, Mike was sent to McChord Air Force Base in Tacoma, Washington.

"The first thing I did, I was part of bringing the POWs home from Vietnam. That was in February of 1973," he said.
"After that, I was in an

operation called 'REFORGER' [an acronym for 'Return of Forces to Germany'] over in Ramstein, Germany. I was part of the Arab-Israeli War of 1973 and went down to Tel Aviv for a few weeks. After that and a few other things, I ended up going permanently assigned to Germany, where I spent a lot of time in Africa, Europe and Western Asia doing all kinds of stuff."

He met Trish at Hill Air Force Base in 1980, and they were married two years later.

Mike retired from the Air Force after 22 years of service. He also

taught at Wor-Wic Community College and worked in the aviation field for companies in Georgetown, Delaware, Wallops Island, and Indianapolis.

The couple have two children, Patrick, a molecular biologist with the National Institute of Health who lives in Silver Spring, Maryland, and Kevin, a computer programmer who lives in Charlotte, North Carolina.

### Ocean Pines and the Memorial Foundation

Trish and Mike decided to move to Ocean Pines while both were serving at an Air Force base in New Jersey. Mike considered going north, back home to Boston, or moving south.

"I went up there [to Boston] around 1989 and they had a huge snowstorm, and I thought 'the heck with this, I'm going south!" he said.

Trish's parents had a home in nearby South Point, and the couple stayed with them briefly.

"We were looking to settle here and found a nice house in Ocean Pines in 1994, and we've been here ever since. We love it here," she said.





Not long after moving, both became involved in the Worcester County Veterans Memorial Foundation. It was a way, they said, to honor their fellow veterans.

"We've been members of the Veterans Memorial Foundation for a number of years," Trish said. "A few years ago, Sherri Lassahn [the foundation's administrative assistant] asked me if I would consider being a board member. I agreed and I've been on the board now for three years.

"The fact that this memorial is

here [in Ocean Pines] and the time and effort and love that's gone into building it and maintaining it is just wonderful," she added. "We get tremendous support from Ocean Pines Public Works. I can't even describe to you how wonderful they are. They do so much for us and they're always willing to zip over here and take care of whatever needs to be taken care of."

### **A Virtual Veterans Day**

As a foundation board member, Trish has chaired the annual Veterans Day ceremony for the last three years, while Mike has served as the event's emcee.

"Guilt by association," he said with a laugh.

Trish helped put together the virtual ceremony held this year because of concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"As time went on, we realized we probably were not going to be able to do [the event]," she said. "There was no way that we could realistically limit the crowd size and, in terms of being six feet apart, there would be people in the Mc- Donald's parking

lot. Also, a lot of our attendees are in the vulnerable groups – they're older and they have health issues."

Instead, foundation members put together a videotaped program made available online on Veterans Day.

"We were able to contact the people that usually participate, and they were all willing to come out and film segments one at a time," Trish said.

"This year was obviously a little different, but everybody who saw it said it was wonderful."

During the ceremony, Mike became emotional near the end of a speech honoring combat veterans. "We can never fully repay our debt of gratitude to the more than 650,000 American service members who died in battle, or the 1.4 million who were wounded," he said at the time.

"I crash-landed five times. I've been shot at in three countries and had a gun to my head in another, plus my dad was a Merchant Marine and



my four brothers served – the military means a lot to me," he said. "That last part, the closing part, kind of gets me."

Mike can also be seen clutching something in his pocket. The item happens to be a keyring from one of the U.S. Air Force C-141 transport planes that carried American POWs, including John McCain, from Hanoi to Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines in 1973.

"I've had it as my keyring for 47 years," he said. "It's my little memento, so I don't forget what I'm here for."

# **Education programs & challenges of the pandemic**

Trish is also involved in the Memorial Foundation's education programs, including serving as a docent last year.

"Every year, every fifth grader in Worcester County is brought to the memorial as a field trip from the schools and we have docents who teach them about the different parts of the memorial," she said. "The ROTC cadets from the different high schools teach them flag folding and proper flag etiquette and respect, and we also have a section on the history of the American flag, which is quite interesting." The Memorial Foundation funds the entire program, which serves public, private and homeschooled children in Worcester County.

"It's at no cost to the schools, so that includes the education materials they receive, and we pay for the transportation and everything for the kids to be here," Trish said. "Some of them are really, really engaged. They ask good questions and it's really interesting to see the perspective [on the memorial] from children."

However, the Veterans Day serv-

# Donate new and gently worn shoes to help fight addiction

Ocean Pines will pitch in this month and next to help collect new and gently worn shoes for a local charity.

From January 1 to February 28, staff at the Ocean Pines Community Center will accept donations to help raise funds for the WGP Warriors Against Addiction.

The newly created charity merges two prior groups: Worcester Goes Purple and the Worcester County Warriors Against Opiate Ad-

Organizer Debbie Smullen said WGP Warriors Against Addiction would "continue the education and fight against all addictions" in Worcester County.

"COVID-19 has had a devastating effect on the recovery community, as distancing and social isolation goes against all recovery needs," Smullen said.

She said the donation drive will help two worthy causes. First, she will send the shoe collection to Funds2Orgs, a group that helps create, maintain and grow small businesses in developing countries. That organization will then supply funds to WGP Warriors Against Addiction, based on the size of the collection.

"We will be paid for the shoes by the pound and the funds will go to help people get into recovery," she

**WGP** Warriors Against Addiction will also host a contact-free drivethrough collection at the Ocean Pines Library on Saturday, Feb. 13 from 9 a.m. to noon.

Ocean Pines Recreation and know I do. Parks Director Debbie Donahue said of the donation drive, "We are always willing to help such a great cause."

"WGP Warriors Against Addiction is always looking for opportunities to help anyone and everyone with reform and recovery," Donahue said. "Ocean Pines Recreation is excited about offering a location to collect shoes. We all have slightly used shoes that we can donate - I

"Please take a look in your closets and drop off those shoes. The more we collect, the greater the donation to this awesome group! What a great way to do our part in helping the community," Donahue added.

For more information, contact wgpwarriors2021@gmail.com, or call 410-870-5161.

### service

from page 3

ice wasn't the only thing canceled this year because of the pandemic. Also lost was the Memorial Foundation's major fundraiser, held each year at the Ocean Pines Golf Club, as well as all education programs planned for 2020.

"We obviously have no idea at this point if children will be able to come next year. It could be until next fall, in which case we would have missed two full fifth grade groups," Trish said. "We're in the process of redoing the booklet that each child receives and we're kind of hoping that, if we can't do the program this spring, we can at least get the books distributed through the schools."

The foundation is also working on a virtual education program – essentially a walking tour of the memorial.

"We have a lot of newer things at the memorial that have been added recently. The battlefield cross and the POW chair were both added in the last year or two, and we have commemorative benches and the 'Patriots Pathway' that outlines each of the conflicts that the U.S. military has been involved with, starting with the Revolutionary War. We'll do a walking tour on the video and a brief section on flag etiquette and the history of the flag."

Supporting the memorial The Memorial Foundation is

seeking donations to keep their programs going. Memberships are available for \$25, or \$150 for a lifetime membership, and commemorative bricks (\$75) and larger pavers (\$150) are also available.

"There's opportunities to purchase bricks and pavers for family members, loved ones, or get one for yourself!" Trish said. "That's a great way to honor someone and to support the foundation."

The existing bricks and pavers honor service members from all branches, and from all eras, of serv-

"Our primary mission is honoring veterans from all over the U.S. – not everyone here is from Worcester County," Trish said. "And, when you go over to the Army section, the bricks go back to the Revolutionary War, so people are commemorating their entire families.

"I would encourage everybody to come out and see the memorial," Trish continued. "It's for everyone in Worcester County and it's for all veterans, all the way back to 1775."

"It honors those who were here before us and those who are presently serving, so we don't forget what we're here for," Mike added.

Visit the Worcester County Veterans Memorial on Route 589, between Manklin Creek Road and Cathell Road.

For more information on membership, volunteer opportunities and donations, visit www.opvets.org.

# Courier MONO

On January 13, 1962, Ernie Kovacs, a comedian who hosted his own television shows during the 1950s and is said to have influenced such TV hosts as Johnny Carson and David Letterman, died at the age of 42 after

> crashing his Chevrolet Corvair into a telephone pole in Los Angeles, while driving in a rainstorm. Kovacs, who often appeared on camera with his trademark cigar, was found by police with an unlit cigar, leading to speculation that he had been reaching for the cigar and lost control of his vehicle. The Corvair was later made infamous by Ralph Nader's groundbreaking 1965 book "Unsafe at Any Speed: The Designed-In Dangers of the American Automobile," about unsafe practices in the auto industry.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an estimated 250 million preschool children are vitamin A deficient. That's a significant concern, as children who are not getting enough vitamin A are at greater risk for severe visual impairment and blindness. Vitamin A deficiency also increases a child's risk of severe illness, and

even death, from common childhood infections, including diarrheal disease and measles. The WHO notes that breast milk is a natural source of vitamin A and urges mothers of infants to breastfeed to ensure children get ample amounts of vitamin A. Parents of older children can look to various healthy foods to make sure youngsters are getting enough vitamin A. The National Institutes of Health notes that foods such as sweet potatoes, carrots and fortified cereals typically contain substantial amounts of vitamin A. The U.S. National Library of Medicine

reports that various animal products, including meat, fish, poultry, and dairy products, also contain significant amounts of vitamin A. Parents can speak with their children's pediatricians to determine the healthiest, most effective ways to ensure their youngsters are getting enough vitamin A.

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It's All About. . . By Chip Bertino

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# 2020 Hindsight

Normal.

Pandemic.

Open. Closed.

Toilet paper.

Essential. Non-essential.

Testing. Five days. Forty-eight hours. Negative. Positive. Quarantine. Fourteen days.

Press conferences. CDC. Fauci. Cuomo. Trump. Hogan.

PPE. Ventilators. Hand sanitizer. Wipe down.

Masks. No. Yes. Cover the nose. Six feet apart.

Questionnaires. Contact tracing. Positivity Rates. Bed counts. Metrics. Abundance of caution.

Plexiglass dividers. Stay at Home Orders. Travel restrictions. Backyard-cations.

Stimulus. PPP. \$600 extra. \$1,200. \$2,400.

Zoom. Virtual learning. Distance learning. Work from home. Connectivity. Non-connectivity. Hot spot.

Streaming. Netflix. Tiger King. Amazon Prime. Disney+.

Stock market. Down. Up. Down. Up.

Curbside pick-up. Outdoor dining. Amazon. FedEx. UPS.

Phases. One. Two. Three.

Occupancy limits. 25%. 50%. 75%. 50%. 25%. Super-spreader events. Isolation.

Stimulus package. Again.

Vaccines. Moderna. Pfizer. First shot. Second shot. Second wave. Rising numbers. Ugh.

Thanksgiving. You can come. You can't.

Get tested. Again. Again. Again.

Christmas. Travel. Yes. No.

2021. Much. Hope.





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# Rules of the road

A look back at 2020 won't take long. It was ugly, period.

A look ahead to 2021 can't help but be more optimistic. Social distancing and masks are becoming more acceptable. Vaccines are rolling out and the days are getting longer.

Although there won't be a February boat show in Ocean City this year, there's still a lot of pent up desire to get out on the water. 2020 was a record year for new recreation boat sales but not a record season for attending the mandated Maryland Safe Boating Course (SBC). Therefore beware: It could be the return of Amateur Hour out there this summer.

The Maryland SBC is about eight hours of very straight forward instructions culminating in an equally straight forward test and the issuance of a boat operator's certificate that you must have with you when operating a boat in Maryland waters if you were born after 1 July 1972. All states have a similar, minimum education and proficiency requirement and, like automobile driver's licenses, they are honored in all states.

The SBC teaches some very fundamental aspects of owning and handling a boat such as buoyancy, trailer weight distribution, anchoring, docking, safety equipment, legal documentation, all of which is introspective - affecting you and your boat.

Probably the most significant teaching point beyond personal safety is the rules of the road – how you deal with other boats. There are well established rules and conventions. The overriding rule is that skippers are always obliged to take whatever action is necessary to avoid an accident. Regardless of who is in the legal right, contributing to an accident is always wrong.

Next, motor boaters need to appreciate their priority in the grand scheme. It's broadly accepted that recreational motor boats under 20

meters in length are the fastest and most maneuverable vessels on the water. Therefore, by rule, we are required to give way to everyone else. Why? Because we can out maneuver them. This includes everything from canoes, to slow turning cruise ships and everything in between like sailboats under sail, paddleboards, commercial fishing boats with their nets in the water, dredges, barges being towed, or boats that are restricted in their maneuvering.

Once stated, that's a pretty easy 'rule' to understand and embrace. Motor boats need to stay away from everything else.

The bigger lesson to be learned is what to do when encountering another motor boat in the less than 20 meters class. By 'encounter' we mean close enough that a collision could occur if attention and responsible actions are not enforced.

There are three possible encounter situations: Another vessel coming straight at you, another vessel overtaking you from behind, or another vessel passing in front of your vessel (crossing your bow). Let's look at each.

When a vessel is coming straight at you, the rule is to turn to the right (starboard). It's interesting to note that large vessels like freighters, cruise ships essentially follow the exact same rules within their vessel class. In 1956, the SS Andrea Dora, turned to port directly in front of the freighter MS Stockholm off Nantucket, MA. The freighter tee boned the Italian liner and created a great scuba diving wreck location.

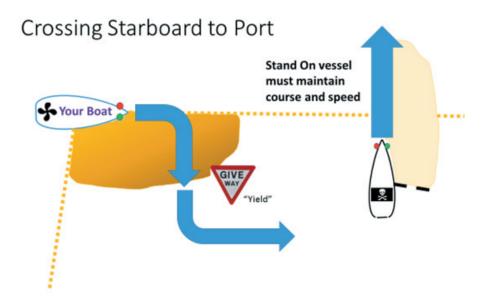
When a vessel is overtaking another from behind, the rule is that the slower boat must 'stand on' its course and direction and the overtaking boat must 'give way' its course and maneuver around the slower boat. The convention is to turn to the right (starboard) and pass the slower boat on your port side however you can turn to the left and pass the slower boat on your starboard side <u>IF</u> both skippers have commu-

nicated and agreed to the passing maneuver.

The third encounter causes the most anxiety. When another vessel is crossing your bow from right to left, the other boat has the right of way and you are obliged to 'give way' to it. If the other boat is crossing your bow from left to right, then you have the right of way and you are obliged to 'stand on' your course and direction until the other vessel passes behind you or stops to let you go by.

There are two organizations authorized to administer the Maryland Safe Boating Course. The USCG Auxiliary offers the course every month from February until November. For more information contact Barry Cohen at 410-935-4807 or by email at CGAUXOC@Gmail.com. The US Power Squadron also offers the Maryland Safe Boating Course. For more information contact Fred Stiehl at 440-641-6535 or email at stiehl@mchsi.com.

You should consider taking the



In more technical terms, a vessel is considered crossing your bow from right to left if it is converging anywhere in the area from directly in front of the bow to and angle 112.5° down the starboard side of your boat. Using the face of an analog clock, that's from 12 o'clock to 4 o'clock.

class if you do not possess an operator's certificate or feel that a review class is a great way to spend some of your Coronavirus hunker down time.

Stay safe. Happy New Year, 2021!

Dan Collins can be reached for comment at dancollins.ocean-pines@gmail.com

# Virtual safe boating courses offered

As the new year begins with hopes for a better 2021, many events are still on hold. This may be the perfect time for you to take the Virtual Maryland Safe Boating Course.

The Ocean City Coast Guard Auxiliary has developed the only virtual course in the Delmarva area. This is an interactive class taught by certified Coast Guard Aux. instructions with student participation. The three-evening course will run February 2, 3 and 4 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

All mandated material and information on local waters will be included. Time is provided for questions and discussions. Everyone is welcome!

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, and passing the test will receive a Maryland Boating Certificate which is NASBLA approved and valid in all states.

A fee of \$20.00 covers the cost of the course and materials.

Checks should be made payable to: USGCAUX 12-05 and mailed to: USCGAUX 12-05, PO Box 1682, Berlin, MD 21811.

Payment via PayPAL is also accepted

For more information or to register please contact: Barry Cohen at 410-935-4807 or E mail CGAUXOC@Gmail.com

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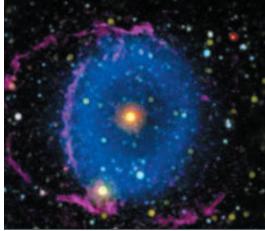
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# Astronomy & Spaceflight By Douglas Hemmick, Ph.D.

# Blue Ring Nebula created by merging stars

Scientists finally have an explanation for the formation known as the "Blue Ring Nebula." This nebula is a donut-shaped region that surrounds the star TYC 2597-735-1, which researchers first discovered in 2004. In recent days the nebula has been studied by a variety of telescopes worldwide, leading to a new breakthrough.

The original 2004 discovery was made by NASA's orbiting space telescope, the Galaxy Evolution Explorer (*GALEX*). Galex operated in ultravio-



Blue Ring Nebula

let light, rather than ordinary visible and was designed to identify galaxies dominated by young, hot stars.

Astronomers have identified many double stars which have undergone a merging process. Prior to joining together, some binary pairs may feature the larger star's gravity "stealing away"

gaseous material from its smaller companion. When the smaller star lies very close, its material can be drawn away so quickly that it cannot maintain its structure; it begins to disintegrate and merge with the larger star.

The November 19 edition of the journal "Nature" reports that TYC 2597-735-1, the star at the center of the Blue Ring Nebula, underwent such coalescing just 5000 years ago. On the cosmic time scale this represents a recent event, compared with other

known examples which joined together millions of years ago.

New observations made by the advanced spectroscopic equipment at both the Keck Observatory, Mauna Kea, Hawaii, and the McDonald Observatory in Texas were essential to the new discoveries. Infrared data from NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope was also reviewed by the team.

Dr. Keri Hoadley, the paper's lead author from Caltech, confirmed this discovery of stellar collision saying: "the spectroscopic data coupled with theoret-

ical modeling shows that the Blue Ring Nebula is consistent with the picture of a merging binary star system, suggesting that the inwards spiraling companion was likely a low-mass star," She added how the timing of the new observations proved crucial: "We think this represents a late stage of

Regasus

Feast

North

West

Mars

Moon

Jupiter

Mercury

Jan 14

South

these transient events when the dust finally clears and we have a good view."

Co-author Dr. Brian Metzger, of Columbia University pointed to the scarcity of data regarding young remnants of stellar mergers and said: "the Blue Ring Nebula might show us what they look like so we can identify more of them." This nebula is a recent celestial example allowing an unobstructed view of the combined central star, offering a clear window into the merging process.

A fascinating phenomenon has been discovered, with two coneshaped blasts of material produced by this stellar merging process. According to the research team's modeling, the smaller star spiraled inward, joining with its larger swelling partner. This produced a significant blast which channeled material outwards, forming two debris cones. In the case of TYC 2597-735-1, one cone is expanding toward Earth, the other aimed in the opposite direction. When these expanding cones struck clouds of gas, the heated hydrogen in the debris caused them to fluoresce with an ultraviolet glow, as observed by astronomers.

During January stargazing begins at about 5:45 p.m., with the V-shape of Taurus the Bull. Taurus is well-known for the "Pleiades" cluster, a small faint patch north of the V. After 9 p.m., which blasted off in 1958. This of U.S. answer to the Wishing good to all stargazers.

most of the classic winter constellations will be available, including Orion the Hunter above the southern horizon. Hobbyists may observe the ghostly-white patch of the Orion nebula, with binoculars.

The planet Mars appears west of Taurus and dominates the central sky. Jupiter is making its final showing before disappearing for the year. Find the king of planets very low to the west south-west horizon, but look quickly as it sets at about 6:15 p.m.

January offers two opportunities to spot the elusive planet Mercury. On the evening of January 11, Mercury and Jupiter are cozying up, just two degrees apart. Next, on January 14, Mercury will be located between Jupiter and the crescent moon. However, the planets and moon are located close to the horizon, and will be setting rather quickly. On the 11th, best viewing should be between 5:15 and 5:45 PM, while on the 14th, the best timing is between 5:15 p.m. and 6 p.m. Mercury is a dim planet and binoculars are recommended in picking it out against the twilight glow.

January 31 marks the historic 63rd anniversary of NASA's first successful Earth orbiting satellite, Explorer-1 which blasted off from Cape Canaveral in 1958. This orbiting craft was the U.S. answer to the Soviet's Sputnik.

Wishing good luck and clear skies to all stargazers.

# Nonprofit inspired by support

Worcester County GOLD, Inc. (Giving Other Lives Dignity), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing emergency assistance for Worcester County residents in times of crisis, is celebrating another successful Helping Hands for the Holidays Program. Despite many challenges, the community rallied together to make sure wishes came true for our neighbors in need.

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

churches, business, organizations, clubs, and individuals."

Visit WorcesterGOLD.org to learn more about programs or services. For additional information please email WorcesterCounty-GOLD@gmail.com or call 410-677-6830.

Just spent 15
minutes
searching for my
phone in my car.

While using my
phone as a
flashlight.

# **School is Closed Camp** available to students

Worcester County Recreation and Parks is offering a school's out day camp this winter called, Science and Sports Combo Camp on Monday, February 1, 2021 at the Worcester County Recreation Center. This camp is perfect for those affected by the schools being closed.

Parents are invited to register children in grades kindergarten through eighth. Children will have fun with science crafts and competitions in the morning and play sports in the afternoon.

There is a 20-participant maxi-

mum for this camp. All campers are asked to bring their own lunch. A snack will be provided. There are two-time frames to choose from: either 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. for extended care at \$40 per child and \$35 per additional child; or from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at \$35 per child or \$30 for each additional child.

For more information contact Derek Jarmon at 410-632-2144 x2509 or djarmon@marylandscoast.org. To view other youth programs and one-day events visit www.worcesterrecandparks.org.

# **County Christmas tree recycling returns**

The Solid Waste Division of Worcester County will host its annual collection of Christmas trees through January 15. Area residents can drop off Christmas trees at the Central Landfill in Newark and the Berlin, Pocomoke, and Snow Hill Homeowners Convenience Centers at no cost.

Businesses and organizations that sold trees will not be permitted to drop off trees at the convenience centers, but may take them to the Central Landfill where applicable tipping fees will be assessed.

The trees will be ground into mulch for use at the Central Landfill. Remember, you can make a difference by recycling. For more info, contact Recycling Manager Mike McClung at 410-632-3177.

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# My Backyard... sponsored by Maureen Kennedy

# The Cardinal

The cardinal, also known as the red bird, is one of the most recognized birds. Even the non-birder knows who they are. Spotted easily by its bright red color, the male cardinal outshines its female counterpart who is far less flashy. She too has some red but is mostly a pale tan & gray. Both adult male and female have a tuft of feathers on the heads known as a crest, and a reddish orange beak. Juvenile cardinals have a black beak. Their beaks turn the reddish orange once they have their first molt and they transition to adults.

Cardinals are omnivores, they eat seeds, berries, and insects. Some insects they eat include ants, cater-

pillars, flies, spiders and even snails. The other part of their diet is made up of vegetable matter such as flowers, seeds of grasses and weeds and berries. They are mostly ground feeders. but they will visit your backyard feeders, especially if they have a flat surface on which they can land. They have been seen eating from a perch, but that is not

the normal. Cardinals love black oil sunflower and safflower seeds. They enjoy mealworms too. When feeding their young, they only feed them insects. Cardinals, just like flamingos, get their color from what they eat. If there is not an abundance of red berries, the male cardinal may not be a vibrant red. In the bird world, this may lessen his chances of attracting a female if competing against more colorful males.

Cardinals typically mate for life. During mating season, you may have the opportunity to see the male feeding the female beak to beak. This is part of normal mating behavior. If you have not had the pleasure of seeing this, keep your eyes open this spring. It is a beautiful sight and shows how

wonderful nature truly is. Unlike some birds, they do not nest in tree cavities or bird houses. They prefer to build the nest in thick bushes or shrubbery and even on low branches that are usually less than 10 feet off the ground. Cardinals are open nesters and build them from twigs and other plant materials. During mating season, both male and female contribute to the nest building. They usually have their first brood in March, and another in May. It is possible for a third brood to hatch in the same year. The female will lay three to four eggs which are a whitish green color. The female incubates the eggs for about 11 to 13 days.



During this time, the male will fiercely protect both the female and the nest from any intruders. The hatchlings are born with pink skin and a grayish scaling. They grow incredibly fast and will usually leave the nest in about nine to 11 days. The male plays a major role in teaching the young to find food and learn to defend themselves. During this time, the female is working on a new location and will start building the next nest. They do not use the same nest twice.

People believe cardinals are a symbol of good luck. It is also believed that if you see one, it is a loved one coming back to visit. Weather you believe or not, the sight of the red bird is one of nature's incredible gifts.



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42												43		

### **CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Adequate yearly progress (abbr.)
- 4. Silicon Valley's specialty
- 8. Gather a harvest
- 10. Famed mathematician
- 11. No (slang)
- 12. Students use one 13. Type of molecule
- 15. Play make-believe
- 16. Large barrel-like containers
- 17. Touching
- 18. Treats allergies
- 21. Calendar month
- 22. Single
- 23. Cease to live

- 24. Brew
- 25. What ghosts say
- 26. Geological time
- 27. Focus
- 34. Discomfort 35. A citizen of Iran
- 36 Trip
- 37. Imitate
- 38. Makes happy
- 39. Double-reed instrument
- 40. Body parts
- 41. Transgressions
- 42. One-time emperor of Russia
- 43. Time zone

### **CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Used in treating bruises
- 2. One who cultivates a small estate
- 3. One who supports the Pope
- 4. Annuity
- 5. Geological period
- 6. Grab onto tightly
- 7. Kept
- 9. Chinese city 10. The most direct route
- 12. Type of tooth
- 14. \_\_kosh, near Lake Winnebago 32. They make some people cry
- 15. Popular veggie
- 19. Foolish behaviors

- 23. Gives
- 24. Expression of creative skill
- 25. A way to prop up
- 26. Midway between northeast and east
- 27. Winter melon
- 28. Supernatural power
- 29. Target
- 30. Threes
- 31. A type of poetic verse
- 33. Kindest
- 17. Supervises interstate commerce 34. Forman and Ventimiglia are two
  - 36. A way to liquefy

**Answers for December 23** 

# Farmers & Artisans Market turns 10

for the Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market, as the marketplace will celebrate its tenth anniversary in the spring.

David Bean, who has served as the market manager in Ocean Pines for the last nine years, said an anniversary celebration is set for June 5, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., in White Horse Park.

"We are ready to celebrate what we've accomplished over this past decade," he said.

Founded in 2012 as a small community farmers market, Bean said the Ocean Pines staple has grown to become the largest year-round farmers and artisans' market on Delmarva. In 2016, the market updated its name by adding "artisans," in recognition of the popular artisan and crafter section.

Bean said the anniversary event would feature live music. Other special activities are also being planned, dependent on the COVID-19 pandemic environment at that time.

"Where Weekends Begin in Ocean

This year marks a major milestone Pines" is the market's tag line, he said, and that speaks to the market's success and support from its loyal shoppers.

> One thing that makes the Ocean Pines marketplace so unique, he said, is how it has grown over the years.

> "The market attracts an outstanding selection of merchants from Delmarva and beyond," he said. "It's one of the things we are proudest of."

> Over the years, the Ocean Pines market has promoted awareness and educational programs through the "Kids' Market Zone," "Meet Me at the Market" DIY workshops, and the extremely popular "Open-air Marketplace Kitchen."

> "We collaborate with our market merchants, local chefs, and culinary experts to put on free educational cooking seminars about how to cook with the high-nutrition and low-cost foods found at the market," Maggie Hearn, the market's resident chef instructor, said.

> Bean said many who shop at the Ocean Pines market are from neighboring towns, but the draw has also

expanded even farther because of the region's vast tourist industry.

"The Ocean Pines market has always been a community hub with locals supporting locals, and we want to continue expanding our programming to grow with the Worcester County community," Bean said. "We're excited about our future."

He added that, because the market works to keep its merchant fees as low as possible, it allows virtually everyone to try their hand at selling their handmade artisan crafts at the market. That promotes the incubation of local small businesses.

"Over the years, we've seen several of our merchants grow their market business into local storefronts in surrounding small-town communities," Bean said.

The Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market runs every Saturday, year-round, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. through March. In-season hours, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., start in April.

For more information, visit www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/far mers-artisans-market.



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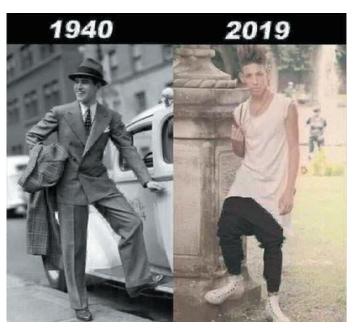


# 1916

2016

# Some things to think about

Gathered from the internet by **Jack Barnes** 

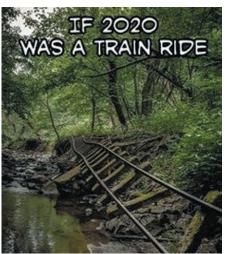














### Mask fundraiser underway

The Kiwanis Club of Ocean Pines is conducting a fundraiser to support vital community projects. The club is selling handcrafted COVID-19 masks for \$10 a piece or \$25 for three. There are four sizes: adult large; medium for women and teenagers; child (ages seven to 12); and, small (children ages three to six).

They are made in Maryland with fabric and supplies from other small businesses in the community. The masks come with an adjustable elastic band.

There are a variety of themes to choose from including sports teams (Ravens, Steelers, Capitals, Orioles), music groups, nautical and animal motifs. Contact Steve Cohen at 301-667-3099 or stevecohenjd@gmail.com for purchase information.

# Things to know about guardianship in Maryland

By Leslie Case DiPietro, Esq.

When an adult lacks the ability to make legal, financial and/or healthcare decisions for themselves, a family member or friend may seek to be appointed as guardian of their property, their person or both. Guardianship in Maryland requires court approval and oversight. Therefore, knowing what to expect and who to turn to can be critical to those exploring guardianship as a solution.

### Less restrictive means

Guardianship significantly limits an individual's rights. Therefore, courts take petitions to appoint a guardian seriously, and require that strict requirements be satisfied. If a person has capacity, they can select their own decision makers, rather than relying on the court. In Maryland, two important documents are required to fully plan for incapacity. First, a properly executed, thorough Durable Power of Attorney, which authorizes a trusted Agent(s) to make various decisions on behalf of the signor if he or she becomes unavailable or incapacitated. Second, an Advance Directive for Healthcare allows the signor to appoint a medical decisionmaker in addition to detailing important decisions regarding end of life and organ donation. Maryland recently adopted legislation as an alternative to

guardianship, which would allow a person to retain their decision-making authority while recognizing that they may rely on supporters to help them make, communicate and effectuate their decisions.

### If guardianship is necessary

The guardianship process is initiated with a petition by the person(s) seeking to be appointed guardian of the disabled person. The petition must include physician certificates which describe the disabled person's legal incapacity. The disabled person is also appointed an attorney who will determine whether the alleged disabled person consents or objects to the guardianship. The disabled person's closest family members ("next of kin") are provided notice of the proceedings. If the disabled person or any interested party objects to the guardianship, the court will schedule a trial to determine whether the disabled person lacks capacity and to determine whether the petition is the best person to serve. Once appointed, the court continues to oversee the guardians care for the disabled person's person and property.

While uncontested guardianships are more easily obtained, it is important that the correct documents are filed and provide the needed facts to

please see guardianship page 14

# Get Fit with adult fitness classes offered

Adult Fitness classes are being offered by Worcester County Recreation and Parks this spring. Registration will be on a first come first serve basis, class space is limited. These classes are a great way to stay fit and active:

Early Bird Morning Fitness, open to those ages 45 and older, includes a variety of activities of cardio, strength balance, and floor workouts. Early Bird Morning Fitness will be held on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from 9 a.m. to 9:40 a.m. The program will run January 11 to April 2.

Yoga, open to ages 18 and older, is back with Instructor Carol Jenkins-Pike, RYT 500. This program will meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The classes will run January 19 to February 25. All equipment is provided. This program is built on three main structures: exercise, breathing, and meditation.

Total Body Bootcamp, open to ages 18 and older, is here to help you get and stay strong. Participants will be utilizing free weights, your body weight, stability balls, and more to challenge all your muscles. This fitness class will meet on Tuesdays and Fridays from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. from February 16 to March 26.

For more information on these upcoming fitness programs, contact Program Manager Myro Small at 410-632-2144 msmall@marylandscoast.org. The cost for each program is \$45 and will cover all weeks of classes. For more information or to sign up, visit www.WorcesterRecAndParks.org. While you're there, be sure to click the links to follow us on social media.

At this point I am about 97.3% feral and will not be able to be integrated back into society.

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# **Registration open for Homeschool Gym**

Worcester County Recreation and Parks (WCRP) is offering Homeschool Gym for those ages five to 14 this winter season. Children of all skill and fitness levels are invited to have fun and keep their bodies moving. The aim of WCRP professionals is to help participants improve their physical fitness skills, enjoy a variety of recreation activities, and build their confidence in a structured, noncompetitive environment while socializing with peers.

Homeschool Gym will take place at the Worcester County Recreation Center on Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. starting January 21 through March 25. The

# Adult leagues to get underway

Worcester County Recreation and Parks is offering adult sports leagues this winter season. All leagues have limited space and are open to adults ages 18 and older.

Cornhole will be held on Tuesdays, starting January 19 through March 23, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. This league will take place inside the Worcester County Recreation Center (WCRC). Participants will have two options to play as doubles or as an individual. The cost is \$60 per doubles team or \$30 per individual. The registration deadline is Friday, January 15. Each team or individual will play at least 5 games per night and will be required to use their own set of ACL bags.

Futsal will take place on Fridays, starting January 22 through April 23. Games will be played from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the WCRC. This league will consist of nine weeks of games, plus two weeks of playoffs. A four-team minimum is required to form a league. The cost to participate is \$475 per team, which includes referee fees. The registration deadline and coaches meeting will take place Tuesday, January 19 at 6 p.m.

For more information, contact Program Manager Hunter Nelson at 410-632-2144 x2506 or hnelson@marylandscoast.org.

I'M NOT BUYING A 2021 PLANNER UNTIL I SEE A TRAILER.

Worcester County Recreation and cost to participate is \$35 per person and tks (WCRP) is offering Homeschool \$30 for each additional child.

For more information, contact Kelly Buchanan at 410-632-2144 x2503 or kbuchanan@marylandscoast.org. To learn more about this and other WCRP youth programs, visit www.worcester-recandparks.org.

# Track clinics offered

Are you ready to run fast? Worcester County Recreation and Parks (WCRP) staff are excited to offer youth track clinics again this winter season.

Those in grades second through eighth are invited to sign up. Participants will learn how to perfect hurdles, relays, long jumps, sprints, and more.

Track clinics will take place at the Worcester County Recreation Center on Tuesdays from 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. starting January 19 through March 9, 2021. The cost is \$35 per child or \$30 for each additional child, and financial aid is available for those who have demonstrated need. Sign up soon, as space is limited to 12 participants.

For more information, contact Myro Small at 410-632-2144 x2512 or ms-mall@marylandscoast.org. View the full lineup of WCRP youth programs IN Worcester at www.worcesterrecand-parks.org.

# Volleyball clinics offered

Registration is open for Worcester County Recreation and Parks (WCRP) youth volleyball clinics at the Worcester County Recreation Center this winter.

Elementary Volleyball Clinics, for grades kindergarten through third, provide a place for young players to learn and practice skills needed to play the game of volleyball. Participants will meet on Mondays, January 25 to March 15, from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Volleyball Skills Clinics, for players in grades fourth through eighth, will run on Tuesdays, January 19 through February 23, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Each evening a different skill will be taught such as serving, hitting, attacking, and setting.

The cost for each program is \$35 per player or \$30 for each additional child, and financial aid is available for those who have demonstrated need.

Contact Derek Jarmon at 410-632-2144 x2509 or djarmon@maryland-scoast.org.

### budget

from page 2

benefits [and] liability insurance – that's \$50 that was not in last year's budget," he said, adding that mandatory minimum wage increases contributed to rising salary costs.

Viola said the \$650,000 projected favorability from the current year could help offset some of those increases.

"We certainly can address this, and this Board can get at where they decide to be," Viola said. "And [Director of Finance and Operational Logistics] Steve [Phillips] and myself and my department heads ... will break it all out, as we all make this decision on what this assessment is going to be this year – whether it is no assessment increase, or there is an assessment increase."

He added a "COVID adjustment" to

cover losses in Aquatics, Beach Parking, the Yacht Club, Golf, Beach Club, and Recreation and Parks was not part of the preliminary proposed budget. That could have added another \$77 to assessments.

"I didn't include it, but it's certainly a challenge – it's certainly something that needs to be discussed over the next seven or eight weeks," Viola said.

"As compared to other years, there's a lot of challenges" to the budget process this year, Viola continued. "We have to look at the variables. We have to have a feeling [as to] what kind of stomach we have for this assessment.

"I'll do my part to [and] my team will do their part. Steve [Phillips] certainly is doing his part ... to break everything out for everybody [and] to vet everything," Viola said.

### guardianship

from page 13

support guardianship. Additionally, the timing of the physician examinations should be carefully scheduled to conform to Maryland law. An experienced attorney can assist with preparing the petition and supporting documents and to ensure that you have accurate guidance on the responsibilities of guardianship.

### The takeaways

If your loved one suffers from a dis-

ability, but has the legal capacity to execute a Power of Attorney and Advance Directive for Healthcare, consider consulting with an estate planning attorney to determine whether these documents, or other supported decision making, may be a less restrictive alternative to guardianship. If your loved one does not have capacity, guardianship should be explored with an attorney familiar with the legal process to help you through it.

### service

from page 2

operations, scheduling the work that needs to be done. He is also in charge when I am out. He is knowledgeable in all aspects that Public Works is responsible for."

Grant has been with the Association for 25 years and started under the food and beverage operation, later moving to Public Works, Wells said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"We are grateful for the service of everyone on our team, and Debbie has definitely been one of the standouts," Viola said. "Debbie has taken on a lot of responsibility and accomplished a great deal during her time as a director, and I appreciate all the hard work she's put in. She's a wonderful asset to our team."

# Virtual arts showcase events planned

Worcester Connects and the Art spectrum of services including men- ing the arts to the community League of Ocean City have teamed to present the "Courageous Arts Showcase" on Zoom for local students on two consecutive Sundays in January. Middle school students can join in on Sunday, January 17, from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. High school students, on Sunday, January 24, from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.

The program is funded by a grant from The Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore.

Ash'iz Cuffee will guide students through "Expressing Your Voice Through Spoken Word Poetry."

Cuffee has been a teacher for 15 years and is a certified Child Development Associate.

"I think we all can remember our awkward days of youth, trying to find our voice and where we seem to fit within this massive puzzle we call life," Cuffee said. "We have an opportunity to gift them with a more productive way of traveling their journey of self-expression and awareness."

Worcester Connects is a mentor program of Worcester Youth & Family Counseling in Berlin, serving the community for 45 years. WYFCS helps people of all ages with a broad

tal health counseling, youth and adolescent enrichment programs, advocacy for abused and neglected children, and empowerment programs for those fortunate. Adapting to the pandemic, WYFCS has continued to serve the community using technol-

"With the Courageous Arts Showcase taking place over Zoom, Worcester Connects hopes to impart courage upon the youth of our community to express themselves through art," Debbie Smullen at Worcester Connects said.

"This innovative program is part of our vision to be a regional catalyst and provide access to the creative arts of all forms," Rina Thaler, executive director of the Art League, said. The Art League is a nonprofit organization serving the community for 58 years and dedicated to bringthrough education, exhibits, scholarships, programming, and community art projects, such as the Courageous Arts Showcase.

Smullen at WYFCS is pre-registering students at 410-641-4598. This class is open to all Worcester Co. middle and high school students, with a limit of 15 students per session. Registrations are being accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

If you live in Ocean Pines, be sure to contact The Courier if you want the paper each week in your driveway.

Call 410-629-5906

# **TheCourierofOceanPines**

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Day	High Tide /Low Time	
Th 14 14 14 14	Low 1:57 AM High 8:39 AM Low 2:53 PM High 8:54 PM	
F 15 15 15 15	Low 2:45 AM High 9:26 AM Low 3:38 PM High 9:41 PM	
Sa 16 16 16 16	Low 3:32 AM High 10:10 AM Low 4:22 PM High 10:27 PM	
Su 17 17 17 17	Low 4:21 AM High 10:53 AM Low 5:06 PM High 11:13 PM	
M 18 18 18	Low 5:10 AM High 11:36 AM Low 5:49 PM	
Tu 19 19 19 19	High 12:00 AM Low 6:02 AM High 12:20 PM Low 6:32 PM	
W 20 20 20 20 20	High 12:51 AM Low 6:56 AM High 1:08 PM Low 7:16 PM	

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