

The Courier

Special Home Edition

April 27, 2022 Volume 22 Number 31



**Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce Spring Community Expo
Saturday, April 30 9 am to Noon White Horse Park**



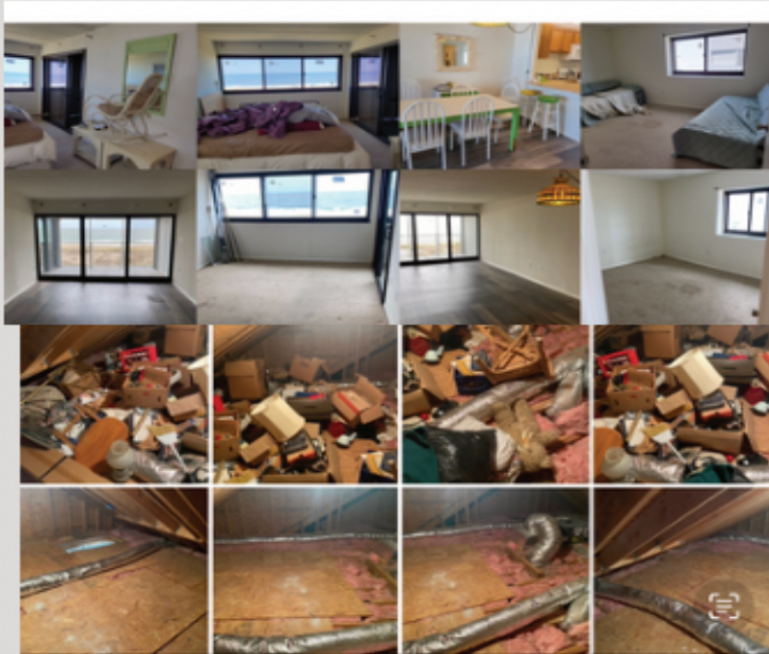
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GM report includes kayak launch, water taxi, and financial news

General Manager John Viola discussed a proposed kayak launch, new water taxi service, and recent successes with Northstar during his monthly report to the Board, on Wednesday.

The financial report also highlighted another positive variance to the budget.

Viola said the Association is considering installing a kayak launch and recreation pier at Pintail Park, potentially by fall 2023. He said the estimated cost is \$40,000-\$50,000.

"We met with the state ... on April 6 to review the proposed plans," he said. "We needed to determine what was needed from [the] county and state to ensure that the project complies with all specifications. So, the team is working on it."

Viola said one dock on the new Yacht Club Marina t-docks would accommodate a water taxi service running between Ocean Pines and Ocean City, thanks to an agreement with OC Bay Hopper.

He said the Yacht Club would become one of the shuttle's regular stops, with others including 118th Street and 48th Street in Ocean City, and the Ocean City Harbor in West Ocean City. One-way passes would likely be \$15, with round-trip tickets running \$25.

"You'll be able to go to the Yacht Club, have some drinks ... and then go over to Seacrets or Harborside and come back, or vice versa," he said. "There's a lot of excitement, on both sides."

Viola said he's finally feeling good about the Northstar software project, and he credited IT Manager Keith Calabrese with following up on the many open tickets.

"He goes through this every day ... [and] we're definitely getting efficiencies now," Viola said, singling out online payments as a potential cost savings in the future.

Viola said staff opened 13 new tickets in April, but only five remain.

"So far, it's been sustainable ... this is the best I've felt about it," Viola said. "I believe ... our team has done a really good job on this."

Additionally, Viola said recent landscaping efforts have included planting cherry trees along the north and south gates, and ordering palm

trees from the Beach Club.

Senior Executive Office Manager Linda Martin said bulkhead work on Pintail Drive and Crab Cay Court was finishing up. The next phase of bulkhead repairs is scheduled to start this fall and will include North Pintail Drive and Pintail Park.

Martin said dredging efforts along 22 properties that applied in 2020 could start in July. Applications sent in 2021 are being surveyed and would next go to the Maryland Department of the Environment for permitting.

On mailboxes, Martin said at least 11 cluster boxes were in need of replacement, including three considered high priority. An Association survey also found that 59 pedestals need replacement, with 13 considered high priority.

She said a test cleaning of mailboxes on Sandyhook Road was "a great success."

"We're going to continue with other mailboxes. It should be done ... within the next few months," she said.

Viola said the Association was favorable to budget in March by roughly \$158,000. He credited organic growth and well-managed expenses for the favorability.

Year to date, the Association is favorable to budget by \$1.679 million.

"Hopefully, it will continue throughout, [and] into next year and the year after that. I believe we've fixed a lot of the structure in management," Viola said. He highlighted the Matt Ortt Companies' oversight of food and beverage operations, as well as strong in-house management of Golf, Racquet Sports, Aquatics and other amenities.



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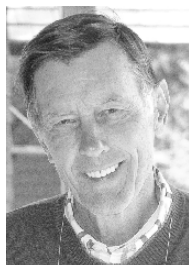
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Commentary

Joyce Kilmer:

I think that I shall never see A poem lovely as a tree

Commentary by **Joe Reynolds**
OceanPinesForum.com



Joyce Kilmer's poem "Trees" ends with: "But only God can make a tree."

God certainly made many trees in Ocean Pines. The problem for the Ocean Pines Association is homeowners are increasingly cutting down large

numbers of trees without the required permit from the Architectural Review Committee.

OPA board member Rick Farr brought the problem up for discussion during the board meeting on March 23, 2022.

"There are widespread violations by both homeowners and tree removal companies," Farr said. He suggested many trees are being removed by some tree companies without going through the process of obtaining a permit from ARC.

Director Larry Perrone asked the

Compliance, Permit and Inspections (CPI) inspector at the meeting, "What is happening?" Are we going after the homeowners? If not, why not? We can't go after the tree companies."

The inspector replied, "We don't have enough staffing to keep up with our six-month reinspection of approved permits."

There was some discussion of limiting tree contractors to work only Monday through Friday. Perrone said, "We have no authority to do anything to the contractors and it seems that is what you are looking for. We are stepping into a bucket of stuff we don't need to step into."

Frank Daly said he agreed with Perrone. Then Daly proceeded to tell an anecdotal story about the Columbia Association and a developer who removed trees. Daly says the developer was taken to court and faced expenses of tens of thousands of dollars to replace trees. Of course, the issue in OP is not developer-removal of trees.

Daly says since CPI inspectors are not on duty seven days a week, it is

easy to avoid inspections with weekend work. "That is common knowledge," he said. "So, we could change that by changing the number of hours we have people working to enforce our rules. The second thing is our appetite for enforcement. The problem with our Declaration of Restrictions is right now we enforce them by more or less giving ourselves a \$1500 fine. The homeowner doesn't have to pay anything and we pay all the court and attorney costs."

Daly's solution? Allow the board to impose stiff fines on association members. "That requires a bit of trust between the community and association management and the board," he said. "Our current situation makes DR compliance essentially voluntary. I can't remember OPA taking anyone to court for taking down a tree illegally. Until we change that one way or the other, we are going to be faced with that situation."

General Manager John Viola essentially agreed with comments made by Perrone and Daly about the problem. Viola said staff was letting tree contractors know that tree removal from private lots without permission could result in OPA not using the contractor for OPA work. "We are trying to do something," he said. "That's the best I have right now."

The entire board discussion was ridiculous. The OPA Board of Directors has the authority and the tools it needs to enforce the Declarations of

Restrictions, contrary to Daly's constant drumbeat about how the board needs authority to impose fines on association members. The problem is the board's unwillingness over decades to use the enforcement powers it has.

What can the board do? The board can seek violation enforcement in the courts. Is this expensive, as Daly suggests? Somewhat. While the Court sides with OPA on nearly every case, Daly says association members may ignore the court ruling or just repeat the same violation.

Perhaps, but what Daly has never mentioned, and what never happens, is OPA going back to the Judge and asking for a Contempt of Court order against the association members who ignore a Court's order or repeat the same violation over and over. A former longtime OPA attorney told the board this was something it could do. Instead, OPA ignores repeat offenders or files a new case for the same violation. If OPA sought Contempt of Court proceedings against some of these violators, the overall violations would likely decline very quickly.

As for tree removal, ARC Guidelines say, "A permit is required from the CPI Department for removal of tree(s) of six (6) inches diameter or greater and any native Magnolia, Holly, Bayberry, or Laurel."

The Guidelines also say, "Any tree six (6) inches in diameter/caliper or

please see commentary on page 22

Courier Almanac

On April 27, 2009, the struggling American auto giant General Motors (GM) said it planned to discontinue production of its more than 80-year-old Pontiac brand.

Pontiac's origins date back to the Oakland Motor Car, which was founded in 1907 in Pontiac, MI by Edward Murphy, a horse-drawn carriage manufacturer. In 1909, Oakland became part of General Motors, a conglomerate formed the previous year by another former buggy company executive, William Durant. The first Pontiac model made its debut as part of the Oakland line in the 1920s. The car, which featured a six-cylinder engine, proved so popular that the Oakland name was eventually dropped and Pontiac became its own GM division by the early 1930s.

Hunger is a global issue, but certain parts of the world are significantly more vulnerable than others. According to the global humanitarian organization World Vision, an estimated 22 percent of the population of sub-Saharan Africa is facing undernourishment due to lack of food. By contrast, less than 3 percent of the population of North America and Europe are malnourished. Action



Against Hunger notes that the threshold for food deprivation is fewer than 1,800 calories per day, which underscores how preventable global hunger and undernourishment is. In fact, Action Against Hunger indicates that more than enough food is produced to feed the global population. Despite that, the number of undernourished people increased by an estimated 161 million individuals between 2019 and 2020. Various factors, including conflict and COVID-19, contributed to that increase,

which marked a heartbreaking turn of events after significant progress in the fight against world hunger had been made between 2004 and 2019. Getting back on that pre-pandemic track is not impossible, and individuals interested in learning more about combatting world hunger can visit Actionagainsthunger.org.

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Someday items

Famous, and not all that unfamiliar, last words: "I'm sure I'll be able to use this someday."

A garage full of "someday" items is what awaited me not long ago



It's All About. . .

By **Chip Bertino**

chipbertino@delmarvacourier.com

when I finally started a project that had been pushed off too long. Of late, my garage has looked like what my boys' bedrooms looked like when they were teenagers. It was getting to the point that just opening the door triggered an avalanche of precariously perched cans, paint brushes and assorted other stuff from the work bench to the floor.

It's in my nature, and I don't believe I'm alone in this, that I habitually stuff, place, shove and/or jam into drawers and cabinets items that are in good working order, cans that are somewhat full and parts leftover from a household project. Why? Because even though they may be old, a little worn, or near empty, they still could be useful for some future project or need. It could happen. I want to be prepared. But a reality of life is this: I *want* to be prepared is different from I *will* be prepared. "Want" and "will" are words different in meaning and result. What will happen, what has happened for years, is that that thingamabob saved for a unique situation is forgotten and a new whatchamacallit is purchased. Which explains why my garage is a repository for "someday" items.

For instance, I found dozens and dozens of cellophane-packaged yellow and orange wire caps left over from the many fans and light fixtures I've installed in my home through the years. Six quarter-full or less cans of turpentine were found in six different cabinets, several hiding behind old telephone cords of various lengths tied with frayed twisty ties.

From behind several old dried-up gallon cans of paint I found three, not one, not two, but three large Zip-Lock bags containing dozens of switch and outlet covers. There are more covers in these bags than I have switches

and outlets in my house. Why? You know the reason. Come on. Stay with me. Because, there might be a situation when I may need an off-white colored twin switch cover or two or three or seven or eight. You chuckle. But when that situation arises, I'll be prepared. Would you?

Beneath the cluttered work bench, in a lower drawer that I haven't opened in years, are old ornately carved hand planers, hand drills, drill bits, mechanical screw drivers and some things I have no idea what they are. These belonged to my great-grandfather and grandfather each of whom were cabinetmakers in their days. The tools haven't been applied to their functions in decades. They rest silently, relics of a bygone era. I'll never use them. I'll never throw them out.

Deep in an upper cabinet I found three unopened, dust coated boxes of bicycle inner tubes, two to fit a 16-inch tire and one to fit a 24-inch tire. The bikes for which these parts were purchased haven't been around in ages. And that's not all.

In another cabinet were several boxes for items that have been long gone. One was the box for an old cell phone I had in the late 1990s. Still in the box were the packaging it was wrapped in as well as the User's Guide. Another box was for a handheld VHS radio I purchased for the boat. Two radios have been purchased since this box was placed in the cabinet for safekeeping.

And when it comes to tattered boxes and discolored jars of old nails and screws, I'm awash in them. Why? I wish I could explain but I can't. What's ironic is that these boxes and jars are sitting next to newer leftover boxes of new nails and screws purchased for whatever job I was working on at the time.

I've been doing my best to throw items away; coming to terms with the reality that saving more than one old bathroom towel rack is not necessary. The objective is to redefine the garage space so that I can actually use the work bench and be able to move around without climbing over, crawling under or squeezing through clutter. We'll see.

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Dispatcher of the Year **Cindy Ward** (L) with Legion member **Bob Gilmore** and Ocean Pines Police Chief **Leo Ehrisman**.



Police Officer of the Year **Shakh Toppin** (L) with Legion member **Bob Gilmore** and Ocean Pines Police Chief **Leo Ehrisman**.

Toppin, Ward get top honors from American Legion

Two Ocean Pines Police workers received top honors during a March 30 ceremony of the American Legion, Synepuxent Post 166.

For 2021, the Legion honored Lt. Shakh Toppin as Police Officer of the Year and Pco. Cindy Ward as Dispatcher

of the Year.

Ocean Pines Police Chief Leo Ehrisman said the American Legion has long shown staunch support for local law enforcement.

“The American Legion is a big backer of emergency services,” he said. “Any of-

ficer, fireman, or veteran, if you walk in and say, ‘I need a meal, I’ve been working on 10 hours and I need a sandwich,’ their doors are open.”

Ehrisman said the Legion also hosts annual recognition ceremonies for local police, firefighters, EMS, and Coast Guard workers.

“The American Legion calls each organization for a nominee, and then the chief for each gets to make a nomination and they get to present the award with one of the American Legion personnel,” he said.

Ehrisman said both Toppin and Ward are long-time members of the Ocean Pines Police Department that have demonstrated their strong work ethic and leadership skills.

“I nominated Toppin because he recently moved up into the command staff, with his promotion to lieutenant after many years of experience being a road

supervisor,” Ehrisman said. “He’s been on the command staff since I took office here, as police chief, two years ago.

“Cindy has many years of experience as a 911 dispatcher, and she’s also our training coordinator for public communications,” he continued. “It was also cool to see the dispatcher awards for the first time this year, because those dispatchers are always left out and they’re an important part of our department.”

Ehrisman said the awards serve as a significant morale boost.

“I think it leaves a big impression, because it’s the American Legion of Ocean City, but they don’t limit their support and their resources to Ocean City. They offer that support to all agencies in the county,” he said.

Ehrisman said the Ocean Pines Police Department is currently hiring officers and dispatchers. Police academy candidates are also welcome to apply.

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HEALTH REVIEW

Slip, slop, slap and wrap to prevent skin cancer

By **Mary Mullins**, RN, MSN
Director, John H. 'Jack' Burbage, Jr.
Regional Cancer Care Center

The bronze glow of a summer tan that most of us strive for could turn to skin cancer down the road. The chances of that happening are 50% higher in Worcester County than the state of Maryland as a whole. For men in Worcester County, the rate of melanoma was 68% higher than in women, according to the most recent data.

There are three types of skin cancer: basal cell, squamous cell and melanoma. Without getting into too

deep of a science lesson, just know that all three types of cells compose the top layer of skin. If either of the three types of cells start to grow out of control, that is cancer. Basal and squamous are the most common types of cancers and are the most treatable.

Melanoma originates from melanocyte cells in skin that provides the tan color. Melanocytes act as our own natural sunscreen. However, when these cells become cancerous, they can spread more easily. Melanoma is the least common skin cancer.

Most skin cancers are triggered by

sun exposure, or ultraviolet rays. The two main types of UV rays you see on the sunscreen bottles are UVA and UVB. UVA rays have less energy, and while they can lead to some skin cancers, they are most associated with aging and wrinkles. The UVB rays however have more energy that can damage DNA. The UVB rays lead to sunburns and most skin cancers.

When selecting a sunscreen, you want to look for broad spectrum coverage for both types of rays. Think of sunscreen as your first line of defense but keep in mind, it should be used as part of your sun protection strategy. Another thing to know about sunscreen is the SPF scale. SPF 15 filters out 93% of UV rays, SPF 30 filters out 97% and SPF 100 filters about 99%. So the higher the SPF scale goes the smaller the increase in protection. The key to sunscreen is to put on enough. The average adult should use about 1 ounce, the amount in a palm-full or shot glass. To get the best sunscreen protection, you should also reapply at least every two hours.

Besides sunscreen, what should your skin cancer prevention routine

look like? Slip, Slop, Slap and Wrap is the motto from the American Cancer Society. Slip on a long-sleeved shirt, Slop on enough sunscreen, Slap on a hat and use Wrap sunglasses with UV protection. When it comes to clothing, there are a number of SPF clothing lines on the market to select from. For hats, you should use a hat with a two to three-inch brim all the way around. Baseball hats leave necks and ears exposed, which are common sites for skin cancer.

Finally, it's best to avoid tanning beds and lamps. These devices increase a person's risk of melanoma, especially if exposed before the age of 30.

The best advice is to avoid the sun and stay in the shade as much as possible this summer. If you are going outside, remember the strongest UV rays are between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Ultraviolet rays also penetrate clouds so use your sun protection on cloudy and overcast days as well. Enjoy your summer and remember to Slip! Slop! Slap! and Wrap! Your way to skin cancer prevention.

Fast facts about the sun

The sun makes life on Earth possible. While the warmth and light provided are beneficial for many reasons, the dark side of the sun is the potential damage that can be caused by ultraviolet radiation. These facts about sunlight and UV rays, courtesy of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the FactFile and NASA, can help people make more informed choices about spending time in the sun.

There are three types of UV rays. UVA reaches Earth's surface because the atmosphere does little to shield these rays. UVA rays contribute to ailments like wrinkling and can penetrate through windows and clouds. UVB rays largely are thwarted by the atmosphere. However, latitude, altitude and time of year may increase the likelihood of UVB ray exposure, which is often the culprit behind skin cancer. UVC rays are completely absorbed by the Earth's atmosphere and don't pose a significant threat, even though they have the highest energy levels of all three types of UV rays.

The sun's UV rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun is at its highest in the sky. The ultraviolet radiation will be less severe early in the morning and later in the day.

Snow, water and sand reflect the damaging rays from the sun and can increase a person's risk for sunburn.

The higher up in altitude a person goes, the stronger the sun's rays become. Therefore, sun exposure in the

mountains can be more dangerous than exposure at sea level.

Areas closest to the equator will get the longest hours of sunlight. The sun's rays are much stronger near the equator.

Australia ranks near the top of the skin cancer risk list along with New Zealand. These countries are located close to the ozone layer hole over the Antarctic. In addition, during summer, the Earth's orbit places Australia closer to the sun compared to other countries. That results in an additional solar UV intensity, according to Specialist Clinics of Australia.

UVA rays penetrate more deeply into the skin and can cause it to prematurely age.

UVB rays damage the outermost layers of the skin and contribute to the most skin cancers. Overexposure to UVB rays causes delayed sunburns.

While the sun is more intense during spring and summer, sun glare may be a bigger problem in the fall and winter. The sun during the colder months takes a lower angled route when rising, rather than seemingly going straight up, which it does in the summer. That keeps the sun in a blinding position for a longer period of time in the fall and winter.

The sun's energy is produced by the fusion of hydrogen into helium. Nuclear reactions occur in the core of the sun due to temperature and pressure. The sun also emits infrared radiation, visible light and ultraviolet light.

Melanoma signs and symptoms

Melanoma is a type of skin cancer that affects melanocytes, or the cells that produce the skin pigment melanin. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that the sun's UVB rays stimulate melanocytes, and more than 90 percent of melanomas are thought to be caused by ultraviolet exposure. Melanoma can exhibit different symptoms depending on the part of the body it is affecting, and may not affect everyone in the same way. The following are some of the signs and symptoms of melanoma.

A new spot on the skin that changes in shape, size or color.

A spot or mole that looks different from the other moles or spots on the skin (known as the ugly duckling sign).

A sore that doesn't heal.

Spreading of pigment from the border of a spot into the surrounding skin.

Changes in sensation in the skin, such as itchiness, tenderness or pain.

Changes in the surface of a mole, whether bleeding, oozing or scaliness.

A dark line beneath the nail bed.

The presence of hard or swollen lymph nodes.

A hard lump on the skin.

Unexplained pain, weight loss or fatigue.

Ocular melanoma, or melanoma that occurs in the eye, may be difficult to see without a professional eye exam. Enlarged blood vessels in the eye could indicate the presence of a tumor.

Any symptoms, however benign they may seem, should be brought to the attention of a doctor who can determine if melanoma is present. The Melanoma Research Alliance says there is now a 98 percent five-year survival rate for stage 0, I and II localized melanoma.



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A message from the OPA finance team

General Manager **John Viola**

Ocean Pines, overall, is in one of the best places financially that it's ever been.

This year, because of the efforts of the entire team and the support of the Board, we were able to cut assessments by \$100, to \$896 for the 2022/2023 budget year. Along with that, we covered a \$38 increase for the Fire Department in the name of public safety, and we also covered inflation and wage increases.

We are trending positive, despite headwinds, an example of which is the need to navigate logistical hardships such as the inflated cost and difficulty of getting materials, and the challenges of a COVID environment.

However, that's not to say that infrastructure projects aren't being done – just the opposite. We have jump-started the bulkhead program after several years of inactivity, we're spending more money on roads, and we're spending more money and getting better results on drainage projects. Pipes that were 30 years old or more are getting replaced, and a major drainage and water filtration project at Bainbridge Park was undertaken.

We have also invested in our amenities, and we're seeing results there in terms of more usage and better numbers. The Golf Course is in the best shape in years and the financial results there are now favorable. Our pools are also in great shape and our Aquatics Department is in excellent hands. Our Recreation Department is offering robust programs for all ages and all skill levels, from junior sports and camps, to the many classes and activities geared toward seniors. Racquet Sports and the Marina are also thriving, and our food and beverage operation is better than it has ever been, thanks to the guiding hand of the Matt Ort Company.

This team is about more than just achieving positive financial results – we're getting things done. We're results oriented. We're detail oriented. We've been able to control expenses and produce organic growth in revenue, and the result is a better overall experience for our homeowners.

We've invested in our infrastructure and invested in amenities, and all of that is showing positive results, of which the strong financials are an ex-

cellent indicator.

Senior Executive Office Manager **Linda Martin**

Mailbox renovations are underway. Ocean Pines is having the mailboxes cleaned to remove the debris and rust from the mailboxes. All mailbox sites have been evaluated and high priority locations have been determined. Although materials are currently on backorder, we have received two of the pedestals and will be contacting the post office to arrange a time to replace the pedestals at one of the high priority locations.

The 2022 bulkhead project is completed, with the backfill of the properties on Pintail Drive and Crab Cay Court completed by the contractor this past week. Permits have been submitted for the 2023 bulkhead project, which will include properties on North Pintail Drive along with the bulkhead at Pintail Park.

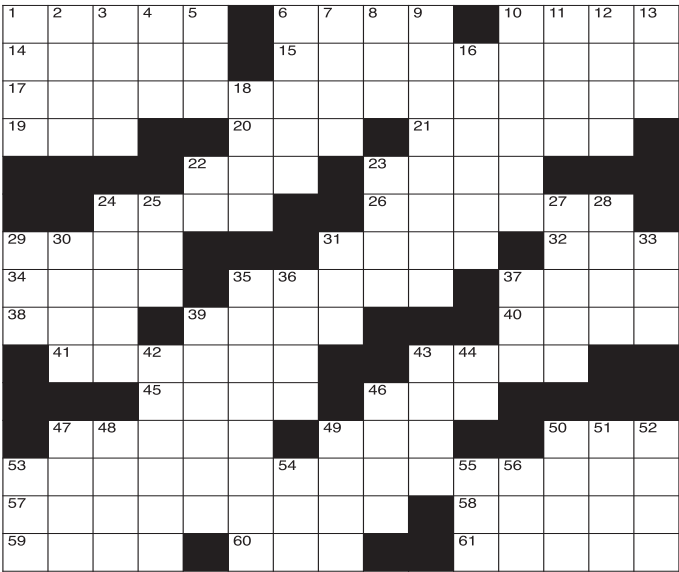
Ocean Pines once again will be contracting with Pelican Underground to install the cured-in-place pipe (CIPP) liners in the drainage pipes. This process involves running a resin lining into a pre-existing pipe that once the resin cures will form a tight fitting, jointless and corrosion-resistant lining to the pipe, which then gives the pipe a 100-year life expectancy. With the success of last year's project, which included lining 12 drainage pipes, Public Works has selected an additional 11 locations for this year's project, with the work tentatively scheduled to begin in May.

Finance Director **Steve Phillips**

As we wind down to the end of fiscal year 2022 and begin the new season, Ocean Pines continues to be very healthy from a financial standpoint. We just finished closing the eleventh month of the fiscal year, and the operating results are \$1.679 million favorable to date versus the adopted FY23 budget. This favorability is partially attributed to amenity performance, which accounts for approximately \$805,000. There has been strong organic revenue growth in FY23, as net revenues are up a record \$1.321 million versus the budget to date.

The Association's external auditors

please see **finance** on page 22



CLUES ACROSS

1. North American people

6. Chinese surname

10. Fit in at the last minute

14. "Very" in musical terminology

15. Underwater displays

17. Crosby's bandmates

19. Belong to he

20. Informed about the latest trends (archaic)

21. Sequences of alternating turns

22. Genus of grasses

23. Satisfy

24. Petty quarrel

26. Made level

29. Ruler of Iran

31. Historical region of Syria

32. Food suitable for babies

34. Something to lend

35. Zone of oceanic trenches
37. Philippine island

38. Domesticated animal

39. Plant of the lily family

40. Bluish green

41. __ Tomei, actress

43. Without (French)

45. Lilly and Manning are two

46. Apply pressure to

47. Divide in half

49. Bad deed

50. Don't know when yet

53. Hollywood's greatest honor

57. Aiming to exhort

58. Faked

59. A way to pierce

60. Midway between northeast and east

61. Points

CLUES DOWN

1. Chop up

2. __ Spumante (Italian wine)

3. Egyptian goddess

4. Split pulses

5. Afflict

6. Type of area rug

7. Tide

8. Affirmative

9. Sudden change

10. One picked

11. Debauched man

12. Stiff bristles

13. Famous arena

16. Established rules and methods

18. Injection

22. Father

23. Protein-rich liquids

24. He delivers gifts

25. Advanced degree

27. Fencing swords

28. Chinese mountain range

29. Shaft horsepower (abbr.)
30. Precursor to hemoglobin

31. Much __ about nothing

33. Compound fabric (abbr.)

35. A way to act slowly on

36. Ottoman military commanders

37. Popular kids' network

39. Hard compound

42. Sympathize with

43. Northeast college

44. Blood group

46. Frosted

47. Turn away

48. Benefit

49. Dry or withered

50. Bangladeshi monetary unit

51. Reproduced

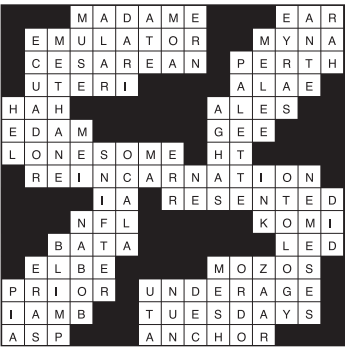
52. Contributes

53. Thrust horse power (abbr.)

54. Wear

55. Promotes retention of water (abbr.)

56. Very small



Answers for April 20



Creations - Lynn Wrench's 4th grade class at Ocean City Elementary created posters after researching famous Marylanders during English Language Arts.

Boating course offered

The Coast Guard Auxiliary will offer the Maryland Safe Boating Course in a one-day session on May 14 at the Ocean Pines library between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Learn the rules of navigation, knot tying, docking, basic maintenance, and more.

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 covers the cost of

GOP meet and greet scheduled

The Republican Women of Worcester County are holding a Candidate's Forum/Meet & Greet on Tuesday, May 17 at the Marlin Club located at 9659 Golf Course Road in West Ocean City from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and is open to the public. Mike Bradley of WGMD will emcee the event. Come and meet many of our local candidates. Light refreshments will be served. For more information, please call our Campaign Activities Chair at 410-430-4456, or go to www.gopwomenofworchester.org

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.

The 2022 course schedule is as follows: June 8-10, July 12-14, August 6 (one day), September 13-15, October 11-13 and November 8-10.

WYFCS Pirate Party returns

Tickets are now on sale for the Worcester Youth and Family Counseling Services (WYFCS) 12th Annual Pirate Party fundraiser to benefit the children of Worcester County. The event will be held on Friday, May 13, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Sunset Grille in West Ocean City (with a rain date of May 20). Attendees are encouraged to join the fun by coming dressed in their best pirate garb (Pirate attire is not required to attend.) A popular event among locals, this annual fundraiser represents the kick-off party to the summer season. A \$65 admission ticket includes a light fare buffet, a Pirate-inspired Rum drink voucher, live entertainment, and games. Tickets can be purchased in advance by phone or in person at 124 N. Main St Suite C in Berlin.

This is WYFCS's biggest fundraising event of the year. All proceeds made go directly to supporting the organization's youth programs designed to positively impact the lives of Worcester County's most vulnerable residents. The programs help to engage residents in healthy, structured social activities in addition to working with them in therapeutic environments to improve their lives. Any donations received will support the organization's youth enrichment programs and Lower Shore CASA program, which advocates for neglected and abused children in the child welfare system.

Individuals can also support the fundraiser by becoming a Pirate, who are asked to raise funds leading up to the event or donate funds to financially support a specific Pirate. Friends, family and

colleagues can help Pirates meet their financial goals by visiting the WYFCS website at www.gowoyo.org and donating to "their" specific pirate. Anyone interested in purchasing event tickets or becoming a sponsor and/or Pirate should contact WYFCS at 410-641-4598.

Public Works yard to open in May

The Ocean Pines Public Works yard will be open to Ocean Pines residents May 2-28 from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays. Yard debris may be dropped off during this time.

Only loose yard debris, such as leaves and limbs, is accepted. Debris may also be placed in paper bags. Plastic bags are not allowed.

Republic Services customers may place up to four additional bags of leaves or yard debris curbside for each scheduled pickup. Republic will also pick up branches if they are tied in bundles no longer than 4 feet and weighing no more than 50 pounds.

Trash collection days for residents south of Route 90 are Tuesday and Friday. For residents north of Route 90, the collection days are Monday and Thursday.

The Public Works yard is located at 1 Firehouse Lane, next to the Public Works Department. For more information, contact Public Works at 410-641-7425.



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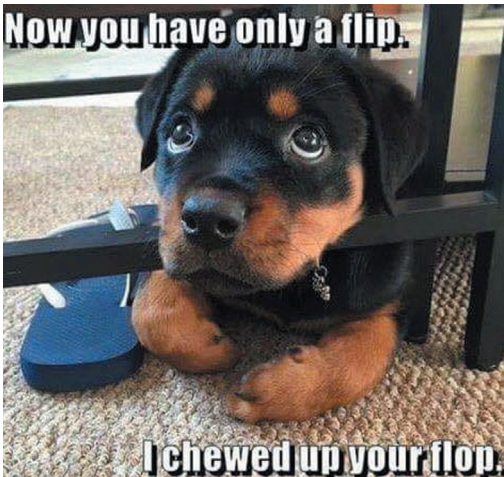
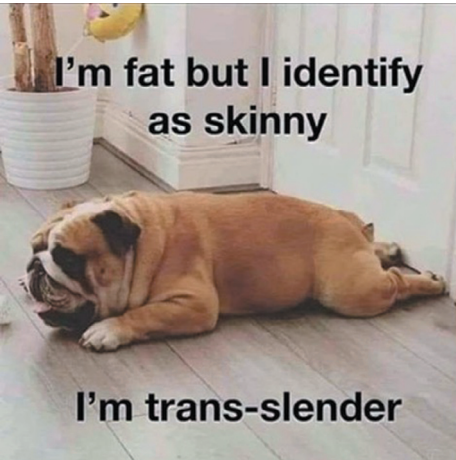
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Some things to think about

Gathered from the internet by **Jack Barnes**



The different ways to repair a driveway

Asphalt driveways do not last forever. Over time, weather and general usage can degrade the driveway surface, resulting in cracks, pitting and more. Ultraviolet rays, salt and automotive fluids also can affect the appearance and func-



tionality of a driveway. An unsightly driveway can adversely affect curb appeal and resale potential.

Homeowners have to consider various factors when it comes to repairing driveways. They may have the option of getting the driveway resurfaced, resealed or repaved, and each project is unique.

Resurfacing. According to the home improvement price comparison site Kompare It, resurfacing is simpler and faster than installing a new asphalt driveway. With resurfacing, any cracks are filled in to create an even base. Then a new layer of asphalt is applied over the existing one. That new layer can range in thickness from 1.5 to 3 inches. A heavy rolling machine will then smooth and flatten the layers together. If the driveway has minor pitting or cracking, then resurfacing can be a cost-effective strategy, as it may be a \$3,000 to \$6,000 job as opposed to

\$5,000 to \$10,000 with repaving.

Resealing. Resealing a driveway, also called sealcoating, is another repair strategy. HGTV says resealing can be a do-it-yourself project. Resealing helps the driveway last longer.

The driveway needs to be clean and dry, with holes and cracks filled prior to sealcoating. Start at the far edge of the

driveway and seal that area by “cutting-in” by hand for a neat edge. Afterward the rest of the driveway can be sealed using a squeegee or broom. This project can be completed within two or three days if no precipitation is forecast.

Repaving. A project best left to professionals, repaving typically involves the removal of an existing driveway and the installation of a new one. The sub-grade layer is essential in the process for a smooth look. Contractors also will as-

sess soil and grading when doing work. The construction blog Main Infrastructure says the new asphalt driveway can vary in thickness between two and six inches, depending on budget and need. The contractor also can advise if full-depth asphalt application or an aggregate base is practical.

Assessing the condition of driveway can give homeowners a better idea about which type of repair project best suits their property.

Negro ballplayers recognized

Worcester County NAACP will host a day of recognition of the history of the Negro Baseball League and Players on Delmarva on Saturday, June 12. The Delmarva Shorebirds will play the Fayetteville Woodpeckers game time 2:05 p.m.

This event will be held at Shorebirds stadium, and will recognize William “Judy” Johnson, a Snow Hill native and Former Negro League Player who was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY in 1975. There will be special appearance by Former Negro Baseball League Player Pedro Sierra (pitcher, Indianapolis Clowns and Detroit Stars) and Negro League Baseball Ambassador Rayner Banks along with other vendors who have exhibits that will bring awareness to the Negro Baseball League and players.

Donations are being requested to help defray the expenses that the Worcester County Branch NAACP will bear for the event promotion and the special guests travel/lodging costs. For more information, e-mail Worcester NAACP President Ivory Smith at ivos4@aol.com.

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OPA Board meeting briefs

Shorter meetings

Association President Colette Horn jokingly apologized for the “punishingly long” Board meeting last month, which clocked in at just over three hours.

“My colleague, Doug Parks, tells me that I may have won – or possibly lost – the award for the longest meeting on record,” she said with a laugh.

Horn committed to keeping future meetings “within a reasonable timeframe” and to shorten meeting agendas. The new approach paid off, as the meeting on Wednesday lasted roughly 45 minutes.

Public Works yard to open in May

Horn said the Public Works yard would open to Ocean Pines residents for yard debris drop-off on May 2-28 from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday-Friday, and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays.

Only loose yard debris, such as leaves and limbs, will be accepted. Debris may also be placed in paper bags, but plastic bags are not allowed.

For more information, visit https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/news_content?announcementId=1292&backURL=/web/pages/opa-news.

Referendum update

Horn said referendum packages should be in the mail to homeowners this week. On the ballot are 28 proposed changes to Ocean Pines’ bylaws.

“The Board supports these revisions and urges you to vote in favor of each one,” Horn said. “The changes were crafted to clear up inconsistencies and lack of clarity in our existing bylaws, and to protect us from future litigation,” she said.

Ballots are due back by 4 p.m. on May 19.

For more information, visit https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/news_content?announcementId=1291&backURL=/web/pages/opa-news.

Capital purchases

Board members unanimously approved two capital purchase requests: \$55,260 for ATC Corporation for pickleball court repairs, and \$20,547.68 for The Chiavari Chair Company for banquet chairs.

General Manager John Viola said the pickleball court repairs were necessary because of safety issues caused by spreading cracks.

Senior Executive Office Manager Linda Martin said the chairs were part of the approved budget for Yacht Club equipment.

Candidate registration form

The Board held a first reading to revise Resolution M-09, Attachment B, the Board candidate registration form.

Horn said it was necessary to clear up confusion about the form.

“When the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee submitted their proposal for revision of the candidate registration form, there was acknowledgement that some of the questions in Section 3 were not directly related to the current requirements for candidate eligibility as set forth in the OPA bylaws,” she said. “The position was that those questions would be of potential interest to voters, and on that basis were of value.”

“There was no intention that answering these questions would be a requirement for a candidate’s application to be considered, [but] the form that was approved did not indicate this,” Horn continued. “This proposed motion corrects that and removes any confusion about the necessity for candidates to answer the questions in that section.”

She said a second reading and vote to approve the changes would occur on Friday. For more information, visit https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/news_content?announcementId=1287&backURL=/web/pages/opa-news.

Committee appointments

Board members unanimously approved two committee appointments:

-Gary Murray - 1st Term - Architectural Review Committee

-Jennifer Cropper-Rines - 1 year Extension - Communications Committee



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Time to replace old wiring

Old homes can be charming and contain architectural elements not often seen in many modern housing developments. But what older homes may have in design appeal, they may lack in updated features.

While cosmetic changes are not

necessarily difficult, one area of concern in historic homes, and sometimes even in houses built 40 or 50 years ago, is archaic wiring. Wiring provides power to every room of the home. In today's electronics-driven society, electricity that works is an essential component of daily life. Over time, wiring can be compromised through simple aging, pest infiltration, weather, or other conditions. Deteriorated wiring can present a shock hazard and also a serious fire hazard, warn the home renovation experts at The Spruce. Furthermore, the home improvement site This Old House advises that the amperage of old wiring may not be able to meet the needs of the devices used in homes, overpowering the circuits. This can cause breaker blowouts and other problems, such as overheated wires that may spark and cause fires from within the wall.

Wiring often falls into the "out of sight, out of mind" category. Homeowners may make allowances for inadequate electrical systems, such as running extension cords or using mul-

tiplug connectors to increase their wiring capacity. However, they may not be diligently keeping on top of upgrades needed to stay safe. Confirming that a home's electrical system is safe is a necessary part of home maintenance.

For those who haven't already done so, schedule an inspection with a licensed electrician to go over the home's wiring. He or she can determine if any areas pose a safety risk and/or do not conform to local code requirements and the National Electrical Code. Failure to meet code can lead to difficulty obtaining permits to make other home renovations, or difficulty selling a home later on.

The electrician can also go over improvements that can improve safety and function. Additional outlets, including GFCI outlets in kitchens and bathrooms, may be part of the plan, as well as rewiring a fuse box or circuit panel to allow for better flow of power around the house. Frayed wiring or underinsulated wiring also may need to be replaced.

Owners of old homes should recognize possible electrical system dangers that require attention. Plus, considering electrical codes change quite frequently, it is always in a homeowner's best interest to work with a qualified electrician to keep wiring inspected and up to date.



Did you know?

Investing in a home renovation project not only requires money, but also time and patience. While contractors, architects and designers can estimate how long a project may take, it is impossible to anticipate all of the scenarios that can affect that estimated timeline. Information from the real estate firm Keller Williams indicates an average kitchen remodel involving installation of new countertops, cabinets, appliances, and floors can take three to six months. But if ductwork, plumbing or wiring must be addressed, the job may take longer. A midline bathroom remodel may take two to three months. Adding a room to a house can take a month or two. The home improvement resource Renovation Junkies offers similar estimates, with the average home renovation taking between four and eight months. Homeowners need to consider time when planning their home projects.

12th Annual
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Th 28	Low	12:46 AM	
	High	7:03 AM	
	Low	1:02 PM	
	High	7:24 PM	
F 29	Low	1:34 AM	
	High	7:45 AM	
	Low	1:40 PM	
	High	8:04 PM	
Sa 30	Low	2:17 AM	
	High	8:26 AM	
	Low	2:16 PM	
	High	8:44 PM	
Su 1	Low	2:58 AM	
	High	9:05 AM	
	Low	2:52 PM	
	High	9:24 PM	
M 2	Low	3:38 AM	
	High	9:45 AM	
	Low	3:28 PM	
	High	10:03 PM	
Tu 3	Low	4:18 AM	
	High	10:25 AM	
	Low	4:06 PM	
	High	10:44 PM	
W 4	Low	4:59 AM	
	High	11:06 AM	
	Low	4:46 PM	
	High	11:26 PM	

Water, the best medicine

By **William Hamilton Jr., DPT, CHT**
Owner of Hamilton Physical Therapy (Ocean Pines)



Billy Hamilton

I get asked several times a day by patients, “what can I do at home to help get rid of my pain?”. And up to very recently my response would almost always be, “make sure you’re doing the home exercises I showed you” or “ice and rest” depending on the issue with the patient. However, over the past year I began to have moderate to severe hip pain. Long story short I believe it to be damage to the cartilage on the socket of my hip joint. I want to discuss the process I went through along with a few other interesting facts about hydration.

With respect to my hip pain, it began last spring and was mild at first. Over a few months the pain progressed to severe at times and was always worse after activities like

prolonged standing or running. I first tried resting for 4 weeks with no success. I then tried traditional physical therapy in my clinic. I was able to make some progress, but definitely not pain-free. I continued to have episodes of sharp pains in the “groin” area with simple movements such as rolling in bed or pivoting when walking. I was almost at the point where I thought that surgery may be my only option. At that point I performed a little self-reflection on my dietary habits. I realized that I was drinking mostly drinks that are considered diuretics such as coffee and tea. Over the next 2 weeks I would have my morning coffee and then only water the rest of the day. I made a concerted effort to have a water bottle at my desk and drink frequently whether I was thirsty or not. When I tell you that towards the end of that 2 weeks I was feeling dramatically better, it would be an understatement. My pain went from a 6-7/10 to a 1-2/10 and sometimes no pain at all. I won’t tell you that I have completely cured myself with water because the damage is still there, and I feel it when

I am not as vigilant about drinking water. However, this small experiment I performed on myself has emphasized the role that water plays in healthy joints and muscles. The other example I give my patients about the importance of hydration, think about the difference in how soft and pliable raw meat is vs dehydrated jerky! Now this is an extreme analogy, but still a good mental aid for how important water is in our body. Moving on from my personal experience I’d like to share a few facts about hydration that may be surprising to everyone.

The importance of hydration cannot be understated. The general rule of thumb is to attempt to drink half your body weight, but in ounces. For example, if you weigh 200 pounds you must try to drink 100 ounces of water. Research has shown that the average woman should drink around 11 cups of water per day and men 15 cups per day. Of course, these numbers vary up or down according to body size and the amount of water in your meals (i.e. oatmeal = ¾ cup of water). Another fun fact is that all food and drinks count towards hydration, on average you can count 3-5 cups of water you will be getting from meals. Even coffee, tea, and alcohol add to your overall hydration, WHEN consumed in moderation. Another great source of hydration is whole or skim milk and orange juice. In fact, the “hydration index study” found that these drinks provided better hydration than actual water.

You may be surprised by some of these facts that I’ve shared today. My goal was to highlight how important water is to our overall health and wellness. You may even be able to prevent a trip to your doctor or physical therapist with simply increasing your water intake! If you’d like to know more feel free to stop in some time and have a chat with me.

For more information contact: 410-208-3300. Email: Billy@HamiltonPTcares.com

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Retiring early? Know your health care choices

Submitted by **John Bennish**

Financial Advisor, Edward Jones

Life doesn't always go as planned. For example, you might think you'll



John Bennish

retire at 65 or later, when you'll be eligible for Medicare. But if you retire before then, how will you pay for your health care?

Without insurance, you risk incurring thousands of dollars of expenses if you are injured or become seriously ill. And if you must pay for these costs out of pocket, you might have to dip into your IRA, 401(k) or other retirement accounts earlier than you had planned – which could result in a less desirable retirement lifestyle than you had envisioned.

What, then, are your options? It depends on your situation, but here are four possibilities:

Employer retiree health benefits – If your former employer offers

health coverage to retirees, it could well be your best choice, especially if the employer continues to pay a share of the premiums. However, fewer employers are offering continuing health coverage to former employees, and among those who do, they may use certain criteria – such as length of service and position within the company – to limit eligibility.

Spouse's plan – If you're married and your spouse still has employer-provided insurance, you may be able to get coverage under this plan or continue this coverage if you have it already. If the employer subsidizes premiums for spouses, this plan could be an affordable choice – if not, though, it might be more expensive than other options.

COBRA – The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) allows you to maintain your existing coverage with the same benefits and provider network. However, COBRA is typically only available for a specific time – usually 18

months – after you leave your employer, and coverage can be expensive. Your previous employer subsidized a portion of the premium as a benefit, but once you've retired, you'll likely have to pay the entire premium, plus an additional charge.

ACA Marketplace plan – Through the Affordable Care Act Marketplace, you can find a variety of plans from which to choose, possibly including ones that include your existing network. If you qualify for subsidies, the premiums for your coverage may be similar to employer-sponsored coverage; if not, though, they can be more expensive. For information on ACA Marketplace plans, visit www.healthcare.gov.

If you have options for health insurance, you'll want to take into account differences in coverage and cost. Check whether your desired health care providers are in-network and try to determine if your current medications and the benefits you rely on are covered. You may also

want to consider a plan that allows you to open a health savings account (HSA), which offers potential tax benefits. To contribute to an HSA, you must be covered by a high deductible health plan (HDHP), so there's that cost to consider, but if you're in generally good health and you don't expect to depend heavily on your health insurance until you're eligible for Medicare, you might want to consider an HDHP.

One final note: Even when you do enroll in Medicare, you will still incur expenses for premiums, deductibles and co-pays, so you'll want to budget for these costs in your overall financial strategy.

In the meantime, explore your health insurance options. The future is not ours to see – so you'll want to be prepared for anything.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor John Bennish, Ocean Pines. He can be reached at 410-208-9083. Edward Jones, Member SIPC.



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How to protect your home when you're away

Vacation often serves as a well-deserved break from the hustle and bustle of daily life. When relaxing and recharging away from home, the last thing vacationers want to think about



is the safety of their homes and everything inside them. However, the National Council for Home Safety and Security and Statistics Canada estimate that more than two million burglaries occur in the United States and

Canada every year. That underscores the importance of protecting your home at all times, including when you're not there.

Create the impression that someone is home. Just because you're heading off for parts unknown doesn't mean you can't create the impression that life is carrying on as usual within the walls of your home. Smart home technology now enables homeowners to set timers on lights and even home electronics like televisions and radios. Homeowners also can ask neighbors to pick up their mail or halt delivery until they return from their trips. Nothing says "no one's home" as definitively as an overflowing mailbox.

Keep quiet on social media. A Credit Sesame survey of former burglars in the United Kingdom found that 78 percent acknowledged monitoring social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter as they try to find homes to burglarize. Individuals

about to go on vacation should avoid sharing that on social media.

Stay silent while you're away as well. Social media silence should be continued while you're on vacation as well. No matter how tempting it may be to share photos from an exotic location, such posts could catch the attention of all the wrong people. A recent report from MetLife indicated that 35 percent of Americans between the ages of 18 and 34 check in from their locations via social media. That can alert criminals that no one is manning the fort back home.

Switch from a traditional lock and key to a lockbox. Individuals who

travel frequently can take a page from the realtor notebook and switch from a traditional lock and key lock system to a lockbox. Lockboxes require that a code is entered before a box containing a key can be unlocked. Homeowners who want this added measure of protection don't even need to put a key inside the lockbox, which typically covers a lock, making it extremely difficult for potential thieves to pick the lock.

Before leaving for vacation, individuals can implement various strategies and safety measures to protect their homes and their belongings while they're away.

Vendors in bloom at Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market

Mother nature is rolling out her seasonal green canopy atop the Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market at White Horse Park, as returning merchants pop up like blooming spring bulbs along the winding pathways.

Market manager David Bean said about 80 merchants are currently enrolled in the marketplace, with that number expected to top more than 130 by the peak of the summer.

please see vendors page 22

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How to care for perennials

Perennials can add color and vibrancy to any garden. One of the more desirable components of perennials is that they come back year after year, meaning homeowners do not have to



invest in a gardenful of new flowers every year. That can add up to considerable savings. Perennials often form the foundation of beautiful gardens.

Annuals only grow for one season, produce seeds and then die. However, perennials die back to the ground every autumn and their roots survive the winter. So, the plants reemerge in the spring, according to The Farmer's Almanac. Some perennials are short-lived, meaning they will come back a few consecutive years; others will last for decades.

Though planted perennials require less maintenance than annuals, they are not completely maintenance-free. Certain care is needed to help perennials

thrive, and that starts with the soil. In fact, soil is the single most important factor for growing healthy plants. Penn State Extension says most perennials grow ideally in well drained, fertile soil with a pH of 6.0 to 7.0. In addition, organic matter can improve soil texture and water-holding ability.

When including perennials in the garden, make sure you wait for the right time to plant them. The ideal time is during the spring or fall. Perennials come as container-grown perennials, which already have been established in the soil. Bare-root perennials are just roots that are often packed in peat moss. In order to plant bare-root perennials, soak the roots in water for several minutes before gently planting in the ground, indicates the how-to resource Tip Bulletin.

Perennials should be watered deeply, especially during the first growing season. However, the soil should never be overly dry or wet. Most perennials do not need to be fertilized heavily. A single application in the spring typically is all that's needed.

Care along the way can include deadheading spent flowers so that plants can use their energy on seed production and reblooming. Perennials should be divided when they grow large, every three to four years when the plants are not in bloom. Perennials produce fewer flowers or may look sickly when the time has passed to divide them. Early spring often is a good

time to divide perennials, advises The Farmer's Almanac.

A thick layer of mulch can help perennials to overwinter successfully. Perennials planted in containers will need to be transplanted into the garden before it gets cold because most

containers cannot thoroughly insulate perennial roots.

Apart from these strategies, perennials pretty much take care of themselves. As long as sunlight requirements match plant needs, the perennials should thrive.

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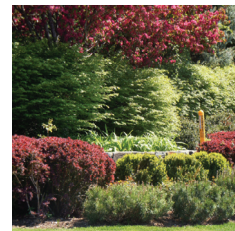


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How to prevent crabgrass

Few things can give a home exterior that sought after wow factor as well as a nicely maintained lawn. A lush green landscape is a great way to show pride in home ownership and improve curb appeal.

As many homeowners know, lawns are under constant attack. The elements are rarely easy on lawns, and watchful eyes must always be kept open for other problems that can plague a lawn, including crabgrass.

Crabgrass can be a formidable adversary in the summer months. According to the Penn State College of

please see **crabgrass** page 22

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Art scholarship deadline approaches

The Art League of Ocean City reminds high school seniors the deadline to apply for college art scholarships is May 8. The nonprofit will award several scholarships to students seeking a degree in art, continuing a tradition that began in 1991. To date, the Art League has awarded 69 college scholarships to Worcester County students.

Students must be graduating high school seniors who are residents of Worcester County, Md., including public and private school students and homeschooled. The scholarship recipient must be pursuing a higher education in the creative arts from an accredited institution.

The Art League will consider applicants for the Sidney M. Beckstead \$5,000 scholarship; the multiple Katherine Ellen Brown \$1,000 scholarships; and the Eva Fox \$1,000 scholarship. Scholarship winners will also receive a one-year membership to the Art League.

Applications are available online at [ArtLeagueofOceanCity.org/scholarship](https://artleagueofoceancity.org/scholarship), at the Ocean City Center for the Arts at 502 94th St., or through high school guidance offices. With the one application, the Art League will consider students for both the \$5,000 and the \$1,000 scholarships. Questions on applications may be sent to katie@artleagueofoceancity.org or 410-524-9433.

The scholarships are funded by contributions from the Art League as well as from the Katherine Ellen Brown Fund administered by the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore and from private donors.

The Art League scholarship programs adhere to a nondiscrimination policy, in both principle and practice, and will not discriminate against candidates on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, or physical challenge.

Committee to host roundtable for prospective candidates

The Ocean Pines Search Committee will host an Informal Roundtable Session on Thursday, April 28 at 7 p.m. for prospective candidates for the Ocean Pines Board of Directors.

The candidate filing deadline is May 10 and the election will decide three seats on the seven-member Board, which is the Association's governing body.

Search Committee Chairperson Tom Piatti said the virtual session will supply an opportunity for potential candidates to ask questions and receive answers about Board member responsibilities and commitments.

Piatti, who is also a former Board member, said discussion topics will include preparation of a candidate resume, Board member time commitments, Board member liaison assignments, knowledge of governing documents and where to find them, Ocean Pines demographics, and attendance at candidate forums. The roundtable will include both Search and Elections committee members, and Board members.

"To learn more about the duties

of a Board member, I encourage you to attend our virtual roundtable discussion on April 28th at 7 p.m.," Piatti said. "Several serving Board members will be available to directly field your questions concerning duties and responsibilities. Our goal is to have five applicants for the three upcoming Board vacancies.

"Please consider running for the Ocean Pines HOA Board," he continued. "We are a community with a vast number of talented people. Serving on the Board gives you direct impact and influence in managing HOA business, and it also gives you an opportunity to share your thoughts and bring new ideas to the table."

To download a candidate application, visit <https://www.oceanpines.org/documents/10184/122647/Candidate+Registration+Form+Revised.pdf>.

For more information on the Ocean Pines Search Committee, visit <https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/search-committee> or email tompatti@aol.com.



New members - The Ocean City-Berlin Optimist Club recently welcome three new members. Pictured from left to right are Optimist Club President **Bill Hickey**; new members **Chris Short**, **Chris Thomas**, **Angela Short**, and membership chairman **Roger Pacella**.

The basics of container gardening

Gardening is a rewarding hobby that has been linked to health benefits like reduced stress and improved mental well-being. Gardening also can lead to an inviting home landscape full of attractive blooms and/or delicious foods.

Backyard gardens have long been planted after clearing a plot of land, tilling and amending the soil, and planting rows of favorite crops. However, gardening can be less labor-intensive and even more successful when people consider the many benefits of container gardening.

What is container gardening? As its name implies, container gardening is growing plants inside of containers. These containers can be flower pots, rectangular deck boxes or even large raised garden beds.

Pros to container gardening. One of the advantages of container gardening is that plants can be moved in and out of sunlight to ensure the right growing conditions. This isn't as easily achieved when gardens are stationary. Also, beginner gardeners may be more able to control soil conditions inside of a small container rather than a vast ground-based garden, which will require a good deal of manual labor. Pots and boxes also can be grouped to-

gether to create eye-popping displays, usually at lower costs than the sheer volume of plants that would be needed to fill out an expansive landscape.

Cons to container gardening. Container garden plants will not have direct access to the ground, so they need gardeners to create the ideal growing conditions. Developing the right care formula can be challenging. The home and garden resource The Spruce says that drainage is an important factor in container gardening, and most containers do not offer enough drainage holes. If water cannot escape the soil, the roots of the plants can rot and die. It's not enough to add stones or gravel to the bottom of containers. Drill additional holes in the bottom (1½-inch in diameter for small or medium-sized pots; one inch in diameter for larger pots). Also, be sure to check on soil moisture so that watering can be adjusted. During hot stretches, plants may need to be watered more frequently.

Plan for plants that play well. Grouping plants together can create visually stunning combinations. However, it is important to choose plants that require the same amount of light and moisture. Look at plant tags when

*please see **basics** on page 21*



Learning - Students in Laura Black's Kindergarten class at Ocean City Elementary have been learning about forces. They worked together to save Tiny Town from boulders rolling down the mountain by placing push pins to act as poles. These poles changed the direction of the boulder, so it did not go into the houses. Pictured are **Da'Marri Williams, Maddie DelliGatti** and **Colton Metcalf**.

Organize and declutter room-by-room

Clutter can be a major source of stress that affects how individuals feel about their spaces. Psychology Today indicates messy homes and work spaces can contribute to feelings of helplessness, anxiety and overwhelming stress. Clutter bombards the mind with excessive stimuli, makes it more difficult to relax and can constantly signal to the brain that work is never done.

Tackling messes no matter where they are lurking is not a one-time project. Much like losing weight and getting healthy, clearing a home of clutter requires dedication and lifestyle changes. With these organizational tips and tricks, anyone can work through their home room-by-room and conquer clutter.

Find a place for everything. Clutter creeps up as people accumulate possessions over the years. Over time, failure to regularly go through belongings and thin the herd can lead to the accumulation of clutter. But clutter also

can accumulate if people fail to find a place to put items. Racks for garages, organizational systems for closets and furniture with storage capacity, such as storage ottomans, are some storage solutions that can help people find a place for their possessions.

Utilize vertical space when possible. Getting items up and off the floor can maximize square footage in a home. Bookshelves, hanging wall shelves, hooks, cabinetry, built-ins, and other storage solutions that rely on walls and ceilings are simple and effective storage solutions. Unused space behind cabinet or closet doors are some additional places to store belongings. Hang razors or toothbrushes on medicine cabinet walls and curling irons and other hair tools on the interior of cabinet doors in bathrooms.

Create a coding system. Home offices can be some of the more disorganized rooms in a house simply due to the volume of electronics and paperwork within them. HGTV suggests

using a color-coded system for important files to keep them organized. Label important items, whether they're paper or digital files, in accordance with your system.

please see **organize** page 22

basics
from page 20

visiting the garden center and select complementary plants, or ask a store employee. Mixing different plant shapes, colors and leaf textures, as well as plants of various heights, can help containers look filled out.

Feed plants accordingly. Plants need nutrition to thrive in containers. Quality potting mixes will contain fertilizers, but nutrition will wane over

time. Every couple of weeks, container plants will need either fresh potting mix or granular fertilizer added to feed them. Oregon State University Extension Services suggests using a slow-release fertilizer or worm castings several times throughout the season.

Container gardening is a great way to add plants to smaller patios, reduce the workload involved in maintaining expansive gardens, and customize conditions for optimal growth.

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County moves forward with sports complex

Last evening's public hearing for the proposed sports complex at Stephen Decatur High School was well attended and very civil.

During the nearly three-hour hearing, 53 people offered testimony. The speakers were split in their opinion of whether the county should undertake the project. An informal tally indicated that 25 speakers supported the complex; 25 people opposed the project; and, 3 were neither for nor against the project.

It appeared that most of the people who supported the project were associated with Ocean City. Many residents from the Town of Berlin voiced concerns that included the project's impact on traffic especially on Route 50 and Flower Street, the impact on the Town of Berlin infrastructure, the fact that Berlin officials had not been consulted about the project and that the location of the complex should not be in a highly congested area.

Residents from the southern part

of the county including Snow Hill, Girdletree and Pocomoke expressed displeasure that their area was overlooked as a possible venue, some citing that only the northern part of the county benefits from such an investment. One Pocomoke resident said her community could have benefitted from such a project especially since many in her community struggle financially.

Many of those who opposed the project stressed the fact that taxpayers should not be paying for this venture.

Ocean Pines resident Amy Peck expressed concern about the feasibility of the project, referencing concerns contained in the 2017 Crossroads study.

At the conclusion of the public portion of the meeting Commissioner Josh Nordstrom (District 1) made a motion to purchase the property adjacent to Stephen Decatur High School and to bond \$11.2 million for the project. Bud Church (District 3) seconded. The motion carried in a 4-3 vote.

FOR: Commissioners Nordstrom, Purnell, Diana Purnell (District 2), Joe Mitrecic (District 7).

AGAINST: Commissioners Chip Bertino (District 5), Jim Bunting (District 6) and Ted Elder (District 4).

organize
from page 21

Put it away. When you finish using an item, return it to its storage location. This eliminates piles of belongings strewn around the house and hunting and pecking for missing things. If you can't put it away immediately, have a few baskets on hand labeled for the different rooms in the house. Pop the items in the requisite baskets and then routinely take each basket around the house to return the items.

Investing in custom cabinetry and organizational systems also can help people organize their belongings. Tackle rooms such as the garage, basements, bedroom closets, and pantries, or those areas that tend to accumulate clutter the fastest.

crabgrass
from page 19

Agricultural Sciences, crabgrass begins as seeds. These seeds germinate in spring or early summer. While crabgrass dies after the first hard frost in fall, crabgrass seeds remain dormant in winter, and the seeds then grow again in the following spring when ground temperature warms up. Without action to prevent crabgrass seeds from germinating, homeowners will likely end up with patches of crabgrass throughout their lawns every summer.

The home improvement retailer Lowes' notes that a healthy lawn is the best defense against crabgrass. The healthier a lawn is, the harder it is for unwanted grasses like crabgrass to thrive. The following are a handful of strategies that can promote a healthy lawn and make it more difficult for unsightly crabgrass to establish itself in the months ahead.

Keep grass at a consistent length, and don't cut too low. Maintaining a consistent length of grass by mowing at regular intervals can make it hard for crabgrass to thrive. Crabgrass requires ample sunlight to germinate, so grass that is not cut too short may keep crabgrass from growing in. Of course,

commentary
from page 4

greater that is removed without CPI Department approval must be replaced by a tree(s) of the same species, or a different species approved by the CPI Department."

The above is rarely, if ever, enforced. The absolute absurdity of the above replacement policy is the required size of any replacement is less than six inches. Result? A homeowner can plant the replacement tree and then cut the replacement down with-

vendors
from page 18

"When the market bell rings next Saturday morning, shoppers will find the freshest produce and so much more for their market basket," Bean said. "Fresh asparagus is now being harvested by our local farmers. Look for these harbingers of spring this weekend when shopping the green market loop."

Other notable vendors include seamstress In My Hands, located in the Artisan Plaza and carrying a selection of handmade totes and other one-

grass should not be allowed to grow knee-length, either. By raising blades to the mowing height appropriate for their type of grass, and mowing at regular intervals so the grass remains at that height through the summer, homeowners can promote healthy lawns and make it harder for crabgrass to germinate.

Never cut too much of the blade off of the grass. When mowing, don't cut too much of the blade off the grass with each cut, even if the grass seems especially long. As noted, cutting too low allows sunlight to reach crabgrass seeds. But cutting too much off the blade, even if the grass is still high after a mow, can injure the grass. Injured grass can make lawns more vulnerable to weeds and crabgrass.

Apply a pre-emergence herbicide. Pre-emergence herbicides kill germinating grass seedlings before they emerge from the soil. Follow the manufacturer's instructions regarding when and how much herbicide to apply. If crabgrass has already started to grow, it's likely too late to apply a pre-emergence herbicide.

Crabgrass is an unwelcome invader in many lawns. Spring can be a great time to prevent this unwanted guest from returning this summer.

out a permit.

OPA should change the replacement Guidelines to require a replacement larger than the size that can be removed without a permit. Then OPA needs to take association members who fail to properly replace trees removed without a permit to court.

Those who choose to make a mockery of the Declarations of Restrictions and Guidelines will only stop doing so when it costs them money to do so. The board can make that happen without fines. All the board needs is the will to do so.

of-a-kind items.

Ukulele player Peggy Katona will perform on the market stage, providing a soundtrack for shoppers to stroll the marketplace, and Lyon rum will offer locally made coconut rum.

"There is always something to see and do at your Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market, where the weekend begins in Ocean Pines," Bean said.

The market is open Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in White Horse Park.

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

finance
from page 10

will begin their audit work next month to express an independent audit opinion on these fiscal-year results.

OPA's cash balance ended March at \$13.9 million, compared to \$11.9 million at the end of March last year. Cash inflow will also pick up tremendously in the next month based on the due date of FY23 assessment dues. New this year, Northstar has enabled us to allow members to pay their assessment via either ACH or credit card on the Ocean Pines website.

Reserve balances are in line with what we have been projecting to end the year with, ending March with a \$6.477 million balance. The General Replacement reserve specifically ended the month with a balance of \$4.844 million. This balance is roughly 22% of the estimated fully funded reserve amount. OPA will be at the higher end of the approved 22-28% fully funded target range, once the FY23 approved budget contribution is accounted for in May 2022.

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