


# The Courier

January 11, 2023 Volume 23 Number 15

A photograph of an older man, Bill Hickey, standing in front of the open rear hatch of a silver SUV. The hatch is filled with several large, clear plastic bags, each containing a winter coat. Bill is wearing a dark vest over a light-colored long-sleeved shirt, khaki pants, and a baseball cap. He is smiling at the camera. The background shows a wooded area with bare trees and a clear blue sky.

**Delivery** — On January 2 **Bill Hickey** (pictured) and Bill Thompson delivered two carloads of winter coats to seven schools in Worcester County. The number of coats delivered 172, which is one half of the total coats (344) the Ocean City-Berlin Optimist Club delivered this year to schools.





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# OPA staff supports local families and nonprofits

Ocean Pines Association staff's annual holiday giving this year helped feed 20 local families and collected donations for several local nonprofits and charitable organizations.

Michelle Lane-Ross, administrative assistant for the General Manager, helped organize staff donations at Ocean Pines' central office.

She said the Association traditionally donates holiday dinners to 10

events. But with the help of staff and community it was a huge success!

"Every day I would see food being delivered by staff and watching our lobby fill with gifts around the tree and would feel so excited," Lane-Ross continued. "[On Wednesday] morning, all the items were picked up and I was just so joyful to see that we all came together to make this happen for those less fortunate. I always say that no matter how bad you think things are for yourself or your family, there is always someone else worse off and I am just thrilled that we could help."

Aquatics Director Kathleen Cook organized a similar angel tree at

the Sports Core Pool, sponsoring three families through a local church.

"It went well, as always," Cook said. "We live in a community that is so loving and generous."

Cook said the angel tree program means a lot to her and was something she first did in high school.

"It helped us truly understand how blessed we were and allowed us to see that wasn't the case for everyone," she said.

Cook took the concept to a former supervisor several years ago, and it became an annual tradition for the Aquatics Department.

"Once I presented it to my boss, it was agreed that we would develop a similar program," Cook said. "Now, I get to watch parents take angels with their children, and they are teaching their children the same lessons that we learned in high school."

"I am so humble for the phenomenal support that this community gives to this program," she added.

Jessica Conaway, an administrative assistant for the Recreation and Parks Department, collaborated with two local charitable campaigns.

The department for several years has helped the "Be a Santa to a Senior" program run by Home Instead Senior Care.

"This countrywide program brightens local seniors' hearts by giving them a gift they otherwise wouldn't have," Conaway said. "Crystal Heiser, coordinator of this program, said that this year almost 800 local seniors received gifts, with close to 200 coming from Ocean Pines area 'Santas.'"

"This cause is important because these seniors are asking for essentials – not for what they want," she continued. "And most of the 'Santas' that take a tag will tuck in a special treat or item that wasn't asked for to make the giving more personal."

Conaway and the Recreation and Parks Department also collected donations for Believe in Tomorrow's Children's House by the Sea.

"This program allows families with critically ill children the opportunity to get away, relax, and reconnect together in the midst of a child's treatment and recovery," Conaway said. "Donating items such as toys, books and puzzles helps the children feel more normal, at ease and relaxed while they are here at the beach. Wayne Littleton, the coordinator of

this program, is very appreciative of the donations the Ocean Pines community gives during the holiday season."

Littleton thanked Conaway for helping the program during the last three years, and all the Ocean Pines residents who took part.

"Because of the generosity and support of everyone, not only will we be able to have presents under the tree for every child checking in this weekend, but we will also be able to put toys in the welcome baskets of our children for the next few months," he said. "Thank you so much!"

## Anglers to meet

The Ocean Pines Anglers Club will meet on Saturday, January 14 at 9:30 a.m. in the Ocean Pines library. Come see an interesting and fun photo review of the kids' programs sponsored by the Anglers Club including Teach a Kid to Fish, Youth Fishing Contest and Believe in Tomorrow. Also, there will be updates on winter charter trips and fishing regulations. All are welcome.



local families in need. However, in working with the Worcester County Health Department this year, she said they found seven families in the immediate area, and another 13 in Worcester County.

"We thought we couldn't just leave 10 families without a holiday meal, so we decided to adopt all 20 families," Lane-Ross said. "It was quite an undertaking, but all employees pitched in. Each department was assigned a certain item and they all delivered."

Lane-Ross also helped organize an "angel tree" in the administration building, where each angel-shaped ornament represents a gift suggestion for a local family in need.

Once again, the Association worked with the Health Department.

"It was a single mom with three daughters. Between staff and the Ocean Pines community, we supplied many gifts for the family. I don't think they will be disappointed on Christmas morning," Lane-Ross said.

This was the first year Lane-Ross was tasked with running all the holiday giving related to Ocean Pines Administration.

"I was happy to take it on," she said. "It was a little tricky, since it was my first time taking on these




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# ‘Spec Tennis’ founder visits Ocean Pines Racquet Center

“Spec Tennis” inventor Nate Gross visited the Ocean Pines Racquet Center on December 21, where he spoke with players, signed autographs, and played several rounds of the new sport.



A tennis pro at the Belvedere Tennis Club in Tiburon, California, Gross invented Spec Tennis in 2016 by combining elements of tennis, racquetball, beach tennis, pop tennis, table tennis and pickleball.

“I played a little bit of paddle tennis in Venice Beach as a kid, and I was basically trying to play that in Northern California,” Gross said. “I was trying to play on pickleball courts with my dad, but the equipment we were using wasn’t quite right. The court was smaller, so we needed to slow it down.

So, I started playing around with different paddles and different balls.”

Gross said he settled on a platform tennis paddle and an orange-dot tennis ball, and the new sport evolved from there.

“I started having fun with it, and I invited some tennis friends out to play in a tournament and they seemed to have a lot of fun too. From there, it kind of went full steam ahead,” he said.

Spec Tennis became part of the regular offerings in Ocean Pines last year.

Gross said the advantage of the sport is that it’s easy to learn.

“You can have fun on day one – you don’t have to have private instruction,” he said. “You can also play with people at different levels, so families can play together, and husbands and wives can play together, just because it’s easier to find the sweet spot on the shorter paddle.

“It’s quick, so you can get a good workout in a short amount of time, and you can really play anywhere,” Gross continued. “They’re playing here on platform tennis courts, but you can play on pickleball courts or tennis

please see **visit** on page 8

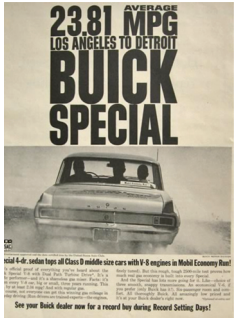
## Rearview Mirror / Chip Bertino

Linda Knight of Ocean Pines on her Buick Special as told to Chip Bertino.

My first car was a blue and white 1963 Buick Special that I bought used for \$850.

I remember going through the Baltimore Harbor Tunnel every day in the hot summertime for work at Ft Meade. Coming home during rush hour each evening, by the time I got to the toll booth my car had overheated. Being a young female, I always had someone to stop and help me fortunately. That year, Buick put an aluminum engine in the car. I’m not sure if they continued using an aluminum engine. I can’t imagine anyone wanting to purchase a car with one but what did I know about it? I didn’t know much about cars then and still don’t. My uncle saw the car in the Buick dealership’s used car lot and the mechanic said it “purred like a kitten”

It must have been a sick kitty!



# Blood Bank celebrates annual Blood Donor Month

Amid ongoing blood shortages, Blood Bank of Delmarva (BBD) remains committed to its mission to help save lives in our community. This month, BBD will honor donors, both old and new, during National Blood Donor Month.

The last few years have been challenging, as BBD faced multiple blood emergencies. This is part of a national trend, as blood donations have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Yet, demand for these lifesaving products is up. This month, the blood center is facing a new concern as the “triple-demic” of RSV, Flu and Covid-19 is threatening an already unstable blood supply. There has been an uptick in cancellations and missed appointments due to donors who are or are

concerned about getting sick.

“During these challenging times, it’s important that new, current and lapsed donors consider making an appointment to donate,” said Nicole Pineault, Director of Donor Resources for Blood Bank of Delmarva. “Every two seconds, someone is in need of blood. Patients rely on volunteer donors to help in their lifesaving treatments.”

Twenty-five percent of the blood supply is used by patients battling cancer and roughly 1,800 units of blood are used by pediatric patients across the country daily. In the weeks following the holiday season, maintaining a stable blood supply and building inventory is critical. One donation can save up to three lives in the community.

In celebration of National Blood Donor Month, all presenting donors through January 31 will be entered into weekly drawings for a chance to win an Apple or Google Watch.

Sixty-two percent of the U.S population is eligible to donate, but just three percent of the population donates. It takes less than an hour of someone’s time to save up to three lives. All members of the community are encouraged to join the elite group of lifesavers and donate blood. BBD especially needs O positive, O negative and B negative donors going into the New Year.

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# Babysitting

Through a confluence of events and varying family schedules, I wound up babysitting alone my just about four-month-old grandson Rhys. Even though it was for only a couple hours, it's been a very long time since I've been solely responsible for the care

For a moment, I must digress. There is an ongoing family story that I changed very few diapers when my children were babies. It's been said that the number of times I changed diapers can be counted on one hand. Whether that's true is open for debate.

Nonetheless, in this instance, there was no one to whom I could handoff the baby. We were on our own.

Now, in the history of filled diapers, this was a diaper of consequence. As Rhys lay in the Pack 'N Play, I went about the business at hand. He smiled and laughed.

I couldn't help think that his father had put him up to doing this on my watch. I was undeterred. He was quickly and cleanly changed. Success!

Afterwards we sat in the living room recliner. He didn't appear as exhausted as me. He soon made clear he

and feeding of such a tiny tot. Usually, my wife takes the lead and I play a supporting role which amounts to not much more than making funny faces to spur smiles from the little one. This time around, I was in the lead.

Before she left my wife gave me a list of instructions as well as a bottle preparation demonstration. As she walked out the front door, she said to call or text if there was a problem. I'm not sure if that comment was meant for me or Rhys.

In full disclosure, Rhys is a very good and very happy infant. He's the type of baby that lulls parents into thinking all babies are so good that they decide to have another.

Once alone, I placed Rhys in his infant chair atop the dining room table so he could watch and grab for the elephant and giraffe figures tied to the attached mobile. He was more attracted to the more colorful giraffe. I quickly made breakfast and joined him at the table. We talked. He made a lot of sounds between big smiles. He also... how should I put this delicately... he also toots a lot, or at least he did with me. Sometimes he scrunched up his face as he did. Such moments are cute when emanating from an infant.

Finishing my breakfast, I picked him up and held him as I scanned the paper. When he finally drifted off, I called my mother. During our conversation, Rhys started squirming. His face contorted in deep shades of red. His eyes popped open. It was very clear very quickly exactly what he was doing. The call of nature had been answered. I hung up with my mother to handle the situation.



was hungry. With renewed energy and purpose, I quickly prepared his bottle which he downed in short order. He finished. He burped - several small ones in quick succession. Then there was a major eruption accompanied by a formula stream that projected onto my hand and down my sleeve. This was followed by him giving me a big smile. After cleaning myself off, we sat again in the recliner and he quickly nodded off. His face was content and his body calm.

A bit later, my wife returned followed by my daughter-in-law shortly thereafter, bringing to a close my babysitting time. I admit, I enjoyed myself despite the projected formula flow and the diaper of consequence. It's good to be a grandfather.

## It's All About. . .

By **Chip Bertino**

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# Ocean Pines Skatepark closed because of vandalism

Because of damage done to equipment and facilities at the Ocean Pines Skate Park, the Association has temporarily closed the park.

During that time, Ocean Pines will remove the damaged property, clean the area, and replace the damaged security cameras.

Recreation and Parks Director Debbie Donahue said the intention is to reopen the park after the repairs have been completed.

"While we're making necessary repairs, the rules sign will be replaced, and the sponsor sign will be upgraded and replaced. New opening and closing times will be posted, and signs mandating 'no trespassing' during off hours will be posted as well," Donahue said.

Donahue said the skate park is monitored by the Ocean Pines Police Department. She said if the vandalism continues, the Police Department will remove the parties involved and potentially ban them from the skatepark permanently. Police will also monitor the park for trespassers during the posted hours when the park is closed.

"Rec and Parks wants to be able to have a nice facility for Ocean Pines members. However, with the continued behavior it does not make sense to upgrade the facility or spend the money needed to continue to replace damaged property," she said.

"Closing the park is not something

we want to do," Donahue continued. "Let's work together to continue to have a nice facility, and to be able to add more items to the park and do any necessary upgrades."

General Manager John Viola said there is a cost involved in continued upkeep of the skatepark, and that must be passed on to all Association members.

"It's unfortunate, and you never want to see something like this," he said. "We also want to remind people that we have posted rules at the park, and those are for the safety of those using the park and the safety of those around them. We hope everyone will respect the rules of this facility, so we can continue to operate it for the benefit of our homeowners and residents," Viola said.

Skaters must complete a signed waiver to enter and skate in the park. All skaters under the age of 18 must have the waiver signed by a parent or legal guardian in the presence of Ocean Pines Recreations and Parks staff or Ocean Pines Police staff.

Skaters should wear safety gear. Helmets are mandatory. Elbow and knee pads are recommended. Shirts and shoes are required.

The park is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

For more information about the Ocean Pines Skatepark, visit [www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/skate-park](http://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/skate-park).

## Statement on Janasek lawsuit settlement

The following is a statement from the Ocean Pines Board of Directors:

*The Ocean Pines Association has agreed in principle to a settlement in the Thomas Janasek vs. Ocean Pines Association, Inc., et al. case. Specific terms and conditions of a proposed settlement were reviewed by counsel for both parties. The amount of the financial payout to the plaintiff was proposed and agreed to by the insurance carrier for OPA. The final details and related paperwork are in progress and will be finalized over the next several weeks.*

## Expert, grant writer to help with OPA and OPVFD capital campaign

The Ocean Pines Association and Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department have contracted with a fundraising expert and hired a grant writer to work on the capital campaign for a new south fire station.

Stacey Weisner, who led successful fundraising campaigns for the Salisbury Zoo and Delmarva Discovery Museum, will lead the capital campaign for OPA and OPVFD.

Additionally, Valerie Mann, who has more than 40 years of experience in the grant writing field, will assist OPA and OPVFD in grant research and writing. She will also explore the possibility of other grant opportunities related to infrastructure and public safety.

## OPA admin lobby to close for renovations

The Ocean Pines Administration Building lobby will be closed the week of Monday, Jan. 9 for scheduled renovations.

Because of that, homeowners and residents will not be able to access the lobby for transactions. There will not be an interruption in work during that time by Association staff, and most transactions can be completed over the phone. To contact the membership office, call 410-641-7717 or email [rmeyer@oceanpines.org](mailto:rmeyer@oceanpines.org).

## Caregiver support group meetings expand

Because many people have joined the Caregiver Support Group, the meeting times have been expanded. The group will continue to meet on the second and fourth Thursdays in the Ocean Pines library. The start times will remain at 3 p.m. but the meeting will now last until 4:30 p.m. so that everyone can share and participate.

If you provide care for a loved one, please know you are not alone. Many neighbors are providing care and seek to share their experiences and ideas for assistance. The meetings are private and confidential. For additional information, contact Margaret White at Salisbury MAC at 410-742-0505 ext. 128 or by email at [mwhite@macinc.org](mailto:mwhite@macinc.org).

## Courier Almanac

United States Surgeon General Luther Terry knew his report was a bombshell. He intentionally chose to release it on January 11, 1964, a Saturday, so as to limit its immediate effects on the stock market. It was on this date that, on behalf of the U.S. Government, Terry announced a definitive link between smoking and cancer.

Though plants might not seem like the first thing individuals think of when they ponder long-term investments, perennials can be just that. The home and garden experts at HGTV note that some perennials can live for a very long time. For example, according to HGTV, the colorful flowering plant peony, despite a blooming season that usually lasts just seven to 10 days, has been known to survive for 70 to 100 years. Hostas are another popular perennial because they require little maintenance, and that extra free time can add up over the course of the hosta's life, which can exceed 15 years. Long-living perennials are not necessarily unusual, but gardeners should know that many perennials, and particularly those characterized as "short-lived," tend to live around three years.



The  
Courier

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# Art League to host Tindley celebration

As part of Ocean City's "Dreamfest 2023," the Art League of Ocean City will host a free party honoring the life and accomplishments of Berlin native Rev. Dr. Charles Tindley on Saturday, January 14, 3p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Ocean City Center for the Arts, 502 94<sup>th</sup> St.



The Town of Ocean City will honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during Dreamfest weekend, January 13-15, with a three-day music event held at the Performing Arts Center. Dreamfest celebrates Rhythm & Blues by presenting musical acts The B.B. King Experience featuring Claudette King, Thomas McClary's Commodores Experience, and The Spinners.

Guests who attend the Tindley party at the Arts Center will receive a 2-for-1 coupon good for ticket discounts to the R&B concerts at the Performing Arts Center.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for anyone who wants to celebrate MLK weekend to come to the Arts Center and enjoy our party, receive your 2-for-1 coupon to the concerts at the Performing Arts Center, and then have time for dinner and the shows," Rina Thaler, executive director of the Art League, said.

During the Saturday event, the Art League will honor the legacy of Rev. Tindley, the native son who not only embodied the spirit of what drove Dr. King and others like him forward through the civil rights struggle but also wrote many of the songs that are still sung today. The Arts Center party will include live music, original artwork, films, videos, and refreshments and is free and open to the public.

Clifton Henry Dennis, Jr., who hosts the show "The Gospel Train" on Delmarva Public Media's WESM 91.3 on Sunday mornings, will emcee music for the event. Musician Bryan Russo will perform with the Tindley Family Choir — made up of Tindley's actual descendants — a number of songs including several written by Rev. Tindley.

Russo will also present the video for "Mr. Tindley," the song he wrote

that kickstarted the grassroots effort in Berlin for a mural honoring the composer. Additionally, film previews curated from the upcoming Ocean City Film Festival in March will be screened.

Artwork with the theme "I Have a Dream" created by the students of Most Blessed Sacrament School in Ocean Pines will be on display.

Rev. Tindley was born in Berlin in 1851, a freeborn son of a slave. He fought through many adversities but was determined to get an education and become a preacher. By the time of his death in 1933, Tindley had become known as the "Prince of Preachers" and was considered one of the founding fathers of gospel music. His hymn, "I'll Overcome Someday," was the direct inspiration for the civil rights anthem, "We Shall Overcome."

The Ocean City Center for the Arts at 502 94<sup>th</sup> St. is open daily until 4 p.m., and admission is always free. More information is available at OCart.org or by calling 410-524-9433.

## Promise scholarship helps cover tuition at Wor-Wic

If paying for college sounds stressful, there is some good news. Students on the Lower Eastern Shore may be eligible for the Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship, which provides eligible students with up to \$5,000 to cover remaining tuition and mandatory fee expenses after applying financial aid.

A scholarship information session will take place Tuesday, January 17 at 6 p.m. at Guerrieri Hall at Wor-Wic Community College in Salisbury.

"The Promise scholarship has allowed me to complete my nursing degree almost completely debt free," said Wor-Wic Community College student Miranda Atkins. "Not having to stress about how I was going to pay for school is a huge relief as well. I haven't had to overwork myself while in nursing school just to pay for college. I have been able to focus on studying and getting all of my assignments completed on time."

"We encourage all students to apply," said Dr. Bryan Newton, vice president for enrollment management and student services at Wor-Wic. "It's a tremendous opportunity to complete your education and graduate debt-free."

But there is one key deadline students need to meet: They must submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 1.

"My advice for students interested in applying for the scholarship is to just do it," Atkins said. "It's a very easy application and it doesn't hurt to try. Even if you're not accepted one year, the next year you may be accepted, which was what happened in my case. It's completely free to apply, and it will pay off in the end even if you don't get the full amount of tuition covered — anything helps."

The scholarship has no age limitation, so high school seniors can apply as well as anyone who has put off working on a degree for financial reasons. Students can get guidance at [www.worwic.edu/Pay-For-College](http://www.worwic.edu/Pay-For-College), or by calling the financial aid office at 410-334-2978.



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## Boating course offered

The US Coast Guard Auxiliary is offering a virtual Maryland Basic Boating Safety Course on February 7, 8, and 9 between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. The cost is \$20 for all three evenings. Register or get more information by calling Barry Cohen at 410-935-4807 or -mail CGAUXOC@Gmail.com.

## Virtual poetry reading to be held

Wor-Wic Community College is inviting the public to a free virtual poetry reading with Jennifer Givhan on Monday, January 30, at 7 p.m., via Zoom.

Givhan is a Mexican-American and indigenous poet, novelist and transformational coach from the southwestern desert and the recipient of a poetry fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. She has a master's degree from California State University Fullerton and a master in fine arts from Warren Wilson College in Ashville, N.C. She is the author of five full-length poetry collections, including "Rosa's Einstein" and her most recent collection, "Belly to the Brutal." Her novel "Trinity Sight" won the 2020 Southwest Book Award.

Visit the events section of [www.worwic.edu](http://www.worwic.edu) for more information.

## RWWC to meet

The Republican Women of Worcester County will meet Thursday, January 12 at the Ocean City Golf Club, located at 11401 Country Club Rd, Berlin, MD. Guest speakers will be new Worcester County Commissioners Caryn Abbot and Eric Fiori. Doors open at 10:30 am and the meeting begins at 11 am. To make a reservation or for more information, please go to [gopwomenofwc@gmail.com](mailto:gopwomenofwc@gmail.com).



## Master Gardener visits Kiwanis

Local gardener, Carol Cross, was the speaker at the weekly Wednesday meeting of the Kiwanis Club of Greater Ocean Pines-Ocean City on January 4. Carol comes from a conventional farming family, the Shockley Farm that dates to 1891. Cross Farms does hydroponic and conventional ground farming. Crops are organic and the farm is a Maryland Certified Farm which allows them to supply schools with fresh fruits and vegetables. They offer school tours of the farm starting in April. For more information call 410-251-6824.

Pictured above (L-R) are Kiwanis Club President **Bob Wolfing** and **Carol Cross**.

visit  
from page 4

courts – really any hard surface.”

Gross said the name “didn’t really have a meaning at first.”

“I just wanted a one-syllable name like ‘spec,’ but now it’s come to take on a meaning of ‘tennis, with specifications for anybody,” he said. “You can just be watching from the bench and come on and have a good amount of success, unlike regular tennis where it might take a long time with lessons and drilling, before you feel like you’re able to play in a real game.”

Gross said the response to Spec Tennis has been amazing.

“We just had our first U.S. Open in Coral Springs, Florida a couple of

weeks ago, and there were about 75 players there,” he said. “And now to come out here [in Ocean Pines] and see all these banners up and people playing it, it’s pretty cool!”

Karen Kaplan started organizing Spec Tennis clinics in Ocean Pines last summer.

“I was so happy that the founder of Spec Tennis could pay us a visit today. Since we’ve introduced Spec Tennis to the platform tennis courts, our membership has grown by a third and we have a new game for people to play. It’s great for all abilities, so if you used to play or want to play a racquet sport, come on down and join us!”

For more information on Spec Tennis in Ocean Pines, visit [www.ocean-pines.org/web/pages/spec-tennis](http://www.ocean-pines.org/web/pages/spec-tennis).

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## We've come a long way

Happy New Year to all! This year, rather than offering New Year's resolutions, I'd like to use my January column to raise our awareness of the many innovations and challenges in recreational boating that have and are still evolving.

Without getting into a 'when I was a boy' ramble, I ask you to look around your boat (virtually this time of year) and consider what wasn't there 50 years ago or has undergone major improvements: Radars, global positioning system (GPS) navigation, real-time plotters, digital depth gauges with alarms, bow thrusters, emergency distress transmitters (EPIRB and PLB), electronic signal flare beacon light that replace flares, nontoxic bottom paint, user friendly boat trailers, and countless water toys.

Even the hull itself has been significantly improved by switching from wood to aluminum and fiberglass. Wooden boats are more romantic icons of yesteryear owned by folks who have too much time on their hands. Today's recreational boater is more interested in getting out on the water. The constant scrubbing and varnishing and teaking of the decks and the occasional calking of a leaking seam or replacing a rotted board requires a special mindset or an over-funded 401k.

Lines too have undergone significant improvement. Natural fiber-based materials like hemp and cotton that suffer a losing battle against salt and ultraviolet light have given way to more versatile, more durable materials like nylon and polyester and polyethylene that stretch where necessary to absorb shock or don't stretch to keep a sailboat's sails taut or float to allow a swimmer to be rescued.

On the water navigation aids have also come a long way. Lighthouses, for the most part, have been relegated to artistic calendar photos and the Coast Guard's early Loran-C electronic beacon system has been replaced by GPS, radars, and plotters plus cellphones and internet when they are available.

Likewise, real-time weather updates from solar powered buoys and improved weather forecasting by NOAA have reduced the chances of getting caught in a bad situation.

Microcomputers embedded in today's marine motors track usage and prompt maintenance before you have one of those 'Ah shucks!' moments out at the Baltimore canyon.

Of course, it should be obvious that if you don't listen to NOAA or heed the maintenance alarms, you deserve the place in the boat yard next to that old timer who is working on his wooden boat.

We have also come a long way in the area of marine safety. Now every state requires recreational boaters to have, in essence, a driver's license much like what is required to operate a motor vehicle. This maturing in the recreation boating world is really not that much different than the automobile's evolution. When the first horseless carriages appeared, there were no stop signs, speed limits, or white lines down the middle of the road since the roads weren't paved; but that quickly changed as the volume of cars increased and rules-of-the-road were established. One of those rules was the requirement to know the rules and pass a test to prove it.

With about 12 million recreational boats in the US, you can understand that there is now a need to establish and enforce rules and qualifications to ensure public safety on the water. We are well past the horseless carriage era in recreational boating and we have the accident and fatality statistics to prove it.

The US Power Squadron and the US Coast Guard Auxiliary are the authorized organizations that provide the Safe Boating Class, administer the test, and issue the operator's certificate. Examples of some of the subjects that are addressed in the Safe Boating Class include speed limits, passing rules, buoy standardization, life jacket requirements, boating under the influence (BUI) law, as well as basic boat handling.

Even if you have an operating cer-

tificate for boating, you should consider sitting through Safe Boating Class again because it's an ever-maturing discipline. In just the last couple years, we have seen improvements in life jacket specifications, fire extinguisher definitions, the introduction of strobe light technology to replace the dangerous incendiary flares, as well as emergency calling systems like Digital Selective Calling on marine radios and the relatively new Rescue 21 system that enables the Coast Guard to locate the source of a 'May Day' call by triangulation.

Another ongoing concern for conscientious recreational boaters should be our growing environmental awareness. The oceans are vast and challenging but the world is surprising small and even more challenging. We can't fix everything but we, the recreational boat community, can do our part. We can adhere to legal fishing regulations, avoid the introduction of invasive species into the local waters, stop irresponsible dumping, and clean up oil spills.

Even kicking up the bottom when you speed through shallow water or powering your grounded boat off a sand bar damages the natural habitat by bruising the marine vegetation or choking it with clouds of muck. Try to keep a couple feet of depth below your prop and push off, not power off, the bottom when you run aground.

Virginia Slims used to advertise that, "You've come a long way, baby," to convince women to smoke cigarettes. Fortunately, their advertisement has gone the way of Loran-C. We have come a long way and the trip is not over. Happy New Year.

Stay safe. Stay dry.

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

### Tides for Ocean City Inlet

Day	High /Low	Tide Time
Th 12	Low	4:49 AM
12	High	11:21 AM
12	Low	5:30 PM
12	High	11:43 PM
F 13	Low	5:39 AM
13	High	12:02 PM
13	Low	6:12 PM
Sa 14	High	12:31 AM
14	Low	6:33 AM
14	High	12:49 PM
14	Low	6:56 PM
Su 15	High	1:25 AM
15	Low	7:32 AM
15	High	1:42 PM
15	Low	7:45 PM
M 16	High	2:24 AM
16	Low	8:34 AM
16	High	2:42 PM
16	Low	8:38 PM
Tu 17	High	3:25 AM
17	Low	9:38 AM
17	High	3:43 PM
17	Low	9:35 PM
W 18	High	4:24 AM
18	Low	10:42 AM
18	High	4:42 PM
18	Low	10:34 PM

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

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

# How to care for wild birds this winter

The arrival of winter forces everyone to confront the changes synonymous with the season, and local wildlife is no exception. Low temperatures, harsh winter storms and a scarcity of food can make it challenging for wildlife, including birds, to thrive throughout the winter.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Put shallow water sources around so birds can drink. Replace them frequently if water freezes.

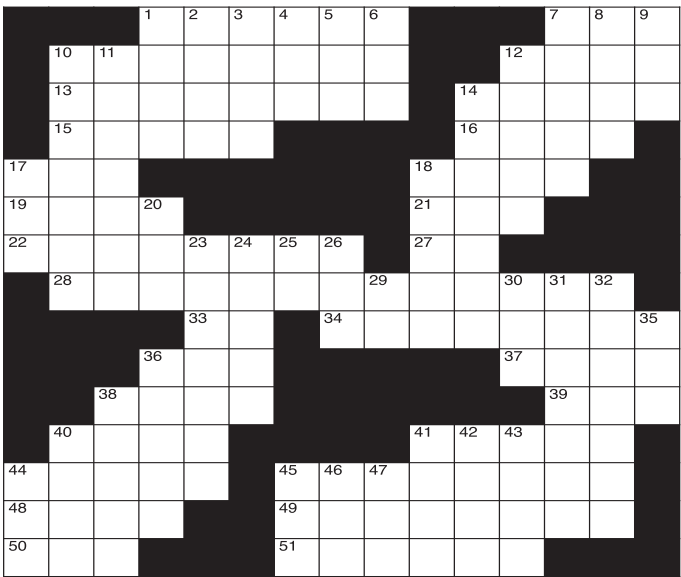
Wild birds can benefit from some help when the temperatures start to drop in winter.



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

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

Another way of keeping warm is building up fat as an insulator and energy source. The Audubon Society says more than 10 percent of some birds' winter body weight may be fat. That



### CLUES ACROSS

1. Respiratory disorder

7. Bulgarian mountain peak

10. Group of important people

12. South American nation

13. Amazes

14. \_\_\_-Castell, makers of pens

15. Perlman and Seehorn are two

16. Early medieval alphabet

17. Legislator (slang)

18. Tasty crustacean

19. Course of action

21. Airborne (abbr.)

22. Permanent church appointment

27. Larry and Curly's pal
28. Famed American journalist

33. 12th letter of Greek alphabet

34. In a way, vanished

36. Afflict in mind or body

37. Egyptian Sun god

38. Source of the Blue Nile

39. Egyptian unit of weight

40. Be the source of pain

41. Esteemed award \_\_\_ d'Or

44. Partner to pains

45. Deep blue

48. No longer living

49. Country in the UK

50. Not even

51. Arizona city

### CLUES DOWN

1. Wager

2. Classical portico

3. As a result

4. Bird

5. A type of "Squad"

6. Autonomic nervous system

7. Dish with food on a stick

8. City northwest of Provo

9. C. European river

10. One out of jail

11. Henry Clay estate

12. Heathen

14. Refrained

17. Parts per billion (abbr.)

18. "The Stranger" author

20. Not old

23. Periods of starvation

24. Language of tribe in India
25. Savings account

26. Pitching stat

29. Megabyte

30. Ribonucleic acid

31. A place to put your feet

32. The fun part of a week

35. We all have our own

36. Partner to "oohed"

38. African nation

40. Breezed through

41. Sets out

42. Other

43. Not fattening

44. "Much \_\_\_ about nothing"

45. Central Time

46. Former EU monetary unit

47. Charles S. Dutton sitcom



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Answers for December 21



## Astronomy & Spaceflight

By Douglas Hemmick, Ph.D.



NASA's space mission Artemis-1 has successfully completed a thrilling 25-day trip, testing its newest systems designed to carry astronauts back to the lunar surface. Blast off occurred in the wee hours of November 16 at Kennedy Space Center in Florida and the splash down occurred off the coast of Baja, California on December 11.

Traveling quickly from the Earth



Lift off at Kennedy Space Center



Lunar Surface



Splashdown near Baja, CA

to the moon requires a hefty rocket. The Artemis 1 launch was powered by NASA's Space Launch System (SLS), which provided an incredible 8.8 million pounds of thrust. The SLS is the most powerful rocket ever to launch into space, exceeding the Space Shuttle and the iconic Saturn V of the Apollo era. November 16 marked the inaugural liftoff of this amazing rocket. The Orion capsule has been tested in the past, but has never taken such an extensive journey.

The drama following the take-off progressed rather quickly. Within about eight and one-half minutes, the core stage of the rocket was jettisoned when the mission attained Earth orbit. After about 90 minutes, with Orion's speed reaching about 22,600 mph, the upper rocket stage was discarded. At this speed, the spacecraft could break free from Earth's gravity and begin its trip to the moon, about 239,000 miles away. By comparison, the International Space Station (ISS) is much closer, orbiting just 248 miles above Earth.

The Orion capsule measures about 33 percent larger in diameter than the Apollo craft. Orion will carry four astronauts, instead of three, and has about twice the earlier capsule's weight-carrying capacity. Modern instrumentation is featured, along with a redundant set of rocket engines for added safety. Orion's guidance and propulsion is provided by a separate unit, the "European-built Service Module." The "ESM" also provides the capsule with air, water and electrical power.

When Orion arrived at the moon on November 21, it had flown more than 950 times farther than the International Space Station.

The capsule flew as close as 80 miles above the surface, in preparation for a lunar orbit called the "distant retrograde orbit" or DRO. "Retrograde" refers to circling the moon in a direction opposite to the moon's own orbit about the Earth. The term "distant" recognizes that Orion's orbit also stretched to a

maximum of about 40,000 miles, at its farthest from the lunar surface.

On November 28, the intrepid Orion craft reached its maximum distance from Earth, at 268,553 miles. NASA and space fans are excited because this breaks the Apollo 13 record for the greatest distance achieved by a human-rated craft.

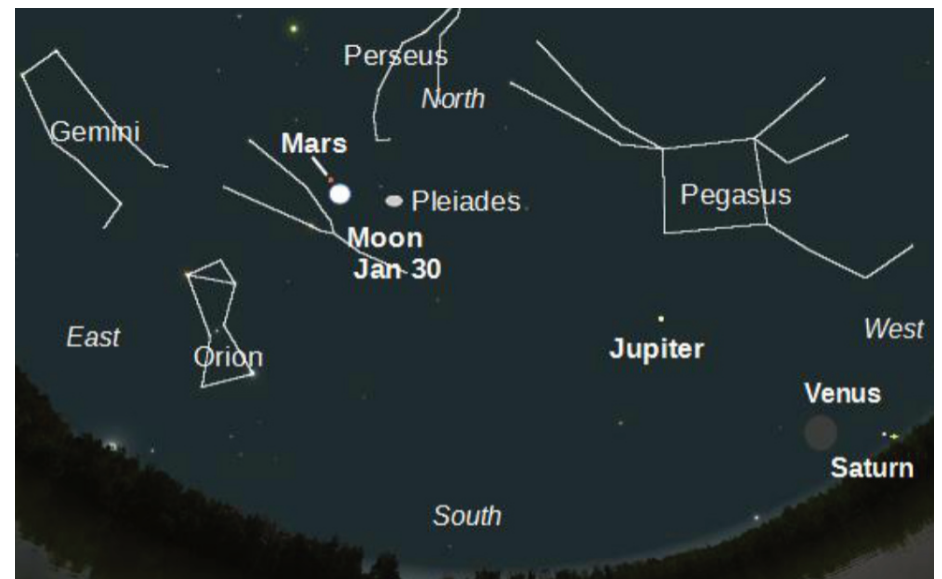
To start its homeward trip, Orion required two more engine firings to adjust its motion. These December 1 and December 5 burns produced another high-speed flyby above the lunar surface, and established Orion's trajectory for return to mother Earth, the final leg of this space adventure.

Safely landing was the final challenge for the spacecraft.

had mannequins aboard to collect personal exposure data. Detectors collected radiation, acceleration and vibration measurements to assess the effectiveness of special protective gear.

NASA Administrator Bill Nelson described the Artemis-1 success: "The whole vehicle, the rocket, the European participation in the support module, the spacecraft itself, Orion, performing so well.... we'll be up to our ears in data."

In January the bright planet Venus appears in the southwest, as early as 5 p.m. Stargazers must look quickly since the planet approaches the horizon after 5:30 p.m. On January 23, Venus, Saturn and the moon form an early evening "trio"



Astronomy hobbyists are well aware of the fact that asteroids while falling to Earth, will burn and break into pieces as they speed into its dense atmosphere. With Orion coming back at 24,464 miles per hour, temperatures of 5,000 F degrees were expected. Orion's specially designed heat shield succeeded in protecting it from these harsh conditions.

Final splashdown took place December 11, west of California's Baja Peninsula. The craft was picked up by the Navy ship *USS Portland*.

While the Orion capsule did not carry astronauts for this mission, it

spanning four degrees.

At about 5:45 p.m., the full night sky features the V-shaped Taurus the Bull, an interesting target. Taurus is well-known for the "Pleiades" cluster, a small faint patch north of the V. Mars is also located in Taurus, all month.

On the night of January 30-31, Mars and the moon will have another "close rendezvous" coming within one-half degree. Some locations in southern US will observe the red planet completely blocked by the moon.

Wishing good luck and clear skies to all stargazers.



**HEALTH WATCH**

# The value of volunteering as a part of your everyday life

By **Ann Hamilton***President of the Atlantic General*

For many reasons, fewer adults are making time to volunteer these days. Statistics show that volunteering in the United States has declined to the lowest rate since 2002.

Many factors go into this decline, however some of us might not realize how important giving our time really is. The returns on volunteering far outweigh the time invested. It doesn't have to be an enormous amount of hours as just one hour within a twelve month period can help.

Volunteers live longer, healthier, and happier lives. Studies have shown that it can be even more beneficial for your health than exercising and dieting. Most people that do volunteer later in life were the very ones that have always volunteered. If you haven't been a volunteer in the past, it is never too late to start.

Why is volunteering so beneficial for you? One reason is that loneliness is at an all-time high, especially, since there have been so many changes after the pandemic. Many of us have online connections or phone friends that we share our lives with but we are not gathering in person like we did in the past. Consequently, one in three people over the age of 45 categorize themselves as lonely.

Sharing a passion while working alongside others develops a bond and therefore creates a relationship within that organization that is contagious. Children who volunteer with family members are much more likely to become volunteers as adults and live happier and healthier lives.

Volunteering is not only good for the individual, but it is also good for the world. As volunteers, we often fill in the gaps where our government programs and our businesses can't. Sometimes these volunteer opportunities provide support that money cannot buy. Human contact and caring comes without a price tag and is of high value.

The truth is that we are not sure why volunteering has such a great benefit to those who serve. When you give

it some thought though, when we do volunteer, it is usually someplace that has special meaning.

People choose to spend time in places that are near and dear to their hearts.

When volunteers at Atlantic General Hospital are asked why they volunteer there, they often state that they have had loved ones who were well cared for within the hospital and want to return the favor.

Others might choose to work with children, their churches or our local homeless or animal shelter. It can provide your life with a sense of purpose, and fill your time if you are looking for a meaningful filler.

Wherever you consider volunteer-

*Volunteers live longer,  
healthier and happier lives.*

ing I can almost guarantee that you will get back so much more than you give!

We want you to become a volunteer, too. Volunteering at Atlantic General Hospital is a great chance to interact with our community, to add variety to your life, and to use your skills and interests to help others. We need volunteers to help in all areas of the hospital system and Thrift Shop. A volunteer might greet people, visit patients, run errands for staff, process and sort mail, work at the information desk, help with administrative tasks, sort, stock and sell items in the AGH thrift shop.

We urge you to take the next step at Atlantic General Hospital. Put your interests into action and help others at the same time. To learn more about how you can get involved, come visit us at our open house on January 18 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the hospital cafeteria. You can also call 410-641-9678 or visit [www.atlanticgeneral.org/volunteer](http://www.atlanticgeneral.org/volunteer) for information and an application.

*Ann Hamilton is the current President of the Auxiliary for 2022-23, has volunteered since 2011, and loved every minute of it!*



Maryland Broadband Cooperative presents a USAC reimbursement check for \$193,050 to Atlantic General Hospital as part of a federal program to offset high speed internet expenses for rural not-for-profit hospitals. From left: **Jonathan Bauer**, AGH vice president of information services; **Don Owrey**, president and CEO of Atlantic General Hospital; **Charlotte Cathell**, chair of the AGH Board of Trustees; **Chip Bertino**, president of the Worcester County Commissioners; **Jeremey Sweeney**, IT manager at Atlantic General Hospital; **Drew Van Dopp**, president and CEO of the Maryland Broadband Cooperative; and **Tim Hayes**, Maryland Broadband Cooperative's vice president of finance.

## AGH secures broadband reimbursement

Atlantic General Hospital recently secured \$193,050 from a federal program that allows not-for-profit healthcare organizations serving rural areas to apply for a 65% discount on eligible broadband services.

The reimbursement, which comes from a Federal Communications Commission fund via the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), is made possible by telecommunications service providers – like those who are members of the Maryland Broadband Cooperative (MDBC) – that pay into the fund to support rural healthcare facilities in bringing world-class healthcare to their patients and families through increased connectivity.

MDBC has provided both lit services and dark fiber (fiber-optic infrastructure not yet in use) to Atlantic General, which allows for the expansion of existing services and telehealth opportunities.

MDBC began the process to construct fiber-optic backbones in strategic locations across the Eastern Shore in 2007 through the support of the Tri-Council of the Lower Eastern Shore in conjunction with the Mid-Shore Regional Council. The first to be completed was on Rt. 113, from Pocomoke, Md., to Berlin and continuing to the Delaware border.

"If not for the vision and effort of

the Tri-County Councils, it would not have been possible for us to reach Atlantic General Hospital and to have fostered this great service partnership we've had for most of the last decade," said Drew Van Dopp, president & CEO of MDBC.

Installing broadband fiber in Worcester County allowed Atlantic General to implement its first electronic medical records system in the provider practices in 2008 and execute subsequent upgrades connecting all of its facilities, which requires the secure exchange of large amounts of data at high speeds to function properly.

"We cannot stress enough the incredible impact the efforts of the Tri-County Councils and the Maryland Broadband Cooperative have had on clinical practice and patient care," said Jonathan Bauer, vice president of information services at Atlantic General. "This reimbursement from USAC helps make broadband internet service more affordable for our organization, thereby reducing the cost of patient care."

Atlantic General Hospital worked with Network Better, a network and telecommunications professional management company, through 2022 to identify and successfully apply for the USAC dollars.



# Thinking of Volunteering?



Wed., Jan. 18,  
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1 - 3 p.m. | AGH Cafeteria

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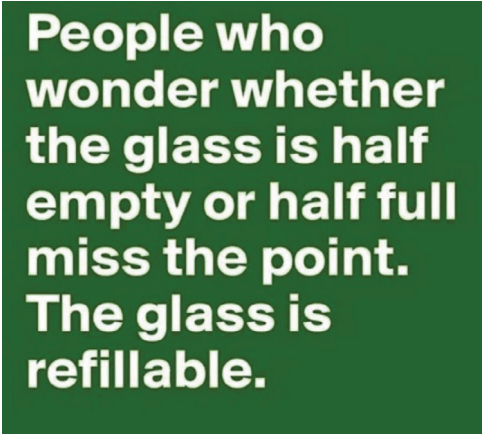
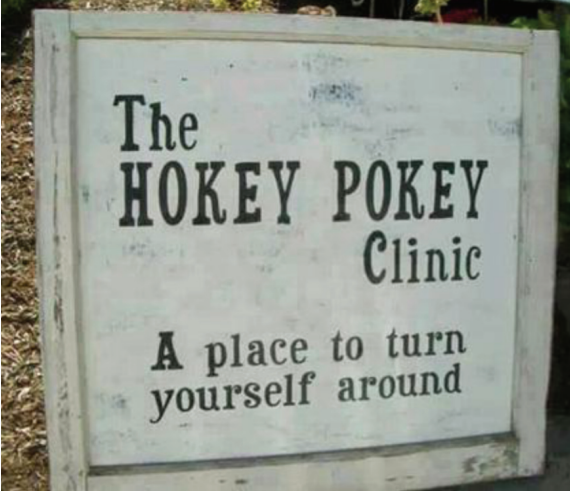
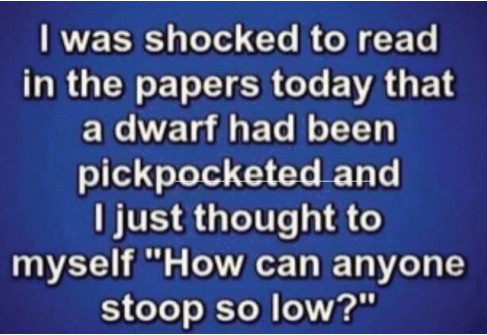
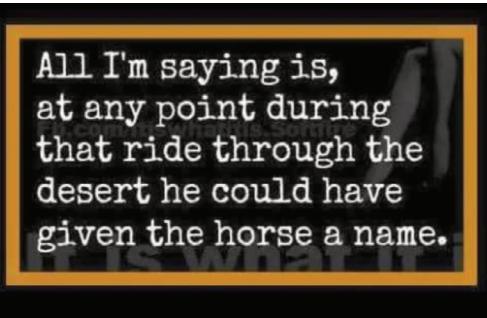
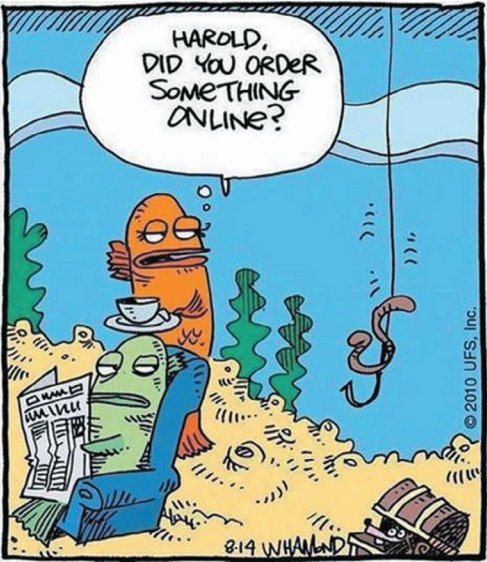
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*Some things to think about*

Gathered from the internet by **Jack Barnes**



**Last Will and Testament**

His nurse, his wife, his daughter and two sons, are with him. He asks for two witnesses to be present and a camcorder be in place to record his last wishes. When all is ready, he begins to speak.

"My son, Sam, I want you to take the Ocean Reef houses."

"My daughter Sybil, you take the apartments between mile markers 100 and Tavernier."

"My son, Jamie, I want you to take the offices over in the Marathon Government Center."

"Sarah, my dear wife, please take all the residential buildings on the bay side on Blackwater Sound."

The nurse and witnesses are blown away as they did not realize his extensive holdings, and as Doug slips away, the nurse says:

"Mrs. Boone, your husband must have been such a hard-working man to have accumulated all this property."

The wife replies, "He has a paper route."



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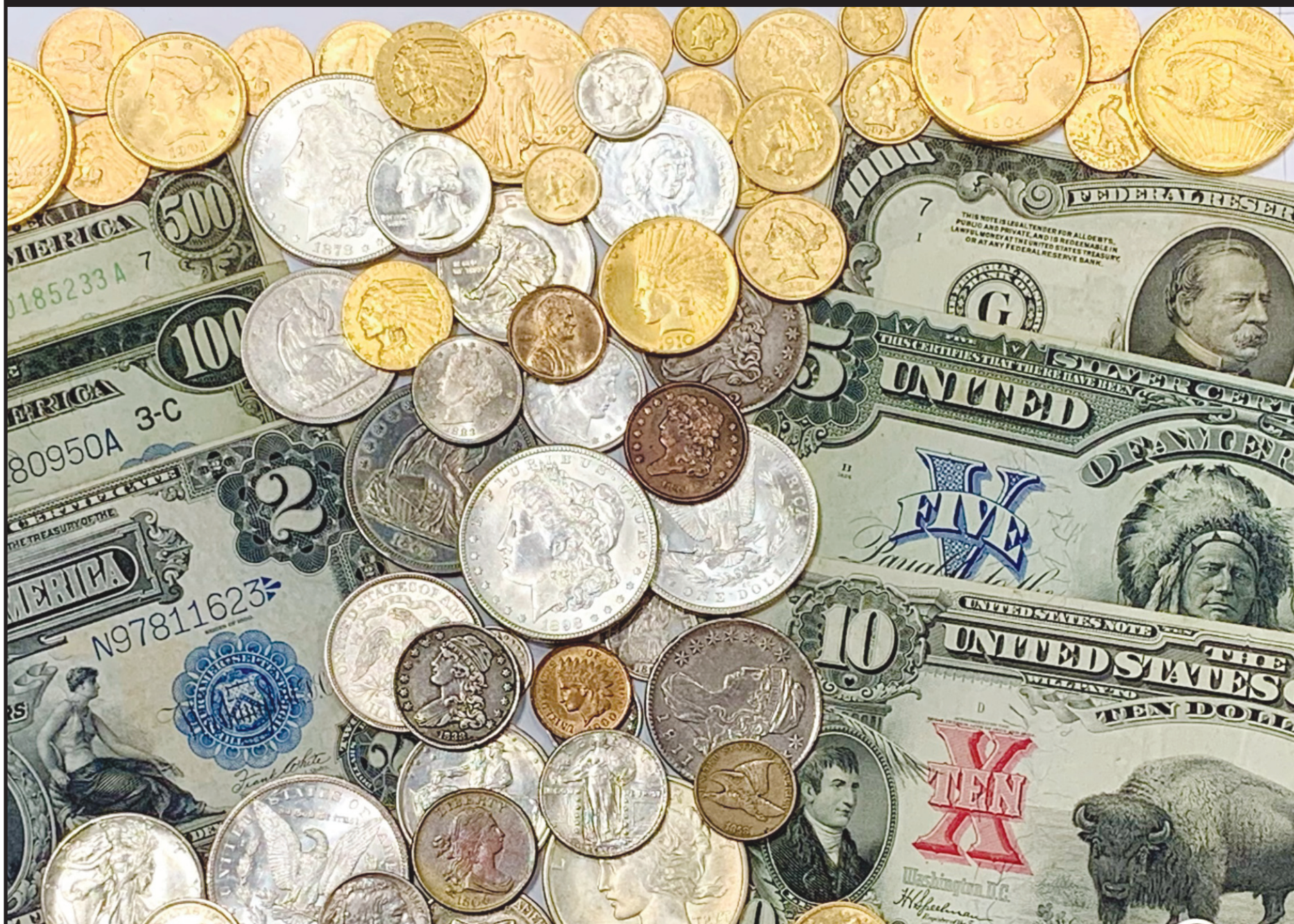
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