

The Courier

December 14, 2022
Volume 23 Number 13



Elf share - Students in Jennifer Fohner's PreK-4 classroom at Ocean City Elementary School finished a writing activity where they had to write two things they wanted their elves to share with Santa. **Naisa Kc, Tucker Coates** and **Chloe Ask** are seen here with their elves.

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Teaming up
with Girl Scout
Troop 812



Grinch feast - Ocean Pines had a very well attended Breakfast with the Grinch on December 3. It replaced the annual Breakfast with Santa who was busy at the North Pole. Volunteers pitched in as always. The Kiwanis Club of Greater Ocean Pines - Ocean City always makes the pancakes and sausages. Pictured are (L-R) front former Kiwanian **Barbara Peletier**, batter mixer and sausages cook **Dave Landis**, **The Grinch** and pancake flipper **Mike Castoro**.

No yard debris allowed at recycling center

Ocean Pines residents are asked to not drop off bagged leaves or other yard debris at the Worcester County Recycling Center, which could result in fines or violations from the county.

Leaves may be dropped off at the Ocean Pines Public Works yard, which is next to the center.

Ocean Pines residents may bring leaves and yard debris in bulk or paper bags to the Public Works yard at 1 Firehouse Lane, near the south Fire Department. The yard will be open through December 31, Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. The yard will be closed for drop off December 23, 24 and 26.

Ocean Pines Public Works will collect bagged leaves and other yard debris through December 22, on opposite days from Republic Services collection days.

The department will only pick up leaves placed in paper bags that residents place curbside.

Republic Services will pick up paper and plastic bags on scheduled pick-up days, limit four bags of leaves

per scheduled pick up. Republic Services will also accept branches tied in bundles no longer than four feet.

The Worcester County Recycling Center accepts newspaper, mixed paper, magazines, glass, plastic, aluminum and bi-metal cans, cardboard, and textiles (clothing).

All other items are not allowed. The recycling station is not staffed, but does have security cameras. Violators may be ticketed.

For more information, contact Public Works at 410-641-7425.

Sweden celebrates Christmas with a giant, straw Yule Goat. In Scandinavian countries, the Yule goat figures into the Christmas decor of many homes. In Norse mythology, the two goats pulled Thor's flying chariot the same way reindeer do for Santa's sleigh. On top of that, there's also a festive tale that focuses on an invisible Yule goat that checks in on holiday prep before the big day. That's why, in 1966, the Gävle Goat was created in an effort to draw shoppers to the Swedish city where it resides. Standing 42.6 feet high and seven meters in length, it also weighs a whopping 3.6 tons.

-BestLife

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Commentary

By Joe Reynolds
OceanPinesForum.com

Worcester County leadership changes

Bertino elected
Commissioners President

Sports Complex property purchase
canceled

Elections have consequences - a trite but factual expression. The consequences of the last Worcester County election were on full display at the December 6, 2022 meeting of the Worcester County Commissioners as the recently elected Commissioners took their oath of office for the next four years. In terms of local County politics, the changes were monumental.

Commissioner Chip Bertino was elected President of the Worcester County Commissioners; Jim Bunting was elected Vice-President. Both were the only individuals nominated for each position. Bertino's district is totally within the Ocean Pines subdivision, and Bunting's district includes a large portion of Ocean Pines. The vote for Bunting was unanimous. The vote for Bertino was 6-1, with only outgoing President Joe Mitrecic of Ocean City making his NO vote very clear.

Immediately following the vote, Mitrecic and Bertino both rose to change seats, passing each other in silence, with Bertino taking the dais center seat assigned to the President. Before moving on to the business of the day as the new President, Bertino said he wanted to make a few remarks.

In a show of pure class, Bertino went on to praise the leadership of Mitrecic over the last three years.

Bertino said, *"Before we continue - the past three years have been unlike any period our county has endured in its 280-year history. The pandemic turned upside down the conventions of governance at all levels - federal, state and county.*

"Our county dealt head-on with the need to continue making services available, we worked relentlessly to keep local businesses open in the face of often conflicting state and federal mandates.

"Worcester County government remained open. And more than any other jurisdiction in the state, this body, with just a couple of exceptions, continued to conduct business in person, as normally as possible.

"On top of these challenges, county government experienced a high level of transition in key management positions.

"It hasn't been easy.

"Our county and this government were well served during this time by Commissioner Joe Mitrecic as president.

"Thank you Joe."

Bertino then led a round of applause for Mitrecic before proceeding with the business of the day.

From a public standpoint, the most newsworthy business transpired just prior to the conclusion of the meeting with a motion by Jim Bunting. His motion was to cancel the contract of sale for the Route 50 property proposed for the location of a new County sports complex and end any and all County involvement in the project.

Bunting's motion was seconded by Caryn Abbott, the newly elected Commissioner from the Pocomoke area. The motion passed on a 4-2-1 vote,

with Bunting, Abbott, newly elected Commissioner Eric Fiori, and Bertino voting YES. NO votes came from Joe Mitrecic and Commissioner Diana Purnell of Berlin. In a real head-scratcher, Commissioner Ted Elder abstained, even after voicing opposition to the project.

Fiori's comments were eloquent, including, "We should not be entrepreneurs with County tax dollars." The Commissioner now representing the West Ocean City area also said it is "speculation" to think a sports complex would benefit the County financially.

The Bunting motion does not prevent any other entity from trying to build a sports complex in the County, it just takes Worcester County's direct involvement out of the picture. In regard to other entities building a sports complex in Worcester County, Bunting said, "I look forward to them coming forward."

New Marine organization forms

The meeting of the new Ocean Pines, Marine Corps League (MCL), Peacekeepers Detachment #1492 was held December 8.

This was the group's first meeting during which the charter was signed and their officers sworn in. Richard Poundsberry was installed as Commandant for the first year. John Daddazio and John Whitehead were chosen as Sr. Vice Commandant and Jr. Vice Commandant, respectively.

MCL Peacekeepers Detachment #1492 will meet every second Thursday of the month at 11 a.m. at the Ocean City Volunteer Fire Co. Station #5 located at 10124 Keyser Point Rd.

Any Marine, FMF Corpsman or

FMF Chaplain interested in joining this new Detachment is welcomed.

For more information contact John Daddazio at jadaddazio@gmail.com or John Whitehead at naphar@aol.com.

"Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" was recorded by a 13-year-old, Brenda Lee in 1958. In the years since, it's been re-recorded by stars including Kacey Musgraves, Justin Bieber, and Miley Cyrus.

-GAB Archive/Redferns

Courier Almanac

George Washington, the American revolutionary leader and first president of the United States, died at his estate in Mount Vernon, Virginia. He was 67 years old.



Millions of people across the globe enjoy curling up with a good book. Though entertainment value might be the force behind books' popularity, the benefits of reading on long-term cognitive health provide another great reason to read. In a 2020 study published in the journal *International Psychogeriatrics*, researchers reported that people age 64 and older with higher reading frequencies had a reduced risk of cognitive decline.

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You can do this

It was a long time happening, too long some have told me. I delayed. I procrastinated. I came up with excuse after excuse after excuse one year after another. I told people I was too busy. I stalled by replying when asked, that I

a dial-up modem, a process that took longer than listening to a politician talk about himself.

That was a long time and many columns ago. Through the years I attempted, halfheartedly, to publish a collection of my columns. Once, about a dozen years ago, I recruited friends to read a couple hundred columns and rank them. My idea was that I'd take their suggestions to use in a book. They did the work; I didn't. For many years

their notes remained on top of a file cabinet collecting dust. Guilt washed over me every time I passed the pile. Still, I wasn't motivated to do anything.



Then, I sought assistance from a professional who helps authors whip their manuscripts into something publishable. We spent a couple months working on ideas and accumulating material. Then, by my own doing, the project fizzled.

Fast forward to this time last year. My wife and I were with friends at one of their homes for dinner. We're sitting around the dining room table talking about everything and nothing. At one point, and I don't recall why, the topic of me publishing a book

came up. I rattled off my pat excuses, hemming and hawing. Some of the people around the table were the same people who many years before had spent much time ranking my columns. They were not shy about reminding me how I "wasted" their time.

The host of the party slipped upstairs and returned with a book she kept on her nightstand. It was a book of positive anecdotes I believe. She handed it to me and with a voice and countenance that only my friend can conjure up, she told me, "You can do this." And for the first time, her cool, assuring voice, made me believe I could. So, I did.

It took many months and long hours, but I finally published a collection of my columns, "It's All About...Some of My Favorites." I overcame all the obstacles I had put in my own way. It is a satisfying feeling to push through anxiety and fear and come out on the other side.

A number of people joined me last week at the Ocean Pines library to hear

me share memories and read excerpts from the book. I was jittery about "going on stage." What would I say? The audience was looking at me. I was looking at them. I thought about that dinner the year before and my friend's reassuring words, "You can do this."

I took a deep breath. "Good evening ladies and gentlemen..."



It's All About...

By **Chip Bertino**

chipbertino@delmarvacourier.com

was still working on it. The reality was I was intimidated. I was scared.

I have been writing this column each week for more than two decades, accumulating a stash of more than a thousand columns. My first column appeared in this space May 9, 2001, just about six months after we launched this newspaper. I had not planned to write a column. It was a necessity. The paper was on deadline and there was a hole on the last page that needed to be filled. The clock was ticking. We had nothing; no press releases, no photos, nothing!

Desperate, I started writing. I wrote about, of all things, a silly little piece about television theme songs I remembered from my youth. Editors through the ages will understand when I write that it wasn't great literature but it plugged the hole. Start the presses! Actually, there were no presses to start. We sent the finished pages electronically to the printer via



Author's note: Now a few words of crass commercialism. If you're interested in purchasing a copy of the book for yourself or as a gift, email chipbertino@delmarvacourier.com or call 410-629-5906.

Facts about the winter solstice

The winter solstice occurs each year during the month of December in the northern hemisphere. In 2022, the winter solstice will take place on December 21 at 4:48 p.m. EST.

Solstices are significant events that occur twice per year. One occurs in the winter and one in the summer. The winter solstice also is known as the first day of winter and occurs when the Earth's pole reaches its maximum tilt away from the sun. During the winter solstice, people will experience the shortest period of daylight and the longest period of nighttime of the year. Here are facts about the winter solstice.

- Depending on the hemisphere, the north or south pole will experience continuous darkness or twilight around its winter solstice.

- The winter solstice sometimes is referred to by the term midwinter.

- Even though the solstice is marked by a whole day on the calendar, it actually is just the brief moment of time when the sun is exactly over the Tropic of Capricorn.

- The word solstice can be translated from Latin and means "sun stand still."

- The Tropic of Capricorn is located at 23.5 degrees south of the equator.

- Tourists flock to Stonehenge to track the movement of the sun. The stones will frame the sunset on the winter solstice and the sunrise on the summer solstice.

- Ancient cultures viewed the winter solstice as a time of death and rebirth.

- Important events in history have taken place on winter solstices. The Apollo 8 spacecraft launched on the solstice in 1968. Pilgrims also arrived at Plymouth on the winter solstice in 1620.

- Each planet in the Earth's solar system has its own solstices and equinoxes.

- The southern hemisphere experiences the winter solstice in June each year.

- A full moon on a solstice is even more rare than a blue moon. The last full moon to occur on the winter solstice was in 2010 and the next one won't happen until 2094.



Commissioners elect new president, vice president

On December 6, 2022, the Worcester County Commissioners elected Commissioner Chip Bertino to serve as president and Jim Bunting to serve as vice president of the board.

Commissioner Bertino was elected to the board in 2014 to represent District Five, the Ocean Pines District, and he is currently serving his third term in office. Commissioner Bertino represents the County Commissioners on the Wor-Wic Community College Board of Trustees and on the Mary-

Sewer Advisory Committee, and the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) Legislative Committee.

Prior to becoming a commissioner, he served on the Worcester County Board of Zoning Appeals for six years, leading the board as chair for four years. He served on the Worcester County Planning Commission for four years, leading the board as chair for three years. He also served on the Ocean Pines Comprehensive Planning Committee. Commissioner Bunting and his wife, Elisabeth, live in Bishopville. They have two grown children and one granddaughter.

The Board of Worcester County Commissioners is the seven-member legislative and executive branch of county government. Each commissioner is elected to serve a four-year term, and one representative is elected from each of the seven election districts. The cur-



Jim Bunting and Chip Bertino

land Association of Counties (MACo) Legislative Committee.

Commissioner Bertino has been in the newspaper publishing business for more than 30 years. He is a member and past president of the Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce, past board member of the Worcester County Veterans Memorial at Ocean Pines, and he is co-author of the book "My Time, My Service" about the men and women honored at the memorial. Commissioner Bertino and his wife, Susan, have lived in Ocean Pines for nearly 30 years. They have three children and two grandchildren.

Commissioner Bunting was elected to the board in 2010 to represent District Six, the Northern District, and he is currently serving his fourth term in office. He previously served as president for three consecutive years from 2014-2016. He is a retired professional land surveyor, and he owned and operated his own surveying and land planning business for 18 years. He represents the commissioners on the Commission for Aging, the Water and

current board was elected to serve the 2022-2026 term. The commissioners meet the first and third Tuesday of each month in the Worcester County Government Center in Snow Hill.

Non-credit course registration now available

Registration for classes being offered this spring by the continuing education and workforce development division at Wor-Wic Community College is now available. Classes begin January 9.

Non-credit courses are offered in the areas of academic preparation, business and leadership, child care, computers and technology, health care, hospitality and culinary, personal enrichment, real estate, trades and manufacturing, transportation and veterinary assistant training.

In addition to in-person classes, a variety of online courses are also offered. Financial assistance is available for many courses.

Visit www.worwic.edu or call 410-334-2815 for more information.

Rearview Mirror / Chip Bertino

Jean Marx of Berlin on her first car, a 1978 Mustang II as told to Chip Bertino.

It was a 1978 Mustang II and it was a tan color. I bought it used in 1983 when I was in college. I think I paid \$1,400 for it and it was with my own money. I'd saved it up from various jobs I'd had in my teen years such as babysitting.

A couple things stand out about the car. I thought it was a pretty big deal, mainly because I considered that a lot of money at the time and I'd paid for it myself. It was probably why I was excited to give the car its own name. I called in "Ponyboy" after a character in the movie I'd recently seen and liked. The movie was *The Outsiders*. I also recall that the car wasn't very reliable. It broke down a lot, so that was stressful. I think I was able to keep it limping along for a few years.



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Trio Trick Pin Set
B Intriguing threesome to scatter gay color over her suit, blouse or dress. Aqua-blue and rose simulated stones in 3/4-in. "Dream House," 1 1/4-in. Dutch Girl and 3/4-in. Magic Flower Pot. Safety pin on each pin . . . so she can't lose her "trio." 4 N 3508E—Shpg. wt. 7 oz. Gift boxed. Set \$1.18

Regal Pendant Set
C She can use beautiful pendant as separate pin too. Sparkling aqua-blue simulated stone with tiny seed pearls in 1 1/4-in. pin (complete with safety clasp) and matching 3/4-in. screw earrings. Detachable 1 1/4-in. gold color metal chain. 4 N 4597E—Shpg. wt. 7 oz. Gift boxed. Set \$1.18

Carved Delight
D Such a romantic remembrance . . . and dainty 2-pc. set is copy of much more expensive favorite. Carved roses of simulated coral with tiny seed pearls are in popular prong-type setting. 2-inch pin has safety clasp. 3/4-in. screw earrings. 4 N 3517E—Shpg. wt. 6 oz. In gift box. Set \$1.18

"Jewel of the East"
E So perfectly named . . . has all the fire and mystery of priceless Oriental treasures. Extra large beveled stone regally set off by artistic rhinestone studded swirls and spirals. Fine gold color metal snake chain is flexible so "Jewel of the East" will lie flat on her neck. Luxurious elegance we know you can't find elsewhere for this price in 16 in. necklace and 1 1/4 in. earrings (screw). In beautiful box. Shpg. wt. 8 oz. 4 N 4675E Set \$5.98

Orchid Corsage
F To pin you to her heart forever. Carefully created to give her one of the finest pins we've seen. Gently rounded leaves frame full blooming flower that twinkles with tiny rhinestones and simulated pearl. Jeweled orchid pin has safety clasp for extra protection, and is 2 in. Beautiful Orchid earrings (screw) are 1 1/4 in. diam. . . . and match pin to smallest detail. Boxed. Shipping weight 8 ounces. 4 N 3504E Set \$2.38

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J **"Pouchette" Compact.** Red artificial leather, gold color metal trim. Sifter, puff. 3 1/4 in. 4 N 4712—Wt. 6 oz. \$2.00

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P **"Cupcake" Compact with gold color initials.** State: Gold color . . . or red or green jewel-tone. Print 3 initials or up to 5 letter name. 4 N 4848E—Sifter, puff. 3 in. Wt. 5 oz. \$5.95

Q **Heart Compact.** Gold color metal. Sifter, puff. Print 3 initials or up to 5 letter name. 4 N 4875S—3 in. Shpg. wt. 5 oz. . . . \$5.95

R **Coro's "Cafe Society."** Fascinating crescent filled with graduated rhinestones . . . each shimmering stone in individual prong type setting for extra brilliance. Flexible gold color metal chain is 15 in. "Cafe Society" earrings (screw) are 1 1/4 in. State color: crystal or aqua-blue. 4 N 4668E—Shpg. wt. 6 oz. Boxed. \$2.40

S **Coro's Beloved Pendant Set . . .** detach dainty pendant from 15 1/2-in. chain and use as pin. State color of simulated stones: rose, aqua-blue, ruby or emerald. Gold plated. 3/4-in. screw earrings to match. 4 N 4568E—Shpg. wt. 7 oz. Boxed Set \$2.40

T **Coro's Genuino Cameo with tiny rhinestones.** Fine 1 1/2-in. gold color metal chain. 4 N 4638AE—Shpg. wt. 4 oz. . . . \$1.18

U **Matching Cameo Earrings.** 1-in. Screw. 4 N 3937ME—Shpg. wt. 3 oz. . . . \$1.18

V **Coro's ALL Rhinestone Necklace** with each stone individually set. 14 in. long. Fiery earrings 3/4 in. (screw). 4 N 4637E—Shpg. wt. 6 oz. . . . Set \$2.40

W **Coro's Sweetheart Scatter Pins** in ivory-chain and use as pin. State color of simulated stones: rose, aqua-blue, ruby or emerald. Gold plated. 3/4-in. screw earrings to match. 4 N 3500E—Shpg. wt. 7 oz. Boxed Set \$3.50

NOTICE FOR THESE 2 PAGES: Prices include 20% Fed. Excise Tax where "E" is added to Cat. No.



Fashion - Republican Women of Worcester County members recently attended the American Cancer Society Fashion Show at the Ocean City Convention Center.

Arts Council awards grants

The Worcester County Arts Council awarded \$19,718 in the Community Arts Development Grants program for art projects and events to be presented by local nonprofit organizations during the six-month granting cycle beginning January 1, 2023.

Grant projects are evaluated based on the overall quality of cultural excellence, community outreach and public impact, and financial/administrative merit.

In FY 2023, the Worcester County Arts Council awarded \$43,158 to local non-profit organizations through this program which is funded and supported by the Maryland State Arts Council.

The following is a list of organizations and their projects that are being awarded a Community Arts Development Grant for the current granting period:

- Art League of Ocean City: Lecture Series
- Berlin Heritage Foundation: 2023 Events
- Julia A. Purnell Museum: Paintings and Techniques of Ann S. Hope
- Lower Shore Performing Arts Company: Musical Review of Broadway Love Songs

Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra: 2023 Spring Concerts

Ocean Pines Children's Theater: Disney's Moana, Jr. Musical

Pocomoke High School Drama Club: Into the Woods Musical

Pine Tones Chorus: Spring Concert and Sing Outs

Snow Hill Elementary School: Free Little Art Gallery

Town of Berlin/Berlin Main Street: Live Music at Farmers' Market

Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art: Wildfowl Carving Competition & Art Festival

Applications are currently accepted for art projects through the Mini-Grant program. The Mini-Grant program is intended to provide funds (up to \$500) for new projects facing an emergency need that emerge between grant periods and deserve immediate Arts Council support. Visit www.worcestercountyartscouncil.org for more information.

The next deadline to receive grant applications for the Community Arts Development Grant Program for July 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023, is April 15, 2023.

Health Dept. receives funding to address disparities

The Worcester County Health Department (WCHD) was recently awarded new funding from the Maryland Department of Health to address health disparities residents may have experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, routine preventive health screenings and care were often delayed. The goal of this new project is to increase access to and participation in health screenings, education programs, and the adoption of healthy lifestyles. The project will address social determinants of health which are the environmental conditions where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship that affect health outcomes. This includes factors like socioeconomic status, education, physical environment, employment, social support networks, and access to care.

"It is my hope that through this project we can help the community members reach their full health potential by ensuring they are aware of re-

please see **funding** on page 14

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Dunes Manor donates to AGH

On November 30, Lorrie Miller, general manager of the Dunes Manor Hotel, and David Del Russo, regional director of operations for OTO Development Group, donated the portraits of Milton and Thelma Conner to Atlantic General Hospital. The couple played a large role in the Ocean City community for decades,

Motel on 27th Street in the 1960s, operating that property together until Milton passed away in 1979. Eight years later, Thelma fulfilled the couple's dream and built the Dunes Manor Hotel, an 11-story, Victorian-style hotel on 28th Street.

Conner was the first female president of the Ocean City Chamber of Commerce in 1974 and was named the 1985 Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Citizen of the Year. She also served as the president of the Hotel Motel Restaurant Association in 1985 and was named 1994 Maryland Independent Hotelier of the Year.

In the spring of 1990, the community campaign to build Atlantic General Hospital kicked off at the Dunes Manor Hotel, as Conner supported the idea of opening "a new chapter in healthcare." Conner went on to be one of the first members of the Atlantic General Hospital Board of Directors.

The Dunes Manor Hotel is currently being renovated to bring a more modern and coastal feel to the property while also still maintaining some of the Victorian old-world charm and amenities that were so important to the Conners, such as the ornate lobby ceiling and the ocean-facing rocking chairs on the back veranda.



Pictured from left to right: **Toni Keiser**, Atlantic General Hospital vice president of public relations; **Lorrie Miller**, general manager of the Dunes Manor Hotel; **David Del Russo**, regional director of operations for OTO Development Group; **Don Owrey**, Atlantic General Hospital president & CEO; **Steven Tyson**, Atlantic General Hospital Foundation Donor relations officer.

and Thelma built and ran the iconic Dunes Manor Hotel.

Accompanying the portraits was a donation of \$11,500 raised from equipment sales and matching gifts.

Thelma Conner moved to Ocean City in 1940 to work with her husband at his family's Hastings Miramar Hotel. The couple eventually bought the Dunes



Staying in shape through the holidays

Shape Ups, the Ocean Pines exercise team of over 80 members, danced and exercised to holiday tunes such as "Jingle Bell Rock" and "Let it Snow." The leadership team of Tom Dempsey, Barbara Harman, Marion McCurdy, Karen Megary, and Judy Neustadt revitalized the long existing program with new exercise routines, a published calendar of specific classes, schedules and reminders.

This holiday season, the membership donated to the Grace Center for Maternal and Women's Health in Berlin and gift cards were given to Sarah's Pantry for families in need.

The group exercises Monday, Wednesday and Friday, September until June at the Ocean Pines Community Center. There is a membership fee of \$20

Send an email to shape_ups@yahoo.com for more information.



Swearing in - The First State Detachment of the Marine Corps League has two new officers. At a ceremony at Ocean City American Legion Post 166 Tom Redding was sworn in as Senior Vice Commandant, and Al Soto took the oath as Junior Vice Commandant.

The First State Detachment Marines is a chartered 501 (c) 4 non-profit organized to raise funds to support local community service programs in Worcester and Sussex Counties. Among these are the Believe in Tomorrow Foundation, Toys for Tots, Youth Physical Fitness Program, and The Semper Fi America's Fund that supports seriously wounded or ill veterans and their families.

Above are (left to right) **Al Soto** and **Tom Redding** taking the oath administered by former Commandant **Frank Del Piano**.



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EOE



Luncheon - The Books by the Bay book club of Ocean Pines recently enjoyed a holiday luncheon at the Victorian Restaurant in Rehoboth Beach.



Capsule - As part of its 40th anniversary celebration, the Community Church at Ocean Pines had the blessing of the time capsule at Sunday services recently. Commendations from the State of Maryland and the Worcester County Commissioners recognizing the church's spiritual leadership and positive contributions to the betterment of the community were acknowledged.

Shown in photo (left to right) anniversary chair **Andrea Barnes**, Pastor **Dale Brown** and committee member **Diane McGraw**.

Lesser known Chanukah traditions

Chanukah, which begins at sunset on December 18, is a relatively modern holiday in regard to the Hebrew calendar. Unlike Yom Kippur or Passover, which are steeped in rich traditions, there are few Chanukah customs.

Chanukah celebrants still participate in various customs each year, some of which are customized according to family preferences. While some traditions, such as the lighting of the Chanukah menorah, are familiar, others may not be as widely known, especially to those outside of the faith. Here's a look at a select few.

Saying the Shehecheyanu blessing: Traditionally, there are two blessings that some people say each night while lighting the candles. The first is recited while holding the lit shamash, and the second is said while lighting the candles. Another blessing, known as the Shehecheyanu, is said the first night. According to 18Doors, a resource on the Jewish faith, it's the same blessing traditionally said on the first night of all Jewish holidays and other special occasions.

Display or use of the shofar: A shofar is a type of instrument made from a ram's horn. It is a symbol of the ram that Abraham offered as a sacrifice in place of his son Isaac, exemplifying heroic faith of the fathers of the Jewish people. The shofar also serves as a reminder of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, and calls people to strive for Israel's renewal and fellowship with God.

Singing "Ma'oz Tzur": Chanukah songs may not be as numerous or as widely sung as Christmas carols during the holiday season, but there are a select few that are part of the festivities. "Oh Chanukah Oh Chanukah" and "The Dreidl Song" are some of the most widely known songs, but some



people also follow the custom of singing "Ma'oz Tzur (Rock of Ages)" around the menorah. The words were composed in the 13th century, and the song summarizes historical challenges faced by the Jewish people that were overcome with God's help.

Use of oil in Chanukah feasts: It's well known that latkes, or fried potato pancakes, are served around Chanukah. The reason is due to the oil used to fry them, which traditionally is olive oil. Fried foods call to mind a specific Chanukah miracle. After the Greeks destroyed the sanctuary and defiled what was thought to be all of the oil, one jug sealed with the imprint of the High Priest was found. That one jug managed to keep the Temple's menorah lit for eight days, despite it being insufficient to handle this task. This was considered a miracle and celebrated in subsequent years.

The tradition of hanging stockings comes from a legend about marriage. Have you ever wondered why we hang up stockings, which are basically fancy socks, during the holiday season only to wake up on Christmas morning to find them filled with tiny gifts? According to the Smithsonian, one of the most popular legends about the tradition's origins is the tale of a poor widower who worried that he wouldn't be able to marry off his three daughters because of his lack of wealth. Fortunately, Smithsonian explains, "St. Nicholas was wandering through the town where the man lived and heard villagers discussing that family's plight. He wanted to help but knew the man would refuse any kind of charity directly. Instead, one night, he slid down the chimney of the family's house and filled the girls' recently laundered stockings, which happened to be drying by the fire, with gold coins. And then he disappeared." In the morning, the family found the gifts, and the daughters became eligible to wed. 'Twas a Christmas miracle!

-Shutterstock



Nobel Prize reveals Santa's secret

“Crab traps, docking lines, tide charts, life jackets, fuel costs, small craft advisories, Dramamine, fishing rods, red-right-returning, free vessel safety inspections.” Well, that’s it for recreational boating gibberish for December. I’ll get back to writing about knots and knots next month.

Now since everyone has gotten their flu and covid shots and the annual three-day Thanksgiving turkey defrosting trauma is in the rear view mirror, it’s time to get ready for the holiday season. While the nights are still getting longer and colder, children’s thoughts are turning toward Santa Claus. For the very young, that means ‘making a list’ but for those a little bit older, the emerging question is how does Santa get to visit every house in just one night? This is usually the first doubting crack in the Santa myth.

So, while we tell the young ones that Santa’s reindeers are magically fast and the sleigh uses pixy dust to wax its rudders, our description of the jolly old guy in the red suit has to be tempered by the reality that kids Google and insight comes sooner. Still, we perpetrate the illusion because it feels good – good for the believers and good for the emerging captives of ubiquitous Christmas advertising / Christmas music / Christmas advertising / Christmas movies / Christmas advertising / and Christmas advertising.

This year the twinkle in St. Nick’s eye is the result of his secret that is only now on the verge of revelation. In ‘Star Trek’ it’s called ‘Warp Speed.’ In ‘Star Wars’ it’s called ‘Jump to Hyperspace.’ It’s the ability to travel faster than the speed of light making the Yuletide flight feasible.

Conventional wisdom has long held that the Jolly One makes his rounds – even stopping for milk and cookies – at the stroke of midnight. Of course, he is aided by the fact that there are 38 local time zones around the world (you can Google it) and therefore 38 strokes of midnight but it’s still a stretch to image 9 reindeers

and a geriatric philanthropist circumnavigating the world of true believers and getting back to the North Pole in time for Mrs. Claus’s famous breakfast brunch with all the elves.

But hark! Santa’s secret has been revealed.

Einstein convinced us that the speed of light was the limiting factor in existence with his famous equation, $E=mc^2$, but even Albert noodled on the intriguing notion that it was not. The latest breakthrough in science now confirms his suspicions.

The 2022 Nobel Prize for Physics was awarded to three scientists for something to do with quantum reflections. Albert E. and others had theorized an “entangled state between protons” (whatever that means) and this year Alain Aspect, John Clauser and Anton Zeilinger were recognized for validating this quantum mechanics theory in laboratory experiments.

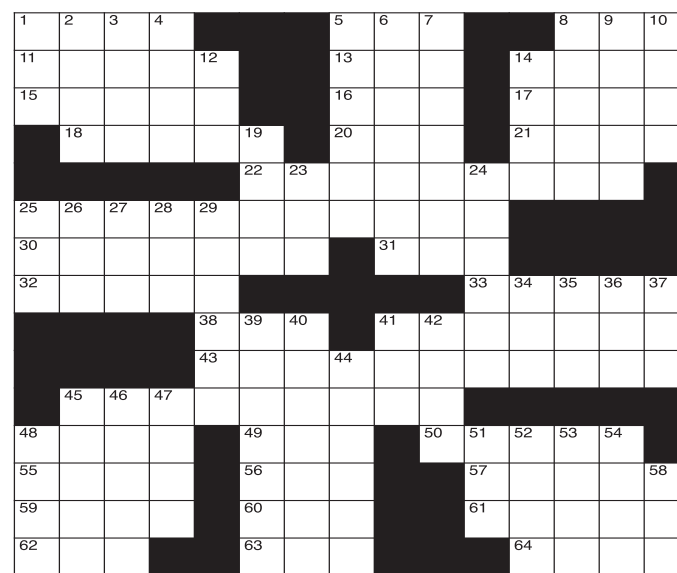
Believe me, I don’t understand it; but buried deep in the details of the experiment’s explanation there is an obscure, little touted comment that the observed phenomenon – this quantum reflection – occurs instantaneously – i.e. *faster than the speed of light*. That, boys and girls, is the beginning of warp speed.

This is a Kitty Hawk moment. Man had dreamed of flying since he saw his first bird but it wasn’t until the Wright Brothers flew a mere 120 feet on December 17, 1903, did Santa’s sleigh seem possible. And only 65 years later Apollo 8 circled the moon at Christmas, 1968. The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences’ recognition of the 2022 Nobel Prize for Physics is the first 120 feet. Hyperspace travel is no longer the exclusive province of science fiction. Santa’s annual trek is even more plausible.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. Google it.

Stay safe. Stay dry.

Dan Collins can be reached for comment at dancollins.oceanpines@gmail.com



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. A people of Eastern Afghanistan
- 5. Supervises interstate commerce
- 8. Touch lightly
- 11. Relating to bees
- 13. Mauna __, Hawaiian volcano
- 14. Mosuo culture religion
- 15. Italian village
- 16. Stiff bristle
- 17. Wealthy enclave in Rio
- 18. Cause to lose courage
- 20. Examines animals
- 21. Ethnic group of Laos and Thailand
- 22. Gets rid of
- 25. Having easily perceived thoughts
- 30. Removed surgically
- 31. Principle underlying the universe
- 32. Popular airline
- 33. Antelopes
- 38. Peacock network
- 41. Utter repeatedly
- 43. One from the Golden State
- 45. Photographers
- 48. Father
- 49. Popular BBQ dish
- 50. Cavalry sword
- 55. Ancient Greek sophist
- 56. Atomic mass unit
- 57. Afflicted in mind or body
- 59. Indian mythological figure
- 60. Mild expression of surprise
- 61. Jewish spiritual leader
- 62. Brew
- 63. Doctor of Education
- 64. Impudence

CLUES DOWN

- 1. State attorneys
- 2. Imitated
- 3. Latvian capital
- 4. Irish goddess
- 5. Taste
- 6. Dried
- 7. Spanish saloon
- 8. Mother of Perseus
- 9. Evergreen coniferous trees
- 10. Refuse to comply
- 12. Negative
- 14. Hyphen
- 19. A way to record
- 23. Not good
- 24. One who tends the furnace
- 25. Small amount
- 26. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
- 27. The whole quantity
- 28. __ King Cole, musician
- 29. One’s opinion
- 34. Holds ashes
- 35. Stablecoin cryptocurrency
- 36. Side-blotched lizards genus
- 37. Legislator (abbr.)
- 39. Concentrated bombardment
- 40. Took for oneself
- 41. Nigerian City
- 42. Thousands of pounds
- 44. Inspired
- 45. Secret clique
- 46. Expression
- 47. Dough made from corn flour
- 48. Comedian Carvey
- 51. Swiss river
- 52. Prejudice
- 53. Actor Idris
- 54. Resistance fighters
- 58. Criticize



Answers for December 7

WYFCS receives grant

Worcester Youth & Family Counseling Services, Inc. was recently awarded \$225,000 over three years to recruit and retain behavioral health providers which will ultimately increase access to service. This award is part of a larger \$7.9 million grant investment from CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield (CareFirst), the largest not-for-profit health plan in the mid-Atlantic region, to improve behavioral health outcomes for youth across its service areas in the region.

“With this grant we will be able to recruit across the country to find excellent behavioral health providers. We will also have the ability to offer incentives to those who work here, including a wellness room, paid CEUs, and self-care planning. With that, we hope to increase access to mental health care in our community with providers who are healthy and well,” said Dr. Jennifer Leggour, Executive Director

To identify needs and challenges impacting behavioral health in the region, CareFirst conducted key interviews with community-based organizations. This process informed its priority areas for the funding, which include: addressing disparities for at-risk youth of color and LGBTQ youth, or supporting programs that address the root causes leading to higher prevalence of

mental health and substance use disorders and reduce barriers to services; and, expanding the behavioral health workforce, or increasing the availability of trained behavioral health providers through recruitment, retention and incentives to expand access to qualified mental health professionals in areas with limited access.

Special considerations were given to organizations serving Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), disconnected youth, persons experiencing homelessness, populations with limited English proficiency (LEP), structurally disinvested communities, justice-involved individuals, LGBTQ populations, low-income communities, rural communities, and other marginalized communities.

“CareFirst recognizes that behavioral health is an essential part of overall health, which includes a continuum of conditions ranging from severe mental health disorders to the emotional, psychological, and social factors that affect a person’s overall wellbeing,” said Dr. Destiny-Simone Ramjohn, Vice President of Community Health and Social Impact for CareFirst.

To learn more about Worcester Youth & Family Counseling visit www.gowoyo.org.



Commendation - The commissioners present commendations to members of the Worcester County 4-H Robotics Intermediate Team for taking first place in the Maryland 4-H State Robotics Challenge at the 2022 Maryland State Fair. Congratulations go out these young people for their exemplary performance. Those pictured include **Elianna Fiori** (front row from left), **Riya Patel**, **Scott Wainwright**, and **Nidhish Gupta**; and team coach **Mendy Fiori** (second row, from left), **Barbara Barga**, of the Extension Office, and team coaches **Gira Patel**, **Amanda Wainwright**, and **Shriya Gupta**; and Commissioners **Caryn Abbott** (third row, from left), **Chip Bertino**, **Jim Bunting**, **Joe Mitrecic**, **Ted Elder**, **Diana Purnell** and **Eric Fiori**.

Safety first when buying toys for children this holiday season

December is a special time of year for children, millions of whom await the arrival of Santa Claus and the bounty of toys he delivers each year. When buying holiday gifts for youngsters, adults must consider safety. According to the Alliance for Children and Families, approximately 217,000 children are treated at hospi-



tal emergency rooms for toy-related injuries each year. Holiday shoppers are urged to stick to age-related recommendations on product packaging and avoid toys that do not contain the ATSM (American Society for Testing and Materi-

als) label.

Bingo offered

The Knights of Columbus will host bingo at their 9901 Coastal Highway location in Ocean City. Doors will open at 5 p.m. and games will begin at 6:30 p.m. on December 16 and 30 and January 6 and 13. Refreshments will be sold. For more information call 410-524-7994.

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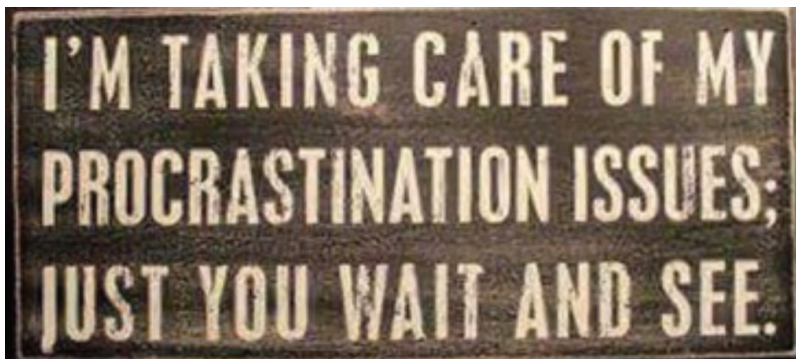
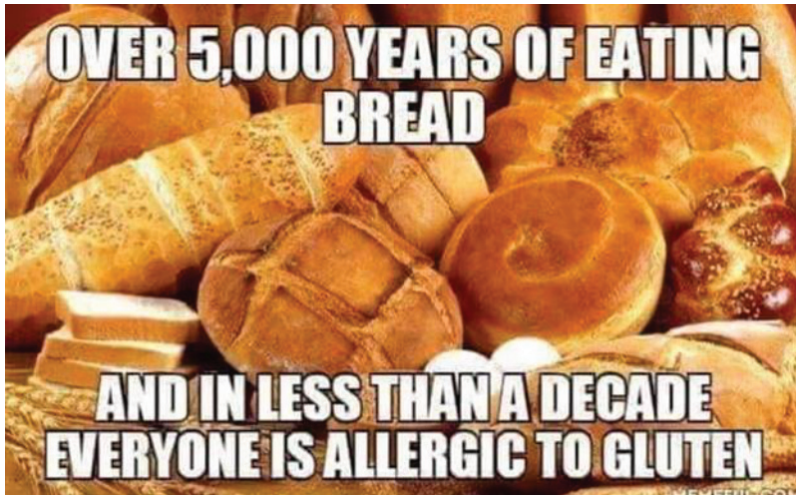
This is a commission-based position with considerable income growth potential. Enjoy flexible working schedule.

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EOE

Some things to think about

Gathered from the internet by Jack Barnes



Just because they pull up next to you doesn't mean they want to race. But... Better safe than a loser.



Today a man knocked on my door and asked for a small donation towards the local swimming pool. I gave him a glass of water.

The next time you hate your life remember, it's all about perspective. I have a friend who has sex 2-3 times a day, exercises twice a day, reads 2 books a week and yet complains about how much he hates prison.

IT'S A SHAME NOTHING IS BUILT IN THE USA ANY MORE. I JUST BOUGHT A TV & IT SAID "BUILT IN ANTENNA". I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE THAT IS.



A guy walks into a lumberyard and asks for some two-by-fours. The clerk asks, "How long do you need them?" The guy answers, "A long time. We're gonna build a house."



Visiting

South Africa

By Kurt and Jean Marx

South Africa is a beautiful country of 60 million people at the southern end of Africa's continent. The country is ethnically, culturally, economically and geographically diverse. According to the World Atlas, South Africa is the eighth most ethnically diverse country in the world.

There are 11 official languages in South Africa (Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Swati, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, and Zulu). An estimated 80% of the population self-identifies as Black South African, including the Zulu, Sotho, Tswana, and Xhosa groups. Multi-racial individuals make up the next largest demographic group, followed by whites who are 8% of the population. The majority of white South Africans are descendants of Dutch settlers. Those of South Asian descent make up 2.5% of the population. Two-thirds of the country's population lives in urban areas while the other third live in rural areas. The majority of the population (55%) is under 30 years of age.

South Africa is much bigger than many Americans realize – it is almost twice the size of Texas. The country is bordered by Namibia to the northwest, Botswana and Zimbabwe to the north, and Mozambique and Eswatini to the east. South Africa's coastline abuts both the Atlantic Ocean and the Indian Ocean.

South Africa's economy is much smaller than that the United States. The USA's gross domestic product (GDP) is approximately \$21 trillion, while South Africa's is \$435 billion. South Africa's GDP per capita is \$7,000 while the USA's is \$63,500. While South Africa's economy does not rival those of Western nations, its economy is the second-largest in Africa. The economy is plagued by high unemployment which stands at 34%. Unemployment is markedly high among young people. The major sectors of the South African economy include mining, transport, energy, manufacturing, tourism, and agriculture. In terms of currency conversion, 1 U.S. dollar is worth approximately 17 South African rands.

There are lots of reasons to travel to South Africa. Perhaps the most common reason is to get the chance to experience African wildlife up close and personal. Having rhinos walk within mere feet of your jeep is an unforgettable experience. Experiencing wildlife in their natural habitat can include visiting Kruger Na-

tional Park. Many national parks and game reserves offer you the opportunity to spot the Big Five (lions, leopards, rhinos, elephants, and cape buffalo), as well as a host of other animals.

In addition to its wildlife, South Africa is also known for its wine. You can tour numerous wineries and sample delicious wines. For outdoor enthusiasts, the beautiful Drakensberg Mountains offer numerous hiking opportunities. The city of Durban has a fantastic beachfront location on the Indian Ocean as well as the benefits of a major city including restaurants, bars, and museums.

A visit to Cape Town offers a variety of unique experiences. The mountain range known as Table Mountain provides breathtaking, panoramic views. You can visit an African penguin colony at Boulders Beach. A short ferry ride to Robben Island shows where Nelson Mandela spent 18 of his 27 years of imprisonment before becoming the first president of South Africa in 1994. The V&A Waterfront has excellent restaurants as well as an eclectic variety of shopping opportunities.

If there are so many reasons, doesn't everyone visit South Africa? There are three major reasons people choose not to visit – convenience, cost, and safety. A direct flight from New York City takes over 14 hours in the air plus a minimum of 3 hours at the airport before you leave and time at the airport after you land in order to go through customs. If you choose a connecting flight, this adds even more time. This means that a trip to South Africa really needs to be a minimum of two weeks in duration once you factor in the travel time.

Flights to South Africa are not cheap. An economy flight to South Africa could easily cost you \$1,500 - \$2,000 per ticket. However, similar to parts of Asia, once you have arrived in the country, prices are cheaper than in the USA. For example, 3 drinks in the bar of a four-star hotel cost just \$5.

Safety is always a concern and South Africa has a high crime rate. However, violent crime generally affects South African citizens and not tourists. That being said, it is always wise to be aware of your surroundings and to leave important documents, some of your cash, and at least one credit card locked in the safe in your room.

We found South Africa to be a fantastic experience and we can't wait to tell you all about it.

The origins of 'The 12 Days of Christmas'

Christmas carols can be heard far and wide from Thanksgiving weekend through Christmas Day. "The 12 Days of Christmas" is one of the most recognizable carols, and for good reason, as the popular song can trace its history back several centuries. Researchers have traced the earliest printed version of the poem on which the song is based all the way back to 1780. That's three years before the signing of the Treaty of Paris, which officially ended the American Revolutionary War. The song has long been suspected to have been a way for Catholics in Britain to teach their children the catechism, as the 1700s was a controversial period for Ca-

tholicism in the country. However, no documentary evidence exists in support of that theory, and many historians feel it is inaccurate. Others indicate that, while 1780 is likely the first time the poem was printed, the poem is likely much older than that, with origins potentially in France or Scotland. What is known is that the version many people recognize today, namely in song form, can be traced to the early twentieth century, when English singer and composer Frederic Austin first popularized the melody for the song. Austin performed that version of the song beginning in 1905, and it was first published in 1909.

Craft an entire day around tree shopping

Though retailers may begin playing holiday tunes shortly after Halloween, for many people, no date on the calendar marks the beginning of the holiday season better than the day they pick up their Christmas tree.

There are many different ways to acquire a Christmas tree. Some people prefer artificial Christmas trees that can be stored and taken out each year. Others make a yearly expedition to a tree lot or a Christmas tree farm to find the perfect fir or spruce. Historians believe a man named W.V. McGallard planted 25,000 Norway spruce seedlings at his Mercer County, New Jersey farm in 1901, essentially establishing the first commercial Christmas tree farm. By 1908, customers could visit the farm and choose trees for \$1 each. McGallard helped create an entirely new industry that now accounts for 350 million trees being grown and sold in the United States every year.

Selecting a Christmas tree may not take more than an hour or two, but there are ways for families and other tree shoppers to maximize their time spent looking for a tree.

Bring refreshments. Couple Christmas tree shopping with picnicking if the weather is amenable. Pack some foldable chairs into the vehicle (sitting on the ground on a blanket may be too cold) and bring along thermoses of coffee or hot cocoa. Snacks like granola bars,

Christmas cookies or other filling treats can keep everyone satisfied and energized while they shop for a tree.

Pair tree shopping with a trip to see lighting displays. Find the tree lot or tree farm and then scope out potentially scenic spots to view holiday lighting displays nearby. Neighborhood Facebook or other social media groups often tout homes that put up eye-catching displays. Ask around for addresses and plan your own tours.

Plan a night out. Everyone may be tired and hungry after a long day of Christmas tree hunting. Plus, it's typically a good idea to wait some time for boughs to open before decorating. Use this opportunity to dine out and return home ready to decorate. Make it a regular occurrence that Christmas tree shopping is followed by a family meal at a favorite restaurant.

Watch a classic film. Many different holiday movies are broadcast this time of year and each enhances the Christmas spirit. While putting up the tree, play a favorite film in the background. What better way to enjoy decorating your own tree than by watching Charlie Brown adorn his meager evergreen at the same time?

Make a day of selecting and putting up the Christmas tree each year. Doing so can enhance the holidays and make for an entertaining way to spend time together as a couple or family.

Add layers of protection to financial strategy

Submitted by **John Bennish**
Financial Advisor, Edward Jones

To achieve your financial security, and that of your family, you will need to create a comprehensive strategy. But for

this strategy to succeed, you'll need to guard it from various challenges – and that means you'll need to build in different layers of protection.

What are these challenges – and what types of protection can be used to defend against them? Consider the following:

Challenge #1: Protecting your ability to reach your goals – To achieve your long-term goals, such as a comfortable retirement, you'll need to build adequate financial resources. And that means you'll need to create an investment portfolio that's suitable for your objectives, risk tolerance and time horizon. And you'll need to keep your long-term goals in mind when adjusting your portfolio during times of volatility.

Challenge #2: Protecting your family's future if you're not around – Hopefully, you will live a long life and always be around to support your family. But the future is not ours to see – and if something were to happen to you, how would your family cope? Their chances could be much better if you have adequate life insurance. Proper coverage could help pay off your mortgage, pay for your children's higher education and allow your family to continue its lifestyle.

Challenge #3: Protecting your income should you become temporarily disabled – If you were to become ill or temporarily disabled and could not work for a while, the disruption in your income could

jeopardize your family's living situation, or, at the least, lead to an inability to pay bills in a timely fashion. To protect against this threat, you may want to consider adding disability insurance. Your employer may offer a short-term disability policy as an employee benefit, but it may be insufficient, either in duration or in amount of coverage, so you might want to look at a private policy.

Challenge #4: Protecting your long-term investments from short-term needs – Life is full of unexpected expenses – a major car repair, a new furnace, a large bill from the dentist, and so on. If you did not have the money available to deal with these costs, you might be forced to dip into your long-term investments, such as your IRA or 401(k). Taking money from these accounts earlier than you intended could incur taxes and penalties, and, even more importantly, could reduce the amount of money you have available for retirement. To help protect these investments from short-term needs for

cash, try to build an emergency fund containing three to six months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in cash or a liquid account.

Challenge #5: Protecting your financial independence – You would probably do all you could to avoid ever becoming a burden to your grown children – which is why it's so important to maintain your financial independence throughout your life. One potential threat to this independence is the need for some type of long-term care, such as an extended nursing home stay, which can be extremely expensive. A financial professional can suggest protection strategies to help you prepared for these types of costs.

It can be challenging to keep your financial strategy intact – so do whatever it takes to protect it.

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.

from page 7

sources available including preventive screening, education, and community activities that offer health benefits," said Debra Stevens, the Director of Community Health at the Worcester County Health Department.

Worcester County's recent Community Health Assessment found that over one-third of adult residents are obese, one out of every eight have diabetes, one out of every ten experience food insecurity, and one out of every seven adults report poor physical or mental health on eight or more of the previous 30 days. This new project will educate residents about healthy eating, physical activity, stress manage-

ment, as well as promote local resources to help with adoption of healthy choices, and access to needed health screenings. Being active, eating healthy, not using tobacco, alcohol, or other illicit drugs, and practicing good stress management skills can improve overall health and reduce the risk of health problems and poor outcomes from diseases such as COVID and the flu. The project will include a media campaign, linkage to community resources, free community activity programs, and nutrition/cooking classes. Programs will be offered in person and virtually. WCHD plans to ensure residents are provided information on available resources to achieve a healthy lifestyle.

Tides for Ocean City Inlet

Day	High /Low	Tide Time
Th 15	High	12:23 AM
15	Low	6:14 AM
15	High	12:45 PM
15	Low	7:02 PM
F 16	High	1:17 AM
16	Low	7:09 AM
16	High	1:36 PM
16	Low	7:47 PM
Sa 17	High	2:13 AM
17	Low	8:07 AM
17	High	2:30 PM
17	Low	8:34 PM
Su 18	High	3:08 AM
18	Low	9:07 AM
18	High	3:24 PM
18	Low	9:22 PM
M 19	High	4:01 AM
19	Low	10:06 AM
19	High	4:17 PM
19	Low	10:12 PM
Tu 20	High	4:53 AM
20	Low	11:04 AM
20	High	5:09 PM
20	Low	11:02 PM
W 21	High	5:44 AM
21	Low	12:00 PM
21	High	6:01 PM
21	Low	11:54 PM



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