

# The Courier

January 12, 2022 Volume 22 Number 17

## *Lift off*

Ocean Pines couple watches  
their daughter blast off into  
space. *Story on page 3.*





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# Daughter of Ocean Pines couple guiding next generation of space travel

*Audrey Powers, vice president of New Shepard Mission & Flight Operations for Blue Origin, recently returned from suborbital spaceflight with Captain Kirk*

By **Josh Davis**

Ocean Pines residents Kevin and Linda Powers have a good claim to top parental bragging rights in the community.

Their daughter, Audrey Powers, is not only an influential attorney with the Blue Origin company, but she's also an accomplished aerospace engineer who recently took her first suborbital space flight.

The Powers family are originally from Columbia, Maryland. Prior to retiring in 2005, Kevin worked for the U.S. government and Linda was a teacher at the Garrison Forest School in Owings Mills.

Kevin and Linda bought a home in Ocean Pines, and moved to the community full time upon their retirement.

## Aspiring astronaut

Kevin said his daughter had dreams of being an astronaut since she was 5 years old.

"She was always eager to go to the aerospace museum and look through a telescope and read about that stuff. She was somebody who loved physics and algebra and math, and she was a STEM person virtually from birth," he said. "She's had this in her mind for a long time."

On her love of all things space, Audrey said, "It's probably easiest to blame that on my parents."

"I recall being interested in flying things from very early on, and I really liked math and science in school," she said. "Those were the subjects that interested me most, and as soon as I showed an interest my parents were always looking for an opportunity for me to go to cool summer camps, or to be involved in school activities that spoke to such things."

After high school, Audrey applied and was accepted at Purdue University in the aerospace engineering program.

"A lot of astronauts came out of Purdue, and it's a pretty well-known aeronautical engineering school," Kevin said. "When she finished at Purdue, she was offered a job at NASA on the space station side, and ultimately qualified as a flight controller for the space station. So, she did about 2,000



*The flight crew: co-founder of clinical research software platform Medidata Solutions **Glen de Vries**, **Audrey Powers**, **William Shatner** and Planet Labs co-founder **Chris Boshuizen**.*

hours of work as a flight controller, which is a pretty highly responsible job with very strict qualifications," he said.

After working for NASA for several years, Audrey decided to go back to college, this time to law school.

"She came back east and did some work for a private law firm. She also did a lot of debriefing of Cambodian refugees who were tortured by the regime, and did lot of interviews on a pro-bono basis of those people," Kevin said. "And she helped write up some of the factual scenarios that led to the prosecution of some of the Cambodian communists."

## Blue Origin and suborbital spaceflight

Audrey was next offered a job working for Blue Origin, a company founded by Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos with a mission of "enabling a future where millions of people are living and working in space for the benefit of Earth."

The company develops partially and fully reusable launch vehicles purported to be safe and low cost, and that serve the needs of civil, commercial

and defense customers.

"She worked in the general counsel's office, and one of the things she was responsible for was getting the New Shepard [launch vehicle] certified by the FAA so it could carry passengers," Kevin said.

New Shepard, according to Blue Origin, is a reusable suborbital rocket system designed to take astronauts and research payloads past the Kármán line, which is the internationally recognized boundary of space.

Because of her ample flight training and background as an aeronautical engineer, she was also called by Blue Origin to join an experimental space flight in October.

Audrey said getting tapped for the mission was a case of being in the right place at the right time, and having the right training and preparation. She said the prior head of mission operations was retiring, and someone suggested her because of her background in flight operations as an engineer, and because she had already served in a leadership role at Blue Origin.

"It could not have been more surprising when they called me," she said.

"Blue Origin employees don't have an expectation of flying. We don't hire astronauts like NASA does, because we're designing autonomous vehicles and they don't need pilots and commanders in the traditional sense. So, the fact that we ended up with an open seat on one of these early flights and that they asked an employee to go was very surprising."

The flight crew also included Planet Labs co-founder Chris Boshuizen, co-founder of clinical research software platform Medidata Solutions Glen de Vries, and "Star Trek's" Captain Kirk himself, actor William Shatner.

Dubbed "Blue Origin NS-18," the mission launched from West Texas on Oct. 13 and lasted roughly 10 minutes.

Although brief, NS-18 is notable as just the second Blue Origin spaceflight with a human crew, and for officially making Shatner, now 90, the oldest person ever to travel to space.

Prior to the mission, Audrey said she "very much had this vision of the NASA astronaut and the professional astronaut who has to train for years

*please see **space** on page 16*



# Are we getting close to a social state?

## Editor:

There are eight levels of control that must be obtained before you are able to create a social state, wrote Saul Alinsky in his book "Rules for Radicals" in 1971.

- 1) Control healthcare and you control the people.
- 2) Increase the poverty level as high as possible, poor people are easier to control and will not fight back if you are providing everything

for them to live. Consider the illegal aliens flood.

- 3) Increase the debt to an unsustainable level. That way you are able to increase taxes, and this will produce more poverty.
- 4) Gun Control – Remove the ability for citizens to defend themselves from the Government. That way you are able to create a police state.
- 5) Welfare – Take control of every aspect of citizen's lives like food, housing, and income.
- 6) Education – Take control of

what people read and listen to – take control of what children learn in school like the critical race theory that divides us.

7) Remove the belief in the God from the Government and schools. No more then, will we be able to recite, "endowed by our creator....".

8) Class Warfare – Divide the people into the wealthy and the poor. This will cause more discontent and it will be easier to take (tax) the wealthy with the support of the poor.

How are we doing with all of

these given the fact that a Niagara Falls of dependent humans are coming across our border EVERYDAY from all over the world!

We Americans better get our heads out of the sand and pray hard that Trump gets to stop this slide to socialism and then communism in 2024. If you think that socialism/communism for America would be a good thing, then you need to speak to a person who has lived under such a regime.

**Dennis Evans**  
Berlin, MD

## Courier Almanac

On January 12, 1969, at the Orange Bowl in Miami, the New York Jets of the American Football League defeated the NFL's Baltimore Colts, 16-7, in Super Bowl III—a result considered one of the biggest upsets in sports history. Days earlier, Jets quarterback Joe Namath guaranteed a victory by New York, an 18-point underdog.

The win was the first in the Super Bowl for the AFL, which merged with the NFL for the 1970 season.



Certain home improvement projects are more complex than others. Projects that involve working with gas lines are among the most complicated and risky undertakings, and even seasoned do-it-yourselfers are urged to leave such tasks to certified professionals. According to Angi, the average cost to move a gas line is between \$15 and \$25 per linear foot, and homeowners can expect to pay an additional \$1 to \$10 per linear foot for pipe materials. A natural gas plumber can install, extend and repair natural gas lines and ensure that the project is completed safely, on time and within homeowners' budgets. Angi notes that the average cost to move a gas line is between \$250 and \$750 for the whole project. However, if a buried line must be excavated, that cost could run into the thousands of dollars.



## Judge rules for Farr

Commentary by **Joe Reynolds**  
[OceanPinesForum.com](http://OceanPinesForum.com)

In the case of Richard Farr versus OPA, Judge Sidney Campen has ruled in favor of Mr. Farr and ordered that Farr and Frank Daly be seated on the OPA Board of Directors for three-year terms as of August 15, 2021.

The only remaining issue is whether or not the OPA Board of Directors votes to appeal Campen's decision.

Here is the Order as written at the bottom of the full ruling in the case:

### ORDER

For the reasons outlined in the forgoing Memorandum Opinion, it is this 5th day of January, 2022, by the Circuit Court for Worcester County, Maryland, ORDERED, that Plaintiffs' Claims for Declaratory Judgment are GRANTED, and the Court makes the following findings and declarations:

1) The Plaintiff, Richard D. Farr, is an equitable owner of the Property, and at all relevant times, was

qualified as a candidate for election to the 2021 Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors; and

2) The Board of the Ocean Pines Association acted improperly, mistakenly, and without good faith, in contravention of the By-laws, the Charter, and Declarations, by attempting to invalidate Plaintiff Farr's candidacy, during the 2021 election, after certifying his candidacy and permitting him to be included on all distributed ballots, and after many votes had already been cast and received by the Ocean Pines Association; and

3) That all votes cast for Plaintiff Farr and other candidates shall be counted by the Ocean Pines Election Committee; and

4) That the Ocean Pines Association Board shall by appropriate means disseminate and publish the results of the 2021 Election for Board of Directors; and

5) That the successfully elected candidates, Richard D. Farr and Frank Daly, shall be installed as Directors, at the next regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors, for a term of three (3) years commencing August 15, 2021 (nunc pro tunc).

**The  
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# Nice moments, unexpected nice moments

Christmas is over. Our home is now undecorated. Lights, ornaments, ephemera and assorted decorations (some generations old and some new) have returned to the



## ***It's All About. . .***

By **Chip Bertino**

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many plastic, green and red tubs that are once again stored in a corner of our attic. Our home, inside and out has returned to normal, or more appropriately returned to its non-holiday décor.

Ours was a Christmas that unfolded in ways unexpected. Several days before Christmas, plans were tossed upside down when our daughter called disheartened that she and her family would not be traveling to join us. Expectations that they we could see each other before New Year's were dashed as well. We understood completely but were no less saddened that our grandchildren would not be around us during the holidays. And, yes, we were saddened too because we would not be able to see our daughter and son-in-law.

As if the Christmas Grinch hadn't dumped enough our way, another call, a few days later from our youngest son, told us that he too would not be joining us.

Plans formulated many months before were scrapped. Our holiday celebrations would be untethered from anticipation.

You know it's an interesting dynamic coming to terms with the reality that your kids are on their own, living their lives separate from yours. For a quarter century or more, when our children were young, it was my wife and me on stage choreographing the holidays and so many other things as well. Now, we find ourselves in the audience watching the happenings on stage. This was one of those years. But my wife and I are nothing if not resourceful. We decided quickly to focus positively on each Christmas moment that came our way this year. We let go of what could or should have been, and

vowed to embrace what would come.

For years, my wife and I have enjoyed Christmas Eve dinner together, just the two of us. This year was no different. We prepared a special meal and dined in our sunroom, which to me is a room made magical by the way my wife decorates it for Christmas: the lights and candles, the family decorations, the Christmas tree inside and the

lighted Christmas tree on the back deck, visible through the sliding glass door. Bing Crosby and Andy Williams provided the soundtrack that evening. As we've done



since our first married Christmas, we exchanged one present. A nice evening of moments it was.

Christmas morning, we spent considerable time Facetiming with our grandchildren and children. Our grandkids took great care to show us each of the gifts brought by Santa. They also made sure to tell us repeatedly that they looked forward to seeing us soon. That made us feel good, very good. Nice moments.

Christmas dinner was spent with our son and daughter-in-law at their

home. Joining us were my daughter-in-law's parents as well as my wife's mother and brother. It was an intimate, enjoyable evening. We're very fortunate to have become good friends with our son's in-laws so the conversation and laughter flowed freely. The evening was capped off when the men-folk adjourned to the enclosed porch for cigars and adult beverages. Nice moments.

Early the next morning, I received a text from our son-in-law's father inviting us over that evening for cocktails. Again, we're fortunate with the relationship we have with our son-in-law's parents. That evening the four of us sat around the table eating lite

fare and commiserating about not being able to see our shared grandchildren. We laughed about our experiences together through the years. The evening was capped off when the men-folk adjourned to the deck for adult beverages and cigars. Are you noticing a pattern of behavior? Nice moments.

The following morning my mother arrived laden with bags of gifts for us, her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Mom goes to great efforts to wrap in special ways each gift. This year, each gift's wrapping included a unique ornament tied to a ribbon. We sat in the sunroom exchanging gifts. Included among

the gifts were framed copies of a few of my mother's original paintings rendered through the years. One was a reproduction of an alley scene she had painted decades ago and which hung in our dining room. Fortunately, it survived a fire that ravaged our family home. Unfortunately, some of her other original works did not. I did ask why we were only getting copies and not originals. She replied that she has three children and wasn't going to play favorites, which left me crestfallen because I al-

ways thought I was her favorite.

Later, at dinner we were joined by our son and daughter-in-law. More nice moments.

The next night we had planned to attend a hockey game — an experience our grandson wanted for Christmas. His other grandmother purchased a block of tickets so we could all go — grandchildren, grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles. Although I grew up in Philadelphia where the Flyers reigned supreme, I had never been to a hockey game so I was looking forward to going. The decision was made that even without our grandson, his sister and parents, we would still go. Having extra tickets, my son-in-law's mother invited our daughter-in-law's parents to join us. It will be long time, if ever, until I'll be able to forget the image of my wife, and our children's mothers-in-law standing in the bleachers performing the dance movements to the "Village People" hit, "YMCA" as it blared from the speakers between periods. I'm laughing as I write this. More nice moments.

We spent New Year's Eve with friends, telling stories, eating and drinking and listening to how we each spent Christmas. There was quite a bit of laughter as well. There have been very few New Year's Eves during the past twenty years when we haven't sat around our friend's dining room table. It's an appreciated tradition, even more so this year. More nice moments.

New Year's Day was spent quietly.

Many days later, finally, we were able to spend time with our grandchildren (and their parents). Both sets of grandparents descended on their house. We crammed the living room with presents and enjoyed watching as each wrapped gift was torn open. Each hug received was the best gift ever. Many more nice moments.

As much as this Christmas season did not go as planned, evolving and changing daily, it was memorable and enjoyable all the same. My wife and I know we are fortunate. Through gesture, understanding words, invitations, text messages and times together, our family, extended family and friends enriched us. The best gift we received this year? Many nice, unexpected, moments.



## Meet the Team

# Finance Department

Among the many unsung heroes of the Ocean Pines Association are the handful of staff working in the Finance Department who helped produce record profitability during the last few years.

They work on the front lines at the Administration Building front desk, and in the back office building stronger controls and a more stable environment to ensure homeowner dollars are put to good use.

Accounting Manager Julia Johnson is one of the newest members of the department, while Membership and Assessment Supervisor Ruth Ann Meyer is among the longest tenured and most experienced.

### Julia Johnson

Originally from Latvia, Johnson came to Ocean Pines in August 2019. She previously worked for CPA firm



Julie Johnson

Robert M. Hoyt & Co. and was a senior accountant and financial analyst for Wicomico County.

Johnson wears many hats for the Ocean Pines Finance office, but her biggest project so far is the implementation of Northstar software systems.

“With that, I got to know a lot of people from different departments and what they actually do,” she said. “I had to learn their processes, so we could set up [the software] to introduce efficiency and transparency in daily operations.”

“Everything changed with Northstar,” Johnson continued, adding that earlier processes included lots of manual entry.

“It was a great opportunity to revamp the whole system, and it gave us the chance to streamline a lot of processes,” she said. “Everybody had a kind of eye-opening experience, where they enter the financial transactions, and they end up here in Finance. Before that, it was manual submission of cash and manual recording, and that was extremely time consuming.”

She said Northstar also allows for

better internal controls and real-time analysis of financial data. As an example, Johnson said she recently studied three years of fuel costs for the Ocean Pines Marinas, to see if there were any trends that could lead to future cost savings.

“We’re finding out a lot of good details,” she said. “With internal controls and analysis, you don’t see the results right away, but I feel that it makes the whole structure of Ocean Pines stronger.”

“It is really all about risk management,” Johnson continued. “Stronger internal controls reduce OPA’s exposure to risk. With Northstar, we are not only able to analyze data at any point of time, but we are also able to identify exposure to risk and reduce or eliminate this exposure by establishing stronger controls.”

Johnson added the new system allowed the Association to change its internal processes and create a greater degree of separation of duties in the department among herself, Meyers, accountant Nekia Wise, accounts payable staffer Geraldine Tate, and Finance Director Steve Phillips.

“Now, we have cash collections going through Nekia, bank reconciliations going through me, AP [accounts payable] going through Geraldine and assessments going through Ruth Ann, so there are so many people involved and I just feel so much more confident in the whole structure,” she said. “It makes me feel good that we’re better protected.”

### Ruth Ann Meyer

While Johnson focuses on the back end of the Finance office, Meyer works on the front line. She supervises the front desk operations and, during assessment season, deals with thousands of homeowners face-to-face.

Meyer has been with Ocean Pines for two decades.

“I get to meet a lot of the residents and we get to hear a lot of feedback directly from them, whenever decisions are made,” she said. “We’re responsible for billing, all the sales of memberships, and we work closely with Julia to make sure the money is right.”

Aiding Meyer on the frontline is longtime office support staffer Joanne

*please see team on page 16*



**Winners** - The Ocean Pines Anglers Club presented the awards for 2021 Angler of The Year at their December meeting. Angler awards coordinator Tim Mullin kept the records throughout the year and presented certificates and cash awards for 14 categories of fish.

Winners shown in photo (L to R) are **Frank Tortella**, (fresh water trout 15", spot 9 1/8"); **Scott Carstairs** (striped bass 28", croaker 12 3/4"); **Bob Woodward** (flounder 23"), **Ken Thompson**, accepting for son Adam Thompson], (red drum 27"); **Budd Heim**, (sheepshead 16"). Not pictured: Greg Donahue (bluefish 15", weakfish 22 1/2"); Steve Stein (tuna 49.6"); Kevin Welkner, (tautog 16 1/2"); Jim McWinney, (black sea bass 16").

## Lifestyle program helps prevents diabetes

There are so many reasons to stay healthy including your family, your work, and your favorite hobbies. If you have prediabetes, you can make healthy changes and prevent type 2 diabetes developing in your future. In Worcester County Health Department’s Lifestyle Balance-Diabetes Prevention Program, a trained coach will help you, and a group of people like you, learn how to lose weight, become more physically active, and reduce stress.

If you have been diagnosed with prediabetes or have a history of gestational diabetes, this program is proven to help you improve your eating habits, increase your daily activity, lose weight, and reduce your chance of developing type 2 diabetes. On average, participants lose between 5- to 7-percent of their body weight.

The **Lifestyle Balance: Diabetes Prevention Program** will allow you to learn about healthy eating, exercise, and weight loss. It is a year-long, group program that will run January 25 to January 24, 2023. Classes will be held every Tuesday at the Ocean Pines Library located at

11107 Cathell Rd. in Berlin from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

You will participate in 16-weekly sessions followed by once-a-month support sessions for the remainder of one full-year. In addition, you will receive one-on-one coaching and support, learn about healthy eating and active living, lose weight, earn weekly prizes, improve health, and participate in group discussions with others to help encourage them during their healthy lifestyle journey.

“People with prediabetes have an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes. The good news is that it can be prevented. Research has proven that healthy eating, physical activity, and a 5- to 7-percent weight loss can prevent type 2 diabetes in those with prediabetes or those who are ‘at-risk’ for the disease,” said Mimi Dean, Director of Prevention Services at the Worcester County Health Department.

Please call 410-632-1100 ext.1108 or email [crystal.bell1@maryland.gov](mailto:crystal.bell1@maryland.gov) to discuss program enrollment, eligibility, and to request a registration packet.





**Decorating** - With clippers, garden gloves and greens from their yards in hand, members of the Worcester County Garden Club braved the cold to decorate Historic St. Martin's Church in Showell for the holidays.

Individuals interested in learning more about Worcester County Garden Club can contact the membership chair at [WorCtyGardenClub@gmail.com](mailto:WorCtyGardenClub@gmail.com).

Assembled members in front of exterior doors with wreaths they created are: (Front L-R) Club President **Deb Young**, **Suzy Young**, and **Jan Owens**.

(Back L-R) **Mary Ellen Jefferson**, **Karen Trigger**, **Martha Bennett**, **Joan La Hayne**, **Alison Schweiger**, and guest **Pam O'Donnell**.

## Quilters by the Sea Guild of Ocean Pines continues giving ways

Founded in 1985, the Quilters by the Sea Guild of Ocean Pines has grown from a small operation among friends and volunteers, to a busy, bustling branch whose love of quilting and giving spirit benefits an entire community.

Last year, the Quilters donated 451 handmade items to more than a dozen different organizations including Believe in Tomorrow, Coastal Hospice, the Cricket Center, Diakonia, and Women Supporting Women.

Jo Anne Donnelly, assistant volunteer coordinator, joined the group in 1996. She always enjoyed sewing and made her first quilt in 1986.

"The group was very small back then and we were very limited, time wise," she said. "We used to work out of the old community center and our volunteer day was only three hours."

Now, the Quilters meet for five hours every Wednesday in the Assa-teague Room of the Ocean Pines Community Center.

"We've really grown, and I've been very active since the very beginning in the volunteer day," Donnelly said.

"That is something I've really enjoyed."

The Quilters host volunteer day on the first Wednesday of each month, when anyone can show up and work on items to be donated to local charities. Since 1986, the group has given away more than 2,000 quilts.

Second Wednesdays are "UFO" days, short for "unfinished objects," when the focus is on individual work and fellowship with other guild members. Third Wednesdays are for general business meetings, and fourth Wednesdays feature workshops and guest speakers.

"It's really very active and I enjoy all the different projects," Donnelly said. "Everybody is friendly and it's a great thing for people in Ocean Pines to do."

Donnelly's sister, Stephanie Dilworth, is the chief volunteer coordinator. She said among the items donated last year were 117 soft pillows that cover seatbelts, given to breast cancer survivors through Women Sup-

*please see **quilters** on page 15*



# Plan to do something

# NEW

# in 2022!

## FITNESS

### Water Aerobics

T,TH | Thru Jan 20, Feb 1-Mar 17  
5:15-6pm

**\$55** Swim Members,  
**\$65** OP Residents, **\$75** Public  
Drop-in: **\$5/\$6/\$7**  
Register: 410.641.5255

### Hydrorider Aqua Bikes

T,TH | Thru Jan 20, Feb 1-Mar 17  
6-6:45pm

**\$90** Swim Members,  
**\$95** OP Residents, **\$100** Public  
Drop-in: **\$8/\$10/\$12**  
Register: 410.641.5255

## FUN

### Hoopsters Basketball League

Player Evaluations Jan 15 | Ages 7-13  
**\$55** OP Residents, **\$65** Public  
Register: 410.641.7052

### Youth Indoor Soccer

Wednesdays | Feb 2-Mar 9  
Age 2: 5-5:30pm Age 3: 5:40-6:10pm  
**\$40** OP Residents, **\$50** Public  
Ages 4-6: 6:20-7pm  
**\$45** OP Residents, **\$55** Public  
Register: 410.641.7052

## GOLF

### OP Golf Club Winter Rates

OP Resident Rate **\$30\***  
Public Rate **\$35**  
Tee Times: 410.641.6057

\*with OP Resident ID Card

## DINING

*LIVE MUSIC W/ ECLIPSE FEB 19!*

### Ocean Pines Yacht Club

Reopens Feb 11  
Then Open Thu-Sun at 11am

### Clubhouse Bar & Grille

Reopens Feb 3  
Then Open Thu-Sun, 8am-5pm



# Clubhouse workers receive 'Heartsaver Hero Award'

Dave Van Gasbeck, president of the Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department, recently presented the American Heart Association's Heartsaver Hero Award to Rob Ruszin and Judie Scotti.

ported by EMS to Tidal Health in Salisbury, and he reportedly recovered.

An American Heart Association study showed that cardiac arrest victims who received a shock from a publicly available AED had far greater

ber recognition by the Worcester County Commissioners. Maryland Del. Wayne Hartman and Sen. Mary Beth Carozza also previously presented Ruszin and Scotti with commendations on behalf of the state.

"You are both truly heroes," Van Gasbeck said. "You did an amazing job. You just jumped into it, and we can't tell you how much we appreciate what you've done and how much we actually recognize, being in the business, how important it is the work you've done."

"You all are both fantastic," he added.

Scotti was modest in accepting the award, saying, "it's something that [anyone] would do."

"As a as a human being, if you can help somebody, then that's what you're supposed to do," she said. "Rob did an amazing job and, for me to help facilitate what I can do, then that was

great ... but I give credit to Rob."

"I was just there and knew where [the AED] was," Ruszin said. "Everyone that was there ... helped out."

"It was a big effort for everyone that was here," Scotti said. "So, it's not it's not just awards for us. It's awards for them too."

Following the award presentation, Van Gasbeck took the opportunity to encourage local people to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

"It's really important," he said. "We are taking more and more patients – and sick patients – on a daily basis. And virtually every patient that we brought in, in the last couple of months, has been unvaccinated."

"Do yourself a favor and protect yourself and your loved ones by getting vaccinated and, with the high amount of positivity now in Worcester County 20.58%, wear masks when you feel it is appropriate," he added.



**Dave Van Gasbeck**  
(center) with **Judie Scotti** and **Rob Ruszin**

Ruszin and Scotti helped save a life on Oct. 31 at the Ocean Pines Clubhouse Bar and Grille.

When a customer had a heart attack, their quick use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) resuscitated the man. He was later trans-

ported by EMS to Tidal Health in Salisbury, and he reportedly recovered.

Van Gasbeck said he applied for the Heartsaver Hero Award shortly after Oct. 31 and was hoping it would arrive in conjunction with the Novem-

## Craft Club announces annual donations

The Pine'er Craft Club of Ocean Pines recently announced annual donations of \$5,800 to several Ocean Pines departments and community groups.

Since forming in 1974, the club has given more than \$175,000 to the Ocean Pines community.

This year, Club President Sharon Puser said funds were distributed to the Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks, Police and Public Works departments, along with the Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department, Ocean Pines Library, Neighborhood Watch, and the Worcester County Veterans Memorial Foundation.

Puser said profits from craft fairs and from the Artisan Gift Shop went toward the donations.

Additional money was raised this year during "Desserts in the Park" events that coincided with summer "Concerts in the Park."

"This was the first time we tried that, and that went over well. Our members baked, and then we sold the goodies at the concerts," Puser said, adding the events would continue next summer.

"The purpose of our club is basically to give back to the community," Puser continued. "Through our creativity – making crafts and selling crafts – it

means a lot to us to be able to support our local groups."

During a recent holiday and installation luncheon, Puser said a new club member was surprised to find out how much the group has donated.

"She said, 'Now I'm even more proud to be a member!'" Puser said. "She knew we gave money back, but she never realized how much it was in total."

Puser said the club is always looking for new members. Regular Pine'er Craft Club meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month, starting at 10 a.m. in the community center on 235 Ocean Parkway.

"People can come in any time, and we love to have new members come and help us," she said. "For January, we're doing a project for Meals on Wheels, so we would love to have some extra help!"

The Artisan Gift Shop, in White Horse Park next to the Farmer's Market and across from the Administration Building on 239 Ocean Parkway, is open Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For more information on the shop or the Pine'er Craft Club, contact Puser at 410-208-3032 or [opcraclub@aol.com](mailto:opcraclub@aol.com).

**Happy New Year**  
As the calendar turns the page, we wish you the very best in the year ahead.

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# Conservation partnership announced

Lower Shore Land Trust (LSLT) announced a partnership with Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC) thanks to a grant from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (Cornell Lab)'s Land Trust Bird Conservation Initiative Small Grant Program.

The \$5,000 award will be utilized to develop a six-part bird conservation series to be held from January to August of 2022, highlighting various bird conservation and restoration practices across the Delmarva Peninsula; the series will also promote opportunities for engaging new and existing volunteers in meaningful stewardship of conservation lands through the lens of bird conservation. ESLC and LSLT will be planning events that highlight the expertise and efforts of Audubon MD-DC, Washington College Natural Lands Project, Foreman's Branch Bird Observatory, Delaware Wild Lands, Pickering Creek Audubon Center, and the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance.

The Delmarva Peninsula is a vulnerable peninsula, with the Chesapeake Bay to the west and Coastal Bays and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. The peninsula hosts a variety of critical ecosystem habitat and supports a plethora of habitats ranging from forest interior, grasslands, wetlands, and salt-marsh habitat. Unfortunately, habitat loss from sea level rise and development, along with large-scale changes in farming practices, have contributed to the declines in a variety of bird species that were once plentiful on the coastal landscape, such as saltmarsh sparrow, seaside sparrow, black rail, and bob-white quail.

This upcoming conservation series will highlight regional restoration ef-

forts being implemented by conservation partners through discussions of restoration practices and trainings geared toward land trust members and volunteers, as well as interested members of our community.

Through these focused programs, which include bird banding demonstrations and birding walks, partners aim to increase awareness of the challenges to bird populations and of the actions being implemented to counter these declines. Existing conservation easement landowners will gain insight and knowledge as to how their land plays a role in the larger picture of restoration efforts, and whether their property might have potential to be enrolled in the highlighted restoration projects. Individuals within our communities can become more involved with local land trusts and will have the opportunity to learn how to become more involved with our conserved lands.

For questions about this upcoming series, please contact: Larisa Prezioso, Eastern Shore Land Conservancy Restoration Specialist at [lprezioso@eslc.org](mailto:lprezioso@eslc.org)

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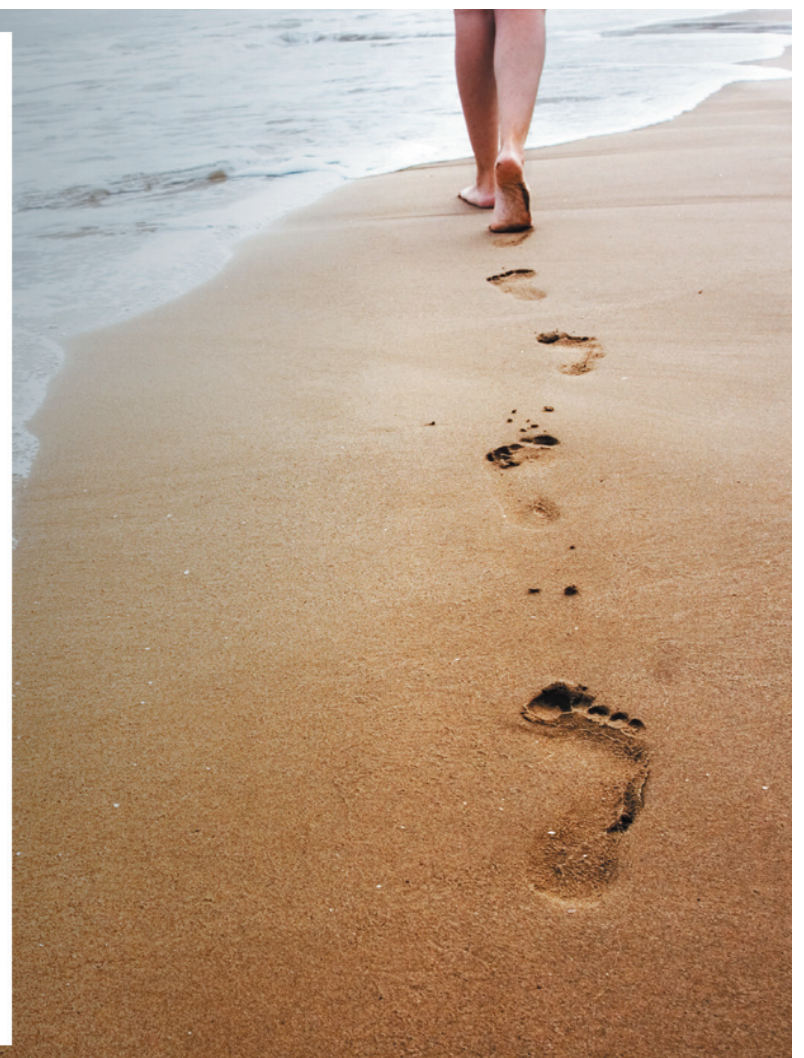


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**My Backyard...** sponsored by Maureen Kennedy

*How to care for wild birds this winter*

The arrival of winter forces every-one to confront the changes synony-mous with the season, and local wildlife is no exception. Low tempera-tures, harsh winter storms and a scarcity of food can make it challeng-ing for wildlife, including birds, to thrive throughout the winter.

Even though several species of birds are migratory and travel to warmer climates to wait out winter, many others stay put. The Audubon

common sources of food, such as in-sects and berries, disappear as winter wears on. This is when some human intervention can prove handy, advise ornithologists. A few simple efforts may benefit birds and other wildlife that may not hibernate winter away or escape to the tropics.

Have a supply of food, bird feeders, houses, and any other bird-related gear at the ready before the storms re-ally rev up.



Invest in nutritious food, such as black oil sunflower seeds or blends that are high in black oil sunflower seeds. You also can make available more foods that are high in fat, such as suet, peanut butter or even whole peanuts. Mother Nature Net-work also suggests adding meal worms if they can be found.

Choose feeders that will keep seed dry; otherwise, it will be prone to bacterial and fungal growth.

Society says that keeping close to home helps some species of birds maintain their territories.

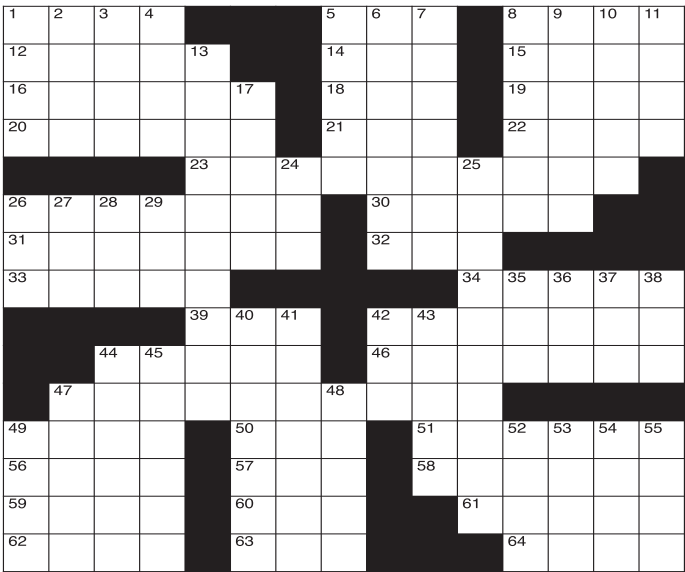
Some birds will puff up to retain heat; others will seek shelter in dense foliage or cavities to avoid the elements. Many birds will huddle to-gether to share warmth.

Another way of keeping warm is building up fat as an insulator and en-ergy source. The Audubon Society says more than 10 percent of some birds’ winter body weight may be fat. That can be challenging to maintain when

Don’t discard fallen leaves or any downed twigs or pruned boughs from trees. This will give birds material for creating shelter or hiding away when the weather gets especially brutal. When the Christmas tree is finished for the season, place it in the yard as a windbreak for birds.

Put shallow water sources around so birds can drink. Replace them fre-quently if water freezes.

Wild birds can benefit from some help when the temperatures start to drop in winter.



**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Requests

5. Calendar month

8. Invests in little enterprises

12. Bird sound

14. S. American plant cultivated for tubers

15. Car

16. Bullfighter

18. Hill (Celtic)

19. Strong criticism

20. Detector

21. When you hope to get there

22. Having the skill to do something

23. Legendary MLB broadcaster

26. Vulcanite

30. C. Asian mountain range

31. In a way, healed

32. Midway between east and southeast
33. Small appendages of insects

34. \_\_\_ Greene, “Bonanza” actor

39. A place to bathe

42. Postal worker accessory

44. Classical music

46. A way of wrecking

47. Terminator

49. You eat three a day

50. Pointed end of a pen

51. NATO official (abbr.)

56. Genus of clams

57. Boxing’s “G.O.A.T.”

58. A colorless, odorless gas used as fuel

59. Covered thinly with gold paint

60. Bachelor of Laws

61. Red fluorescent dye

62. Engineering group

63. Female sibling

64. Adjacent

**CLUES DOWN**

1. What a thespian does

2. Footwear

3. Adjust spacing between

4. Witnesses

5. Who shows excessive fondness

6. Distinct form of a plant

7. National capital

8. Hunting expedition

9. Related to medulla oblongata

10. European country

11. Cola

13. Excluded from use or mention

17. Speak

24. Bloodshot

25. Make better

26. Keyboard key

27. Type of degree

28. Paddle
29. Peacock network

35. Not young

36. Baseball stat

37. One’s grandmother

38. Breakfast food

40. Bathroom features

41. Disease-causing bacterium

42. NY ballplayer

43. Got up

44. Prophet

45. Part of the mouth

47. Unnatural

48. Acronym for brain science study

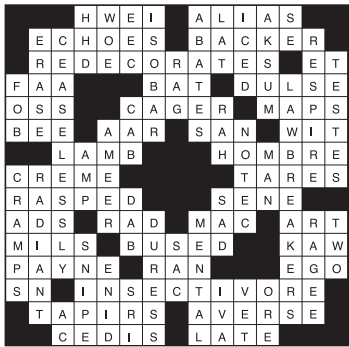
49. Three are famous

52. Languages spoken in Patagonia

53. Freedom from difficulty

54. Widely used OS

55. Many people pay it



Answers for December 22



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# A planetary collision

Scientists have found a new solution to the question: what can happen when planets suffer collisions. The answer - their atmospheres can be stripped away.

On October 20, 2021 astronomers announced they found evidence of a collision between two exoplanets. According to the report, published in the journal "Nature," a young, earth size exoplanet lost its atmosphere as evi-

Schneiderman said: "The energies involved are huge — the impact will result in parts of the bodies getting melted, so some material from both will likely remain in place, while some material is going to get thrown off."

Studies of the gaseous components of the disk were focused on carbon monoxide, which is described as the brightest, and the easiest to find. What surprised the astronomers is the

the unusual minerals. The only successful hypothesis was the impact of a smaller body smashing into an Earth-sized exoplanet with the resulting loss of the planet's atmosphere.

Searching for similar regions of concentrated carbon monoxide may reveal historic collision events in other stellar systems as well.

In more recent news, NASA's newest class of 10 astronaut candidates were introduced on December 6. The group is called the 'Artemis Generation' and will be eligible for upcoming lunar landings.

Another event took place on Christmas day, when astronomers cheered the launch of the James Webb Space Telescope. The launch was from outside of the U.S., at a European-owned spaceport on the northeast coast of South America in French Guiana. This next-generation space telescope is jointly sponsored by NASA with the European and Canadian space agencies. The Webb's 6.5 meter (21 ft) main mirror assembly consists of 18 gold-plated, hexagon-shaped segments, aimed by 132 actuators.

The telescope's new discoveries may begin mid-2022, after it navigates into solar orbit and undergoes sophisticated testing. Webb will reach further than Hubble, exploring stars and galaxies from the very early universe, just after its "birth" in the big bang.

January stargazing begins at about 5:45 p.m., featuring Taurus the Bull,

*please see **collision** on page 15*

## Astronomy & Spaceflight

By Douglas Hemmick, Ph.D.



denced by an unusual region of dust and gas orbiting the star HD 172555. The paper's lead author Tajana Schneiderman of MIT said: "This is the first time we've detected this phenomenon, of a stripped planetary atmosphere from a giant impact."

Such collisions commonly appear in young planetary systems, in early stages after their star has formed and their planets are still developing. In fact, during the early days of our solar system, a smaller body is believed to have struck the young Earth, with a huge impact, leading to today's familiar Earth-moon duo. Analysis of moon rocks brought back by NASA's Apollo astronauts have supported this hypothesis.

The star HD 172555 is estimated to be only 23 million years old, in its infancy on the scale of stellar lifetimes. (For comparison, the solar system is 4.5 billion years old.) At its young age, the HD 172555 system might have planetary collisions.

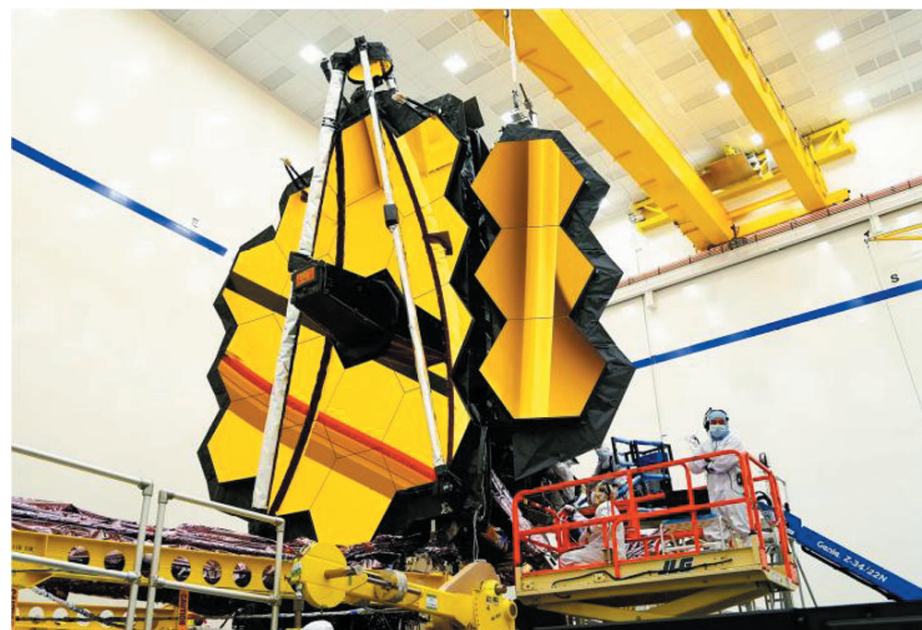
The research group from MIT, University of Ireland at Galway and UK's Cambridge University used source data from the Atacama Large Array observatory in Chile. The star they observed, HD 172555, is found in the constellation Pavo the Peacock, in the southern hemisphere.

Analysis of that star's region of gas and dusty debris revealed that the disk is loaded with unusual minerals, for example, obsidian and black glassy tektites. Such minerals require powerful heat to form. In describing what occurs when an exoplanet is struck,

presence of a large concentration of carbon monoxide gas located rather close to the star, just 10 astronomical units away. One "astronomical unit," or AU, is defined as the average Earth to sun distance in our solar system which is about 93 million miles.

Why is it strange for such gas to be close to a star? The answer can be understood in the following way. When a chemical such as carbon monoxide is exposed to intense light, close to its sun, it is broken down into its constituent elements and thus would become depleted. This process is called "photo-dissociation."

The astronomers analyzed a variety of scenarios to account for the abundance of carbon monoxide, as well as



*James Webb Space Telescope under construction*

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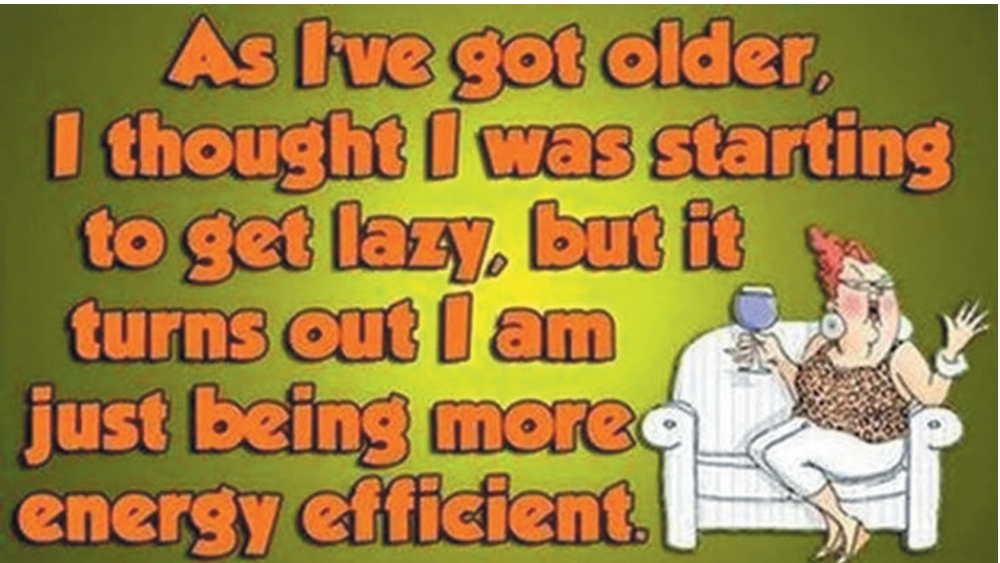
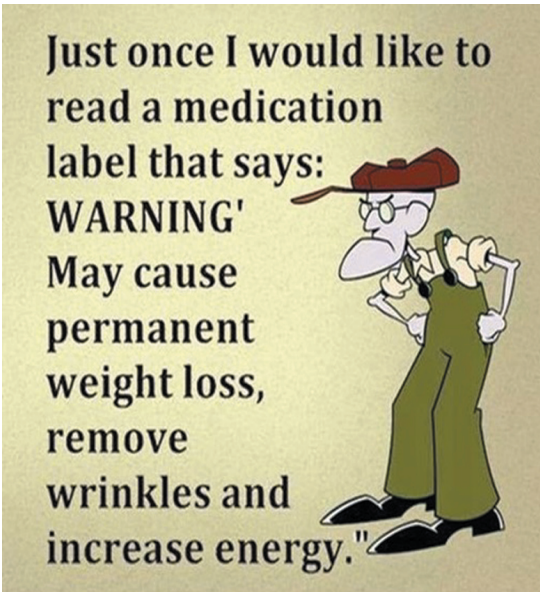
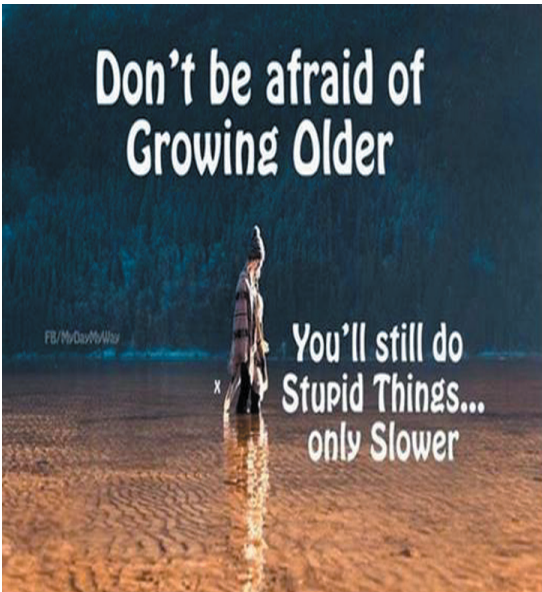
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# Some things to think about

Gathered from the internet by **Jack Barnes**







## Yacht Clubs and marinas

From canoes and kayaks to around-the-world yachts there are many ways to secure a recreational boat when it's not in use. Some folks trailer them. Others moor them at their backyard docks and still others keep them at yacht clubs and marinas. I personally have trailered a sixteen-foot day sailer, kept a thirty-one-foot sloop in a marina, and I currently have a twenty-foot pontoon boat on a lift in my Ocean Pines backyard.

The decision is usually a cost versus convenience tradeoff. We have quite a few public launching ramps for the trailered boats and a whole bunch of marinas and yacht clubs in Ocean City waters.

Marinas provide a nice balance. They are more convenient but pricier than trailering. They also afford a

community atmosphere with fellow boaters; however, you lose the flexibility to haul your boat to other far away waters or land locked lakes.

The distinction between a marina and a yacht club is a bit arbitrary and, as far as the boat is concerned, irrelevant. Either may have fuel and sanitation stations, a variety of dining venues and logoed T-shirts. In fact, they all look pretty much the same from an overhead drone.

Yacht clubs, much like golf clubs, have a more social identity – youth programs, intra-club regattas, parties, organizational politics and membership dues— beyond the care and feeding of the boats.

While yacht clubs tend to be focused on their members, the marinas target a greater swath of the boating public. They tend to be more focused

on the boat – maintenance, haul-out facilities, fish cleaning stations, marine supply and bait shops. Slip rentals for overnight transients are also part of their business model as well as small craft rentals, deep sea charters and berthing for local tour boats.

The biggest and most comprehensive marina in the Ocean City area is the Sunset Marina located on the Ocean City Commercial Fishing Harbor with the most direct access to the Ocean City inlet and Atlantic Ocean. Created (i.e. dug out to roughly 8 feet and flooded) in 1999, it has a couple hundred slips and capacity for about 300 more boats in dry storage where the boat is pulled and stored on a rack when not in use and put back in the water when the owner calls ahead.

The Sunset organization is totally dedicated to providing Ocean City with first rate marina facilities. Besides slips and restaurants, Sunset has a huge haul-out and winter storage business where boat owners have the freedom to perform off-season work by themselves or a contractor.

Building on its reputation for safety and quality, the Sunset organization has continued to grow. Over the years, they have acquired the

Ocean City Fishing Center with its 140 slips at the western end of the Route 50 Bridge and, just this year, the Fisher Marina at the far end of the Ocean City Commercial Fishing Harbor. Sunset also owns the Shark restaurant and its handful of slips.

The biggest yacht to tie up at Sunset has been a one hundred-forty-foot trans-Atlantic vessel and the most famous is Michael Jordan's eighty foot, "Catch 23" when he fishes in the White Marlin Tournament.

The White Marlin Tourney is the most famous of many local and regional tournaments that attract fisherman to Ocean City. Over a hundred of the White Marlin participants come out of Sunset while two-a-day tanker deliveries keep up with the fleet's insatiable fuel demands and winning catches are toasted on the docks late into the night.

But even when there is no tourney underway and no lucky fisherman is buying a round or two in the bar, the marina life is special - good food, great camaraderie, and fish stories to rival 'Moby Dick.'

Stay safe. Stay dry.

Dan Collins can be reached for comment at [dancollins.ocean-pines@gmail.com](mailto:dancollins.ocean-pines@gmail.com)

## Virtual boating course offered

It's never too soon to think Spring and getting the boat back in the water. Brushing up on boating skills and being prepared is what safe boating is all about. The US Coast Guard Auxiliary is offering a virtual course February 8, 9 and 10 between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. All the required material is covered along with time for questions.

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 Mary-

land. Those attending the class, and passing the test will receive a Maryland Boating Certificate which is NAS-BLA approved and valid in all states.

A fee of \$20 covers the cost of the course and materials. Checks should be made payable to: "USGCAUX 12-05" and mailed to USGCAUX 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](mailto:CGAUXOC@Gmail.com).

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# Caregiving from a distance

By **Sherri Holder**

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A major challenge for baby boomers today is providing care needs for their elderly parents from afar. Whether the distance is one-hour, multiple states, or even another country, concerned children often make it a practice to check in daily via telephone. While this provides some peace of mind that mom and dad are fine, it can also provide a clever disguise for subtle, yet important changes in physical and mental health that is only revealed during annual trips for the holidays or vacation.

So, how do you go about meeting this challenge in a practical way?

For starters, recognize that feelings of guilt that you should have realized these changes earlier or aren't doing enough are normal. Allow yourself time to process these emotions and let them go. By accepting the guilt that will likely present itself no matter how much you are currently doing will enable you to put your strengths to work as a long-distance caregiver.

And while we are talking about feelings, consider your loved ones emotional state before you make any decisions or major steps for their benefit. Keep in mind the fear of losing independence or becoming a burden is common among aging adults. Reacting too quickly to a worrisome situation may make them feel unsafe or insecure so you will want to weigh carefully their wishes against any potential risks. Of course, this requires knowing their wishes. Open communication early on will make future transitions much easier for everyone

involved.

Ask permission to follow-up with physicians, local caregivers, and other professionals. Bear in mind this will require the proper legal documentation be in place in advance. By asking permission you are empowering your loved one with a sense of control and opening up a line of communication for estate and long-term care planning.

Education is paramount to effectively plan for a secure financial future and long-term care needs. Consider attending an Elder Law workshop in the state where your loved one resides to get state specific legal advice or contact an Elder Law attorney for a consultation.

Finally, when visits aren't feasible staying in touch through phone calls remains important, but consider adding other forms of contact like a letter, text messages, videos and pictures. Then try to find a support person- a sibling, friend or neighbor- who can keep you up to date on any apparent changes in behavior or health.

Far too often we see families put off or forego care completely because they do not understand the planning strategies that are available to them. They are paralyzed by the stress and misconceptions surrounding asset protection planning. But, planning early, rather than waiting until the last minute, will often yield better results and peace of mind. A thorough plan typically allows for your loved one to stay at home longer, eases the minds of family afar, preserves a nest egg to ensure quality of care, and provides a needed break for the local family caregivers, like a well spouse, child, or friend.



**Recovery donation** - The Executive Committee of American Legion Post 166, at its December meeting, approved a donation of \$5,000 to be sent immediately to the Department of Kentucky Veterans of Foreign Wars to be used for tornado disaster recovery for veterans. The Kentucky VVA Department said it was particularly hard hit in the massive storm and had few resources left to provide help to veterans.

Above are (L-R) Post 166 Charity Committee Chair **Bo Spicer**, and Post 166/Ocean City VVA 1091 Chapter members **Pat Sharkey** and **Bob Gilmore** hold ceremonial check for VVA Kentucky.

## County board, commission volunteers sought

Worcester County Government (WCG) encourages those interested in becoming more involved in the community to volunteer on a Worcester County board or commission. Members are appointed by the County Commissioners to fill two types of vacancies: seats that represent each of the seven election districts, and open seats that may be filled by residents throughout Worcester County.

Current district seats are available on the following boards and commissions:

District One, Southern District – Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board, Local Management Board, and Social Services Advisory Board

District Three, Sinepuxent District – Board of Electrical Examiners, Ethics Board, Recreation Advisory Board, Commission for Women, and Water and Sewer Advisory Councils (WSAC) for Mystic Harbour (3 seats) and West Ocean City (2 seats)

District Four, Western District – Economic Development Advisory Board, Tourism Advisory Committee, and Recreation Advisory Board

District Five, Ocean Pines District – Social Services Advisory Board, and Ocean Pines WSAC (2 seats)

District Six, Northern District – Ethics Board, Planning Commission, and Recreation Advisory Board

District Seven, Ocean City – Economic Development Advisory Board, Board of Electrical Examiners, Housing Review Board, Social Services Advisory Board, and Tourism Advisory Committee

Current open seats that may be filled by residents countywide include the Adult Public Guardianship Board (2 seats), Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council (1 seat), Local Development Council for Ocean Downs Casino (4 seats), Commission for Women (1 seat), and the WSAC for Mystic Harbour (3 seats), West Ocean City (2 seats), and Ocean Pines (3 seats).

In the event that WCG receives more interest in a particular committee than there are available seats, the commissioners will maintain an interest list to help fill future vacancies. To learn more, call Karen Hammer at 410-632-1194, or send a letter of interest, along with a resume or cover letter outlining any pertinent experience, to khammer@co.worcester.md.us or Worcester County Administration at One West Market Street, Room 1103, Snow Hill, Maryland 21863.



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**quilters**  
from page 7

porting Women.

Dilworth said the Quilters received a grant last year from Choptank Electric Cooperative for the Believe in Tomorrow Children's Foundation, an organization that helps young people with terminal illnesses. Those funds helped produce 39 quilts for the non-profit, which is based in Ocean City.

"This year, the American Legion, Post #166, Ocean City, MD gave us a grant to make patriotic-themed quilts for veterans, and most of those are given to Coastal Hospice," she said. "They have a little ceremony when we give the quilts to them, and we've donated 10 so far, since we got the grant."

The guild also donates items to the Berlin Nursing Home, which houses about 15 veterans, Dilworth said.



Other recent beneficiaries have included foster children through The Cricket Center in Berlin, area homeless through Diakonia in Ocean City, and individuals and families struggling with addiction through Worcester Goes Purple.

"Every once in a while, we'll also do something special for a member who is sick, or the friend of a member, where we'll just make and give them quilts" Dilworth said.

"I like all the aspects of the guild, but the giving is very near and dear to

my heart," she added.

Jacqui Santangelo is the current Quilters by the Sea president. She moved to Ocean Pines in 2017 and was previously active in a similar club in Pennsylvania.

Last year, Santangelo said the Quilters stayed active through Zoom meetings.

"Of course, we were sewing like mad, making masks," she said. "Everybody made hundreds and hundreds of masks for Mountaire Farms, because they didn't have enough masks. Some people also gave them to first responders, or anybody who requested them."

"That was a tough year, but we continued to make and donate quilts, and we stayed connected through little workshops," Santangelo added.

Resuming activities this year has also meant resuming the giving tradition.

Along with handmade items, Guild members this year donated canned goods to Diakonia and Sarah's Pantry, to help feed local children struggling with food insecurity, as well as toiletries to the Grace Center for Maternal and Women's Health in Berlin. Quilters also donated more than 100 toys to Toys for Tots during a recent Christmas party.

"It feels good to give a little more," Santangelo said. "Not only are we keeping people warm with quilts, but we're giving

them something to eat to warm their bellies, and we're helping out in any way we can."

For information about joining Quilters by the Sea, email qbsope-mail@gmail.com or attend any volunteer day, the first Wednesday of each month from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Ocean Pines Community Center on 235 Ocean Parkway.

The group also accepts monetary donations, as well as donations of materials.

"We need backings mostly, so that's larger yardage," Dilworth said. "It should be 100% cotton, and I don't turn down anything that's quilting related."

For more information, search "Quilters by the Sea Guild of Ocean Pines Maryland" on Facebook.

## Chronic blood shortage continues

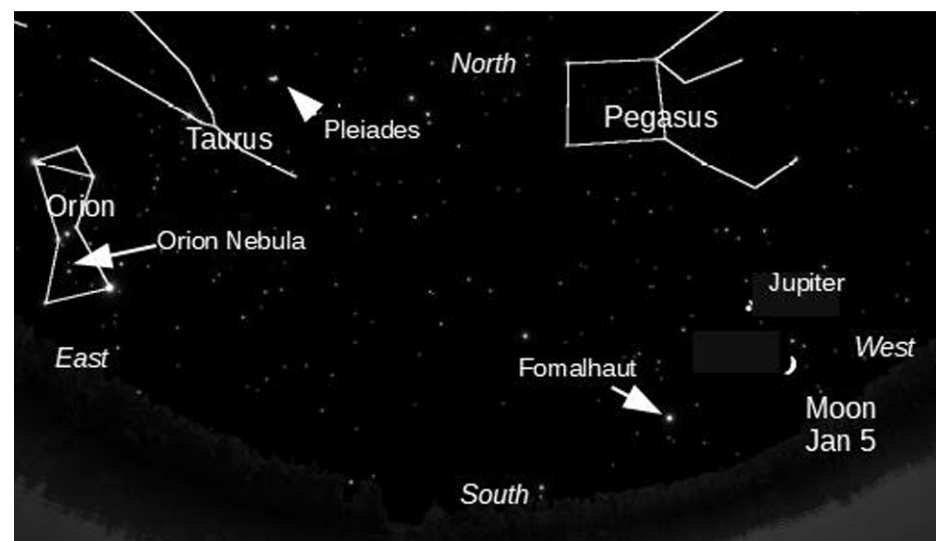
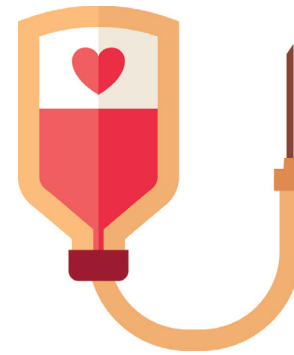
Blood Bank of Delmarva (BBD) continues to call for more donors as the blood shortage extends into the new year. The region's blood supply continues to be threatened by low donor turnout and blood drive cancellations due to surging levels of Omicron cases. Schools that had begun to reinstate student blood drives are once again cancelling, perpetuating the dramatic decline in youth and first-time donors. Prior to the pandemic, 25 percent of annual blood donations were made at high schools and colleges, but the threat of a return to remote learning is making it nearly impossible for them to commit to hosting blood drives.

This is always a challenging time of year for the blood supply, as holiday plans and travel make donating blood less of a priority and winter weather can lead to blood drive cancellations. This year, those seasonal challenges are coinciding with a new wave of the pandemic. Blood centers across the country are and have been suffering from shortages since the start of the pandemic in March of 2020.

"A strong blood supply is essential and can be threatened at any time with emergencies such as the unprecedented snow storm our region saw this past Monday, which caused blood drive cancellations" said Patty Killeen, Senior Executive Director at BBD. "National Blood Donor Month is a great time to sign up to donate blood and start the year by giving back, especially in the wake of this extreme weather and ongoing blood shortage."

Donating blood is safe, and we have taken extra precautions to help prevent the person-to-person spread of COVID-19. As always, people are not eligible to donate if they're experiencing a cold, sore throat, respiratory infection or flu-like symptoms. Additional information on donor eligibility and COVID-19 precautions is available here.

Donors can schedule appointments by calling 1-888-8-BLOOD-8 or visiting [www.delmarvablood.org](http://www.delmarvablood.org)



**collision**  
from page 11

and the nearby Pleiades cluster, a favorite winter binoculars target.

Jupiter can be seen over the southwest horizon, but gently setting after 7:45 p.m. On January 5, Jupiter appears about five degrees north of the

waxing crescent moon.

By 9 p.m. the constellation Orion the Hunter appears above the southeastern horizon. Again, binoculars are handy, this time for viewing the Orion nebula.

Wishing all stargazers good luck and clear skies.

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**space**  
from page 3

and years before you can fly.”

“The New Shepherd experience is a very different type of human spaceflight,” she said. “Having worked on New Shepherd for eight years, we talked every aspect of this flight to death. I thought that I knew everything about it, but then experiencing it for real was still new and fresh and interesting in a lot of ways.

“As I was going through it, my internal dialog was like, ‘Oh, this is what it’s like. This is what we’ve been talking about for all those years.’ The sensory experience was pretty overwhelming, even though I had known about all these things for some time,” she added.

Adding to the surreal experience, among her three crew members was perhaps the most famous fictional space captain of all time. Ironically Shatner, or “Bill” as Audrey now knows him, was a calming influence and someone who helped put everything into perspective.

“I don’t know if it’s his age or his life experience, or maybe just being comfortable with people peppering him with questions and being in front of a camera, but he was so thoughtful at every step of the way, to kind of stop us and say, ‘Do you believe that we’re going through this?’ As the rest of us were fumbling

around to try to find the words to explain what we’ve been through, he was a bit of a poet about it and very comforting,” she said.

Kevin was present for the launch and said it was a strange and “disorienting experience” watching his daughter go into space.

“The anxiety that you have watching your daughter sit on a 60-foot rocket that’s loaded with liquid hydrogen and blast off into space going three times the speed of sound, and then separate and float around above the Kármán line for four or five minutes, and then go through the anxiety of waiting to see the drogue chutes deploy and then the main chutes deploy – as a parent, it’s just very unnerving,” he said.

Kevin said the experience was also “disjointed,” because first you see things happening, and then “you hear it and you feel it.”

“The thing goes up so fast, that it’s just kind of breathtaking. In no time, probably 25 or 30 seconds, it’s going 350 miles an hour,” he said. “But she was really confident of the people at Blue Origin, because she had worked with them for so long, and they really have a great safety program. They’ve launched the same rocket 17 or 18 times.”

**The future of space travel**

At this point in her career, Audrey said among her most fulfilling roles has been as a mentor for the next generation of potential astronauts. She is currently the vice president of New Shepard Mission & Flight Operations for Blue Origin.

What the next wave of space travelers will look like going forward, she said, will be strikingly different from what the public has come to expect since the early days of the NASA program in the last century.

Audrey recently spoke with a Girl Scout troop, and said one of the questions that stood out came from a little girl who asked if they’ll ever need chefs in space.

“I was like, ‘Oh girl, I am with you! I do not want to eat that frozen astronaut ice cream that we used to get at the science museums,’” she said with a laugh. “I said, ‘Absolutely there are going to be needs for chefs in space.’ And then she turns to her brother and says, ‘See, I told you!’

“All of the ways that you can get into working in this industry, I felt like it was much more narrow when I was a kid,” she continued. “You had to be a technical person. You had to be an engineer or a very decorated fighter pilot to work in the space industry, let alone to be an astronaut. You pretty much had to devote your

life to it.”

Blue Origin has flown 14 people in space this year, and none of them were professional astronauts, Audrey said.

“You also have SpaceX flying people who aren’t astronauts, and the same thing with Virgin, so it’s a really interesting time in the industry to look at this diverse group of people who have experienced spaceflight this year and just them being the complete opposite of everything that an astronaut always was,” she said.

Ultimately, Audrey said diversifying space travel and the access to space travel is one of the major goals of Blue Origin.

“If we can create a means to get people to space more easily and make that more inexpensive, then imagine what people will start doing up there,” she said. “You’ll have adventurers and you’ll have artists and you’ll have people of all sorts, in addition to the technical folks.

“I think there is no defined path to get you there anymore,” she continued. “If you enjoy spaceflight and are interested in that way, you can go do whatever else your interests might be and it can always lead a path to get you to space. So, I think it’s a really wonderful expansion of the industry that we’ve seen this year.”

**team**  
from page 6

Tides for Ocean City Inlet			
Day	High /Low	Tide Time	
Th 13	High	4:37 AM	
	Low	10:57 AM	
	High	4:46 PM	
	Low	10:35 PM	
F 14	High	5:23 AM	
	Low	11:46 AM	
	High	5:32 PM	
	Low	11:21 PM	
Sa 15	High	6:07 AM	
	Low	12:27 PM	
	High	6:16 PM	
Su 16	Low	12:05 AM	
	High	6:49 AM	
	Low	1:06 PM	
	High	6:58 PM	
M 17	Low	12:47 AM	
	High	7:31 AM	
	Low	1:43 PM	
	High	7:40 PM	
Tu 18	Low	1:27 AM	
	High	8:12 AM	
	Low	2:20 PM	
	High	8:22 PM	
W 19	Low	2:07 AM	
	High	8:51 AM	
	Low	2:57 PM	
	High	9:03 PM	

Heinlen, plus a rotating crew of summer help.

“Joanne is the most even-keeled person ever,” Meyer said. “Her demeanor is always the same and very professional, and she’s just great at the front desk. You need to have that type of person in the front to deal with all the different personalities that come through the door.”

Meyer said more than 50% of homeowners currently pay assessments in person, meaning she interacts with thousands of customers each spring, when the Association mails annual bills.

While assessment season is the most hectic part of her year, Meyer said there’s little to no downtime.

“Come September, we deal with liens and collections lawyers, and then go right into the budget and getting the annual billing statements ready,” she said. “And, once those go out, our busiest season starts.”

All of that can mean dealing with upwards of 100 visitors and phone calls each day. Asked how she copes, Meyer joked, “You go into your office, you breathe for 10 seconds, and you

come back out.”

“You have to remember that the customers want to be right all the time and, even if they’re not, you have to make them feel like they are,” she said.

Both women said recent customer service initiatives have been successful, including the promotion and use of [info@oceanpines.org](mailto:info@oceanpines.org) for general questions.

“That’s helped a lot,” Meyer said. “Having that central location that you can go to has been a big help, and of course if they don’t have answers they’ll go to the separate departments.

“I think it’s always challenging to be in customer service,” she continued. “You never know how people will take things. You think that they’ll be angry and they’re not, and then you have others that you think are going to be even-keeled and they really are not. So, you have to be ready for whatever they throw at you.”

Both also said flexibility is key when working in Finance.

“If somebody has a project, you might get pulled off of something that you thought was important and you are now on that new project,” Meyer said. “Any given day, you think your day is planned and then all of the sudden it’s not.”

Johnson and Meyer have played major roles during the last two years, as the Association continues an unprecedented streak of financial success. That includes the \$1.2 million favorable-to-budget finish during the COVID-plagued fiscal year 2021, and a \$1.3 million budget favorability during the current fiscal period.

“What I’ve seen on my end ... I will praise all the people that work in every department,” Johnson said. “I’ve seen, personally, how much they’ve all done and helped things to change from worse to better.

“They’re extending the operations, they’re bringing more people in, and they’re working with what they have and making things more approachable and interesting for the public to come in and enjoy what they do,” she continued. “I’ve seen it not only in the numbers, but in everything they do.”

Meyer said “teamwork” has been the key to recent success.

“Everyone has to do their part in order for it to be successful. It’s not just one person over another person, but it’s everyone working together,” she said. “I think we all also respect each other. We all have our moments of frustration, but then you get over it and you figure out how to fix it.”



# Former *Courier* columnist Betty Cianci passes away

Elizabeth (Betty) Melville Cianci passed away on Friday, December 24, in Manheim, PA. Born in Pittsburgh, she was the only child of the late Robert and Mary Melville.



Her work experience began as a Congressional secretary for Honorable William A. Barrett of Philadelphia for three years and as a legal secretary with the law firm of Kirkland, Fleming,

Green, Martin & Ellis for four years. After marriage to Salvatore (Sal) Cianci in 1957, a World War II Veteran and government employee, they moved to Silver Spring, MD where Betty became a stay-at-home wife and mother. They lived in Silver Spring for 43 years where they raised three children; Jean, Chris (Sandy) and Donna (Eric). Sal passed away in 2020.

Betty volunteered as a Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) teacher in 1959 and went on to teach for twenty years at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Silver Spring, serving as their director of Religion for Grades one through eight in the last three. Betty also was active in the Glen Haven PTA and served in many volunteer capacities including PTA President.

In 1975, Betty rejoined the workforce as a part-time secretary at the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. She later became a Management Analyst and finally a personnel staffing specialist. Betty was also involved in the NRC Women's Program and Toastmaster's Club, where she served

as president. She retired in 1994.

In 2000, Betty and Sal moved to their new home in Ocean Pines. Betty became active in the Friends of the Ocean Pines Library where she served as publicity chair for eight years. With her passion for writing, she also became involved with the First Saturday Writers. She began writing for *The Courier* in 2005. She most recently wrote a column entitled "Betty's Corner" highlighting, among other things, local clubs and charities.

Betty's favorite days in Ocean Pines

were when family members visited, particularly her grandchildren Angela, Michelle, Anthony, Nicole and Amber and great grandchildren Jonas, Bennett, and Louie. Since 2000, Betty had been a member of St. John Neumann Church in Berlin and St. John Neumann Catholic Church in Lancaster, PA.

Services will be private in Arlington National Cemetery where Sal and Betty will be laid to rest together. To send a condolence, please visit SnyderFuneralHome.com.

## Health Department receives grant

The Worcester County Health Department was approved for a \$100,000 grant from CareFirst Blue-Cross BlueShield in December. The funding is in response to CareFirst's 2021 Place-Based Strategies: Diabetes Request for Proposals. The money will be used to support the Farm to Library: Preventing Diabetes in Worcester County Program in 2022.

"We are so excited to put the funding we're receiving from CareFirst out into our community to support diabetes prevention," said Mimi Dean, Director of Prevention Services for the Worcester County Health Department. "Our Farm to Library program addresses some of the primary drivers of type 2 diabetes through community gardening, grocery store tours, health literacy, financial literacy, physical activity, cooking classes, and expanded access to the National Diabetes Prevention Program."

According to CareFirst, the organization is committed to providing leadership in assessing and addressing a range of health, social, and economic issues in the communities they serve.

Their support of Worcester County Health Department furthers their goals of investing in the social determinants of health in pursuit of health equity and social impact to improve health care access and affordability.

This project is made possible due to strong partnerships in the community. Partners include the Worcester County Libraries, Shore UP!, Head Start, the Judy Center, Wor-Wic Community College, University of Maryland Extension, Corner Sanctuary Community Garden in Pocomoke, Homes at Berlin, and Pocomoke Landing.

To learn more about diabetes prevention classes and resources in Worcester County visit Worcester-Health.org or call 410-632-1100.

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# How to teach kids about emergency preparedness

Emergency preparedness is something everyone in the household should learn, including children. But approaching the topic of emergencies with youngsters requires finesse. Chil-

ject matter when discussing disasters and emergency readiness with kids. Parents and caregivers can start by determining which disasters are most common where they live. There's no



need to broach hypothermia safety, for example, if the family resides in a warm climate. Another good step is to speak with schools or day-care centers to find out how they handle the subject of emergencies, and then reinforce those lessons at home.

The local library may have

dren are capable of comprehending many things, especially when information is presented in age-appropriate ways.

The American Red Cross recommends parents narrow down the sub-

jects in their children's section and there are plenty of online resources that address safety skills and emergency preparedness in language that children can understand. In addition, the Red Cross notes there are mobile

apps designed to teach and reinforce important safety skills in informative but fun ways. For example, the Monster Guard app is geared toward kids between the ages of seven and 11 who are asked to join the Monster Guard and prepare for real-life emergencies at home and in other environments.

Children may not understand everything that goes into preparing for an emergency, but they may be more inclined to get involved if they are given tasks they can handle. Children in Pre-K to grade 2 can learn how to dial 9-1-1 or practice "Stop! Drop! And Roll!" safety techniques. Older children can be tasked with making emergency supplies shopping lists and helping to put away these items, or working with parents to devise a home evacuation plan.

Practice makes perfect, and once families determine which emergency plans they should put into effect, they can role play with children to help make sure that everyone recognizes what to do in the case of an actual emergency. Important phone numbers can be posted in a key location (and programmed into mobile phones), and children should know what to do in the event they get separated from their guardians during a weather situation or another emergency. Children also can help pack go bags with key items they don't want to part with should they need to evacuate home due to a weather emergency.

Children can be involved in emergency preparedness by working through topics they can understand and explore.

## Bingo event planned

The public is invited to play Bingo, possibly win money and support a good cause every Friday in January. The Ocean City Knights of Columbus Council #9053 is dedicating any proceeds from their Game Nights during "Support Life Month" to the Grace Center for Maternal and Women's Health in Berlin. Having started on January 7 and continuing on January 14, 21 and 28 you can

play every game for a cost of only \$24. Knights Hall is located at 9901 Coastal Highway in Ocean City (behind St. Luke's Roman Catholic Church). Doors open at 5 p.m. and games start at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments are available as are pull tabs and 50/50 games. Any individual donations to the Grace Center will be matched by the Knights of Columbus up to \$1,000.



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## Gribble named branch manager

Reid Tingle, President & CEO of Bank of Ocean City along with the Board of Directors, have announced the promotion of Robin Gribble to Branch Manager of the Ocean Pines office.

Ms. Gribble joined Bank of Ocean City in July of 2020. She brings 25 plus years of management experience coupled with extensive workforce development training. Robin is committed to providing an outstanding customer experience. She is looking forward to serving the clients of the community and building customer relationships.



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### **Somerset County** **Health Department**

8929 Sign Post Road, Westover, MD 21871

Friday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 4:00pm-8:00pm

Friday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4:00pm-8:00pm

Friday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 4:00pm-8:00pm

### **Lower Shore** **American Job Center**

31901 Tri-County Way  
Salisbury, MD 21804

Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am-2:00pm

Saturday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am-4:00pm



### **Berlin** **Health Department**

9730 Healthway Drive  
Berlin, MD 21811

Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am-2:00pm

Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am-2:00pm

Sunday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 10:00am-3:00pm

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