

The Courier

September 6, 2023 Volume 24 Number 1



New flag - When a summer storm blew through the region, the strong winds left in tatters the Marine Corps flag that Stuart Smith was flying at his house in West Ocean City. Smith is a 97-year-old veteran who served in Korea, where he was wounded and received the Purple Heart. His flag was replaced recently by the First State Detachment of the Marine Corps League after American Legion member Harry Rey learned Smith could not replace it. Harry turned to the First State Marines and soon Smith had a new USMC flag flying.

Above are First State Detachment Commandant **Al Soto**, **Harry Rey**, **Stuart Smith**, and Detachment past commander **Bob Broderick** displaying the flag he was given.

More information on the First State Detachment can be found at www.firststatemarines.org. More information about Ocean City American Legion Post 166 can be found at www.aLpost166.org.

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OPA continues to post strong financial returns

The overall financial picture for Ocean Pines Association remains strong, based on the 2023 annual meeting held September 26.

Senior Executive Office Manager Linda Martin and Finance Director Steve Phillips, in presenting the report, detailed the fifth consecutive year with a positive variance to budget, and the third-straight year with a favorability greater than \$1 million.

The Association finished fiscal year 2023 roughly \$1.1 million favorable to budget, according to Martin.

She said about half that was based on the positive performance by amenities, with Golf favorable to budget by \$268,000, combined food and beverage favorable by \$150,000, and Aquatics favorable by \$128,000. Altogether, the amenities produced a positive variance of \$615,000.

The actuals for the Beach Club, Clubhouse Grille, Golf, Aquatics, Beach Club Parking and Racquet Sports are all trending upward compared to the prior fiscal year. In total, the combined amenities finished with a net of \$1.596 million, or a \$135,000

improvement over the prior year.

Martin also broke down where the assessment dollars are spent.

From the \$896 assessment and based on FY23 actuals, \$279 was used to fund police, fire and EMS, and \$447 went to all other operating departments. That included \$258 for Public Works, Maintenance and CPI; \$100 for Finance, Membership, IT and Human Resources; \$53 for Recreation and Parks; \$38 for the General Manager's Office; and \$33 for Marketing. General Administration subtracted (\$35).

An additional \$202 went to general replacement reserves, and \$25 went to bulkhead reserves.

Combined amenities subtracted (\$189), meaning homeowners are not subsidizing the amenities – but rather benefiting from their strong performance. That includes Beach Parking (\$62), combined food and beverage operations (\$52), Golf (\$38), Marinas (\$27), Aquatics (\$8) and combined Racquet Sports (\$1).

“That shows where your money is going that you pay for your assess-

ments,” Martin said.

Of the budgeted \$896, only \$764 was utilized, which produced the \$1.1 million positive variance.

Notably, public safety spending increased roughly 17% year-over-year, and those costs are likely to continue

to go up.

Phillips began his part of the report with the operating fund history, from the FY17 and FY18 deficits that totaled more than \$1.6 million, to the positive operating fund balance of \$2.586 mil-

please see returns on page 15

Organization meeting is Saturday

Meeting materials for the September 9 OPA Board Organization meeting are now available online.

The meeting will be held as a hybrid of in-person and virtual, with seating available in the Clubhouse Meeting Room on 100 Clubhouse Drive. The meeting is scheduled to start at 9 a.m.

Valid property owner ID cards are a requirement to attend Board meetings. Cards may be obtained at the front counter of the Ocean Pines Administration Building on 239 Ocean Parkway. The office is open from 8 a.m. to 4:25 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Property owners must bring a driver's license for verification to obtain a card. First-time cards are free, and replacement cards are \$5. Property owner ID cards are the same as membership cards.

There is no deadline to get a card. For questions, call 410-641-7717 or email info@oceanpines.org.

To join remotely, use the Microsoft Teams link the link can be found on the Ocean Pines website, under both the calendar and news sections.

If prompted, use the web browser plug-in only and not the full client.

Following the meeting, the video will be posted to the Association YouTube channel and links will be announced on the Ocean Pines website, www.oceanpines.org.



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GM report highlights where OPA has been, where it's going

Ocean Pines has celebrated financial and other successes, but must continue to invest in public safety and infrastructure, Ocean Pines General Manager said during his annual meeting presentation on Saturday.

Viola said the Association has "something special here" because of its positive financial results, but also because of the team of staff, Board members and volunteers that helped produce those results.

During his tenure as general manager, Viola said Ocean Pines jumped-started its bulkhead and roads programs, initiated the repair and replacement of community mailboxes, and focused on drainage, maintenance, and other infrastructure needs.

Spending on drainage improvement efforts has averaged more than \$500,000 during each of the last five years – while drainage spending had totaled just over \$120,000 during the prior six years combined.

Other recent maintenance efforts have included the administration building that saw new paint, flooring and HVAC units, and beautification efforts focused on the North and South Gate entrances and landscaping along Ocean Parkway.

Looking at amenities, Viola said Ocean Pines invested in a new roof for the Swim and Racquet Club, and new fencing for the Yacht Club Pool.

"The fence at the Yacht Club has needed a lot of work for years. The team was able to put that together ... and that was a big win for that Yacht Club," he said.

Viola said the Beach Club benefited from maintenance and decking repairs, as well as beautification efforts like the arrival of new palm trees. He said investments there helped produce profits at Beach Parking, and the Beach Club restaurant and pool.

"It's a big number [and] it fuels a lot of the stuff that we do," he said.

Viola said recent improvements at the Golf Clubhouse – the site of the annual meeting – included acoustic panels and refurbishment of the entry hallway. He said the accordion doors between the meeting space and restaurant made it possible for the meeting to occur there.

"That was the vision [and] the concept, and what everybody worked at," he said. "The acoustic tiles brought it all together, and I think we have a real nice place here."

He added that Clubhouse Bar & Grille Manager Judie Scotti and the Matt Ortt Companies team "do a great job" with their part of the operation that includes an increasingly busy breakfast, and the NFL Sunday Ticket starting on Sept. 10.

Viola said the Golf operation has greatly benefited from the leadership of Director of Golf Bob Beckelman and Director of Golf Maintenance Justin Hartshorne.

Six years ago, Viola said he was tasked with helping to turn around conditions at the course. Today, he said they're top notch.

Along with the "ninja tines" used to help aerate and improve greens, the course has also benefited from verti-

cutting of the fairways. Also notable was the addition of new golf carts and the restoration of an iconic gazebo with nearly four decades of history.

Those efforts combined to help fuel a year-over-year improvement of about \$78,000 during July and August, Viola said.

This year also saw the debut of golf instructor Matt Ruggiere, who grew up playing at the Ocean Pines Golf Club.

"Compliments to the golf team ... it's operating on all cylinders," Viola said.

Viola said new Yacht Club Marina gas docks were installed using longer-lasting aluminum that now meet not only new safety standards, but also the needs of a bustling marina operation. New T-docks were also installed to help meet the growing demand.

Racquet Sports saw the installation of new pickleball courts and the hiring of a new manager, Tim Johnson, a longtime Ocean Pines Racquet member and the former tennis supervisor for the Town of Ocean City.

"I think he's doing a great job," Viola said. "The feedback we've received is all positive ... and we're seeing the membership grow for many reasons."

Court maintenance that was put off for years is now a regular occurrence. Going forward, Viola said the Association will also evaluate the Racquet Center's main building.

The Yacht Club entranceway and ballroom also benefited from maintenance efforts. There and elsewhere, Viola said portions of the work were

done by outside contractors that help to supplement the Public Works staff.

"It's certainly showing a difference in all the maintenance [initiatives]," Viola said.

On public safety, Viola highlighted the hiring of new Police Chief Tim Robinson, formerly of the Wicomico County Sheriff's Office. He also recognized Lt. Greg Schoepf, who has served Ocean Pines for more than four decades.

Viola said Robinson has "hit the ground running" to help build on public safety initiatives that already included take-home vehicles for police officers and the introduction of an employee pension plan.

"I'm excited about working with that team," Viola said.

Viola said workgroups continue to be a big part of planning for the Association's future. General manager workgroups are currently focused on the new south fire station, and evaluating the Racquet Sports building.

He said the fire station workgroup "has a very good story to tell" at a future Board meeting, likely in October and to include funding options and a recommendation.

To sum up, Viola said in five years Ocean Pines has transformed operations from a \$1.6 million deficit with stalled maintenance programs and slumping amenities, to the operating surplus and robust programming enjoyed today.

As of July 31, he said operations are favorable to budget by more than

please see gm report on page 14

Board election vote totals announced

The Ocean Pines Elections Committee on Thursday announced voting totals for the 2023 Board of Directors Election.

Voting totals were as follows:

John Latham: 2,237

Jerry Murphy: 1,460

Elaine Brady: 2,293

Jeff Heavner: 1,849

Elections Committee Chairman Tom Piatti said Brady and Latham had each earned three-year terms on the Board, and Heavner earned a one-year term.

Per Ocean Pines Bylaws, elections results were validated during the Annual Meeting August 26.

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I can stop at any time

“Hi, my name is Chip. I have an addiction to chocolate. To be more specific, I have an addiction to Peanut M&Ms. I need help.”

That’s what I tell myself each time I indulge in these treats. It’s a habit I often believe I have under control until I pass a candy display which is

wonderful.

How this predilection originated I cannot say. I don’t recall this candy being around when I was young. Regular M&Ms were but not the peanut ones. And even at that time, I preferred Reese’s Cups over every other candy. But for some time, Peanut M&Ms are what I crave. I know, I have a problem.

The realization that a problem may exist came slow. I would grab a bag when checking out of the Walmart. Then I started doing the same thing at

Home Depot and the Dollar Tree. It was embarrassing. During the time I walked from the check-out to my car in the parking lot, I’d have the bag pretty much polished off.

These experiences were bad enough but when a one-pound bag was within grasp, things turned worse. Such was the case recently when my wife and I were driving home from Florida. The evening before our return trip we picked up snacks for the 14-hour journey. Turning down one aisle I heard my name called. From the far end of the aisle, I was beckoned by what appeared to be a shiny orb. Trance-like, I was pulled closer. The orb grew in size as I approached. And then there it was in front of me blocking out everything else around it – a one-pound bag of Peanut M&Ms shimmering yellow, calling to me. Defenseless I reached for the bag that seemed to just hop into my extended hands. I believe I heard the yellow M&M reassure me that I had made the right decision.

During our drive home the next day, the open bag sat on the console.

Should I seek help?

It’s certainly a question I ask each time I look in a mirror. My qualms are eased when I convince myself that I can quit at any time.

The question remains though, do I want to quit?

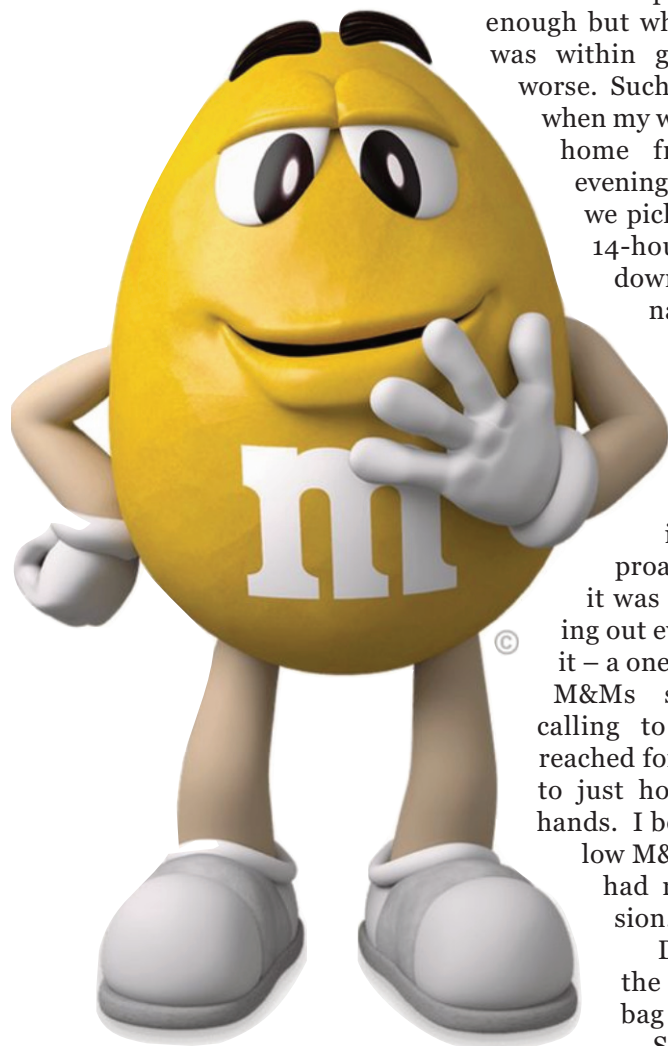


It’s All About. . .

By **Chip Bertino**

chipbertino@delmarvacourier.com

usually positioned at the check out counter. The little yellow bags with the M&M characters draw me in and I’m defenseless to stop my hand from reaching out to grab a bag. Be-



fore I know it, the little bag is scanned. In a whirl of action, I rip open the top, pluck a piece from the bag and pop it in my mouth. The sensation on my tongue is, well,

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2023 annual meeting

The Annual Meeting of the members of Ocean Pines Association took place on Saturday, August 26, 2023.

ism, and, given the considerable number of motions and public comments by association members unfamiliar with the governing documents,

topic at hand, "At this point, I will try to remain objective and watch patiently as the issue unfolds before I stick my toe in the political waters and offer a response."

A major purpose of the Annual Meeting is the validation of the Election Results if a quorum of 100 lots is represented at the meeting, and a quorum was present. Elaine Brady and John Latham were each elected to a three-year term on the board; Jeff Heavner was elected to a one-year

term. They will join returning board members Rick Farr, Stuart Lakernick, Steve Jacobs, and Monica Rakowski to round out our new Board of Directors.

Now, let's get to the details, and the devil is always in the details. OPA bylaws say the annual meeting shall be held on the "second Saturday in August each year." This year the meeting date was extended two weeks by the Board of Directors after the new West Coast elections contractor failed to mail out the ballots at the time required in the contract. This necessitated an additional OPA expenditure of \$5,000 to mail postcard notification of the new meeting date to all association members but, even with adequate time, the board failed to mail the postcard to meet a 15-day notification requirement. That said, it looks like the late postcard mailing sparked the good turnout. OPA should deduct the \$5,000 from any money owed to the election contractor.

Aside from the late mailing of election ballots, it must be noted that neither the elections committee nor any association members were able to view the ballot counting. This is a violation of Board Resolution M-06 and



Left to right, OPA attorney **Bruce Bright**, OPA vice-president **Rick Farr**, and **Matt Ortt** pose for an image after the 2023 Annual Meeting. Farr is the odds-on favorite to be the next OPA president.

because the pre-scanned results were inadvertently displayed early in the so-called "counting process."

Board members have already touted the election ZOOM meeting as a great success. How can it be a success when it failed to do what was required? Was the computer screen razzle-dazzle video impressive and professional? Yes. Did anyone observe the count? No. The point is, why waste a lot of time and effort writing Resolutions if they are going to be ignored when it is convenient to do so? Video of the "vote count" razzle-dazzle five days ago is not yet available.

When members arrived at the Clubhouse or logged in online to the annual meeting their lot ownership

please see commentary on page 14



Commentary

By Joe Reynolds
OceanPinesForum.com

Attendance at the Golf Clubhouse was one of the best in recent years, and quite a few lot owners attended virtually over the Internet.

OPA board and staff presentations were excellent, including that of General Manager John Viola. New OPA counsel Bruce Bright made his first appearance at an annual meeting. OPA president Doug Parks handled the meeting with his usual professional-

Parks also displayed a great degree of patience.

Parks departs the board after serving seven years. OPA politics aside, Parks deserves a great deal of thanks from association members for his service on the board. As an aside, Parks began to express his views about OPA politics when he joined *OceanPinesForum.com* back in July of 2015. In his first post, Parks wrote of the

Courier Almanac

On September 6, 1995, Baltimore Orioles shortstop Cal Ripken Jr. played in his 2,131st consecutive game, breaking "Iron Horse" Lou Gehrig's record for most consecutive games played. "The Iron Man" was credited with reviving interest in baseball after a 1994 work stoppage forced the cancellation of the World Series and soured fans on the national pastime.

Atrial fibrillation (AFib) is the most common type of treated heart arrhythmia. An arrhythmia is diagnosed when the heart beats too slowly, too quickly or irregularly.



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, when an individual has AFib, the beating in the upper chambers of their heart is irregular, which compromises blood flow from the upper to lower chambers. The CDC notes that researchers estimate roughly 12 million people in the United States will have AFib in 2030. The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada reports that one-fourth of all strokes after age 40 are caused by AFib and that people with the condition have a three to five times greater risk for ischemic stroke than those

who do not have AFib. A 2019 report from the American Heart Association indicated high blood pressure accounts for roughly 20 percent of all cases of AFib. The CDC notes advancing age, obesity, diabetes, smoking, chronic kidney disease, and European ancestry are some additional risk factors for AFib.

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Ocean Pines Farmers Market to reflect season change

Hints of the changing season are already peaking in at the Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market, and with that transition the market selections will gradually shift too.

Market Manager David Bean said the last of the locally grown tomatoes

fresh-pressed local apple cider and the first sight of pumpkins," Bean said. "Alongside those will be fall flowers, and greenery for the porch and garden. Mums, asters and pansies of every color will brighten the autumn marketplace, ready for shoppers to take home."

Shoppers should also be on the lookout for decorative gourds and miniature pumpkins at the market.

"They'll look terrific on your dining table or fireplace mantel," Bean said. "They keep for months, so you can decorate now and keep them

and sweet corn will linger well into autumn, as sweet potatoes start to arrive, along with more varieties of apples than one can name.

"There's nothing better than

out through Thanksgiving. You can even hollow out mini pumpkins and gourds to make fun, seasonal candle holders. When you're done with using them for décor, put them out-

side for the wild critters to enjoy the seeds and pulp!"

David Joseph of D.J. David Greengrocer said his market display will soon be piled high with autumnal produce.

"This fall we're selling broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, pumpkins and winter squashes of all sorts, along with leeks, greens, lettuces, beets, carrots, radishes and parsnips, all directly from our local growers gardens and farm fields," Joseph said.

Brandon Brady of Stag Run Farm said the market has just as many locally grown treasures in the fall and winter as it does during spring and summer.

"We always have to fight the expectation of customers that we will not have local produce after a frost has hit – that's a false assumption that requires continual shopper education," Brady said. "There will be plenty to offer after Jack Frost has visited our family farm."

Along with fresh produce, Bean said the selection at the market's bakeries will also start to reflect the season's change, with warming spices

and autumn orchard fruit flavors in abundance.

Apple dumplings are a favorite of the customers at Pies Etcetera. Owner Belinda White has family roots in Pennsylvania Dutch Country, where she learned to perfect her family's recipe. She suggests pre-ordering, as the dumplings always sell out fast.

Bean said shoppers can also find jams and jellies for their morning toast, eggs for fall baking, and a roast for Sunday dinner.

What's more, Dize Seafood will have the last of the Maryland hard-shell crab harvest, and freshly harvested Chesapeake oysters will return just in time for the upcoming holidays.

According to the Maryland Farmers Market Association, the state boasts more than a dozen farmers markets that are open for business during the colder months, with the Ocean Pines market being one of the few open year-round on the Eastern shore.

"There are also not as many folks from out of town who are buying during the fall season, so it is a great time for the market businesses to reconnect with their local shoppers after a very busy summer," Bean said.

Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market is open Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in White Horse Park, next to the Ocean Pines Administration Building and Police Department.

The market returns to its off-season hours of 9 a.m. to noon, starting on Saturday, Oct 7.

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



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The different ways to repair a driveway

Asphalt driveways do not last forever. Over time, weather and general usage can degrade the driveway surface, resulting in cracks, pitting and more. Ultraviolet rays, salt and automotive fluids also can affect the appearance and functionality of a driveway. An unsightly driveway can adversely affect curb appeal and resale potential.

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

project is unique.

Resurfacing. According to the home improvement price comparison site Kompare It, resurfacing is simpler and faster than installing a new asphalt driveway. With resurfacing, any cracks are filled in to create an even base. Then a new layer of asphalt is applied over the existing one. That new layer can range in thickness from 1.5 to 3 inches. A heavy rolling machine will then smooth and flatten the layers together. If the driveway has minor pitting or cracking, then resurfacing can be a cost-effective strategy, as it may be a \$3,000 to \$6,000 job as opposed to \$5,000 to \$10,000 with repaving.

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

The driveway needs to be clean and dry, with holes and cracks filled prior to sealcoating. Start at the far edge of the driveway and seal that area by “cutting-in” by hand for a neat edge. Afterward the rest of the driveway can be sealed using a squeegee or broom. This project can be completed within two or three days if no precipitation is forecast.



Repaving. A project best left to professionals, repaving typically involves the removal of an existing driveway and the installation of a new one. The sub-grade layer is essential in the process for a smooth look. Contractors also will assess soil and grading when doing work. The construction blog Main Infrastructure says the new asphalt driveway can vary in thickness between two and six inches, depending on budget and need. The contractor also can advise if full-depth asphalt application or an aggregate base is practical.

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

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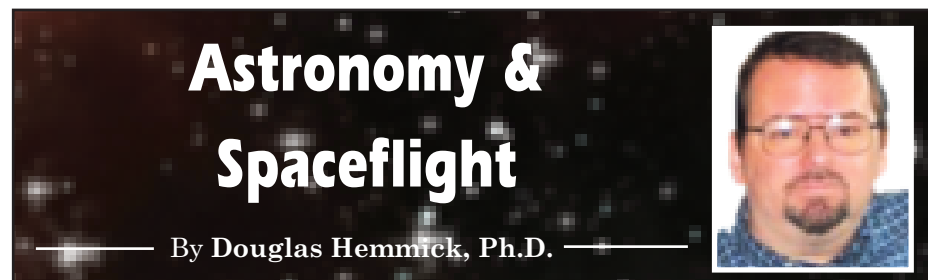
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Cosmic violence as young star pummels its planet

Researchers have discovered a young star bombarding its exoplanet with flares energetic enough to burn off part of its atmosphere. These studies were led by Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, using data from Hubble Space Telescope's Imaging Spectrograph. Their work was published in *The Astrophysical Journal* in July.



Astronomers have long known that young stars produce frequent high energy flares. But new instrumentation has made possible further studies into such activity, and this interests both professionals and hobbyists alike.

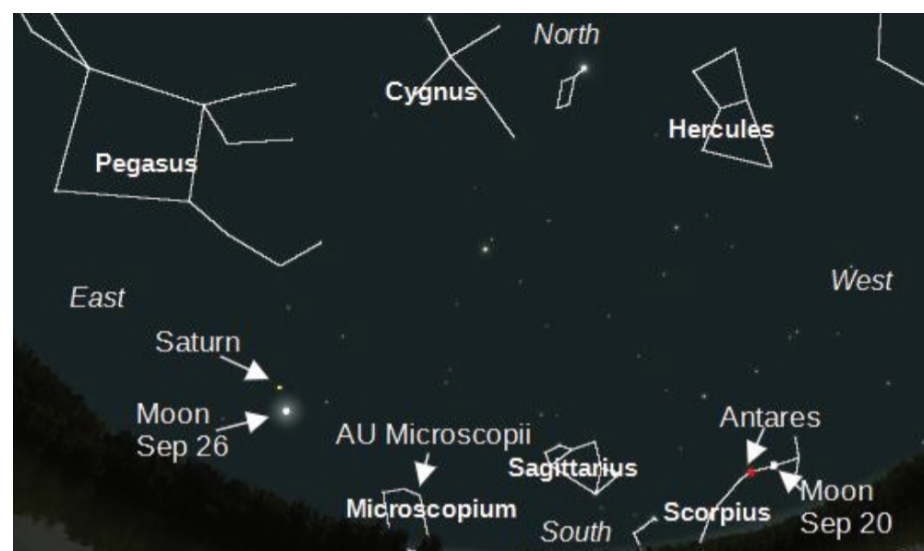
The star in question is termed AU Microscopii ("AU Mic"), and its dynamic and rapid changes were first seen in 1973. Its name comes from its location in the southern constellation, Microscopium. The star's planet was discovered in 2020, and is named AU Microscopii b ("AU Mic b"). This Neptune sized planet is orbiting very close to its star, just one tenth the distance Mercury is from our sun. Some sources have called the planet a "Hot Neptune."

AU Mic is just 23 million years old, which is a drop in the bucket compared to our own sun's 4.5-billion-year age. As they ripen to maturity, stars are expected to settle down and flare only occasionally as seen streaming off the planet at high speed. During another pass, nothing is seen. Further research is needed to answer the question: What is the mechanism by which the interaction is turned off and turned on again, so rapidly? Mic b orbits its star in just nine days.

All planets with an atmosphere lose some gas as they orbit their suns, a process known as atmospheric escape - either slowly like Earth or dramatically like Mic b. But scientists have never before seen atmospheric escape stop and start between orbits. Keighley Rockcliffe, the first author of the study, said: "This is the first time we've seen a planet's atmospheric escape go from non-observable to

does our sun. But the star's young age and the planet's close proximity have resulted in an unusual situation: the planet is often assaulted with radiation from stellar flares.

The Dartmouth College studies have recently analyzed how those



stellar flares have stripped off some of Mic b's atmosphere.

Observations of two phases of the orbiting planet show highly variable results. During one planetary orbit, escaping atmosphere can be

very, very observable."

Coauthor, Elisabeth Newton said, "The young age and behavior of Mic b and its sun suggest that the researchers have captured the early stages of planetary evolution. This

planet is like observing a totally generic toddler."

Another question at issue is the direction of the atmospheric loss. At first guess, we might imagine that the atmosphere blasted off a planet by its star would be trailing off behind it in space, something like the wake left behind a boat moving through water, or a trail left behind a jet. However, the gas spewing from Mic b is stretching out in front of the planet's orbiting pathway about the star. This implies that the gas is not only released, but that it is somehow ejected with great force, enough to overcome the forward orbital motion of the planet.

Seems that astronomy fans will need to pause and wait for further studies in this interesting field of planetary evolution, to answer those fascinating questions.

In September the full stellar vista is visible at about 8:30 p.m., as the constellation Cygnus the Swan (Northern Cross), appears almost directly overhead. To the west Hercules the Hero is also seen flying high. One might imagine Hercules as a smaller and fainter "cousin" of the famous wintertime constellation, Orion the Hunter. High in the eastern sky, the Great Square of Pegasus comes into view after 9:30 p.m.

September will feature two interesting lunar conjunctions. On September 20, the moon will float within four degrees of the bright red star Antares, located in Scorpius the Scorpion, near the southern horizon. On September 26 the Moon will pass just three degrees south of Saturn, in a location halfway between Pegasus and the southern horizon.

Also, near the southern horizon appears Sagittarius, the Archer (teapot). To the east of Sagittarius is the southern constellation, Microscopium, where the exoplanet AU Mic b is being assaulted by stellar flares and losing some of its atmosphere. The faintness of this constellation prevents amateur astronomy fans from observing this fascinating star.

Wishing clear skies and good luck to all stargazers.

Platform Tennis benefit tournament seeks sponsors

The Ocean Pines Platform Tennis Club is seeking sponsors for a new charity tournament scheduled on Saturday, September 23 in Ocean Pines.

Tournament co-chairs Karen Kaplan and M. Petito said the tournament will benefit longtime member Dee Bohanan, who is battling Parkinson's disease and receiving home hospice care.

Players from Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey have been invited, and the tournament

promises to showcase an exciting exhibition of high-level platform tennis, for a worthy cause.

Sponsorships of \$500, \$250, and \$150 - and donations in any amount - will be gifted by the club to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, in honor of Bohanan.

Sponsor benefits include the company's name on a banner with high profile exposure at the Ocean Pines Racquet Center.

"Daily foot traffic at the center

often exceeds 300 players, and a business name on a banner will elevate their brand exposure and highlight their company's goodwill in the community," Kaplan said. "And, it's all for a great cause for our dear friend."

For more information on sponsorships, contact Kaplan at 516-508-0313 for an application.

Additional donations to the Michael J. Fox Foundation can be mailed to M. Petito, 4 Longpoint Court, Ocean Pines 21811.

Kiwanis Club given Sam Wilkinson Volunteer Award

On August 26, Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks Director Debbie Donahue named the Kiwanis Club of Great Ocean Pines/Ocean City as the recipient of the 2023 Sam Wilkinson Volunteer Award.

Since 2003, the award has recognized local people who dedicate their time and talents to help others. The award also honors the memory of its namesake, eight-year-old Sam Wilkinson, who died in a tragic water accident in Ocean City.

Sam played soccer in Ocean Pines and his father, Bob, was a volunteer coach for Ocean Pines Recreation programs. The award was established to recognize a volunteer within the Recreation and Parks Department.

Donahue said the department depends on many volunteers to help run the various programs, sports leagues, and classes held in Ocean Pines.

“This year, we decided that there was a group of people that do a considerable amount for Ocean Pines. They do a lot of work for the Recreation Department, and they give back to our community,” she said.

The Kiwanis Club of Great Ocean Pines/Ocean City was founded in 1980 and is part of a global nonprofit that “shares the challenge of community improvement,” Donahue said.

“Members of the club contribute their time and energy, helping those less fortunate than themselves, with a heavy focus on the children in our community,” she said.

Donahue said Kiwanis members help many local groups and also sponsor clubs at local public schools. They provide financial assistance, including college scholarships for local high school students. The group also collects items for needy children and the

local homeless population.

“Giving back to the community and bringing the community together is what the Kiwanis are all about,” she said. “At different times of the year, they are toy collectors, food collectors [and] school supply collectors.

“Kiwanis are proud to participate in the Ocean Pines Community. They have been around a long time and plan to continue to have a significant presence,” she continued. “And, if you’ve never been to one of their pancake breakfasts, you’re really missing out!”

Donahue presented the award to

Kiwanis Club President Bob Wolfing.

“I’m accepting this award on behalf of our 50 members that we have, and they will be very proud to see this. And we’ll be around for a long time,” he said.

The Kiwanis Club of Great Ocean Pines/Ocean City meets Wednesday mornings at 8 a.m. in the Ocean Pines Community Center on 235 Ocean Parkway. Prospective new members are always welcome.

For more information, visit www.kiwanisofopoc.org or www.facebook.com/servingthechildrenoftheworld.

Board of Public Works funds key projects on the Shore

The Maryland Board of Public Works approved several key projects in Worcester County August 23 including \$250,000 in funding for Atlantic General Hospital to acquire new materials and equipment for minimally invasive surgery. The current equipment – namely minimally invasive video towers and camera box – has reached its end of life.

“Atlantic General is fully committed to meeting the diverse and expanding needs for health care on the Eastern Shore,” said Senator Mary Beth Carozza, who represents Worcester, Wicomico, and Somerset counties. “Minimally invasive surgery allows for less trauma to the body, fewer complications, and a shorter recovery time, which helps our farmers, our watermen, and everyone in between return to their lives.”

Senator Carozza and Delegates Charles Otto requested this funding during the 2023 Legislative Session through the Capital Budget via a Legislative Bond Initiative (LBI). LBIs are local projects that serve a public purpose and must be sponsored by State legislators.

“Every year, the requests coming in far exceed the amount of funding available, and we made a successful case that this Atlantic General Hospital request at this time was a priority

for our constituents,” said Carozza.

The Board of Public Works also approved an LBI requested by Delegate Wayne Hartman and supported by Carozza of \$75,000 to improve the Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department South Station from this year’s Capital Budget, which is in addition to an LBI of \$200,000 in 2022 and a \$1.35 million supplemental budget received during Governor Hogan’s last

please see public works on page 14

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My Backyard... sponsored by Maureen Kennedy

How to care for winter birds that visit your yard

It's not too early to begin thinking about how to care for wild birds and preparing your yard for winter. The pristine, white backdrop of a snowy winter day can be a wonder to behold. While fresh snow on the ground can make for awe-inspiring landscapes, the absence of greenery amid the starkness of winter poses challenges for animals that do not ride out winter in a state of hibernation.

Several bird species stay in colder climates over the winter. Red-winged crossbills, snow buntings, bohemian waxwings, evening grosbeaks, and cardinals are just some of the birds one may find while gazing outside on a chilly winter's day. Birding in the winter can be a rewarding hobby because, despite the chilly conditions, birds tend to be easy to find in bare trees. Furthermore, the colder temperatures may keep many people inside, meaning neighborhoods, trails and parks can be very quiet, making it easier for those who brave the cold to see birds.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds indicates that winter is a difficult time of year for birds due to the weather and the scarcity of food. Furthermore, birds must consume a lot of food in a short amount of time to have the energy and body warmth to survive each day. Even birds that store food in caches or have developed special scavenging strategies to find as

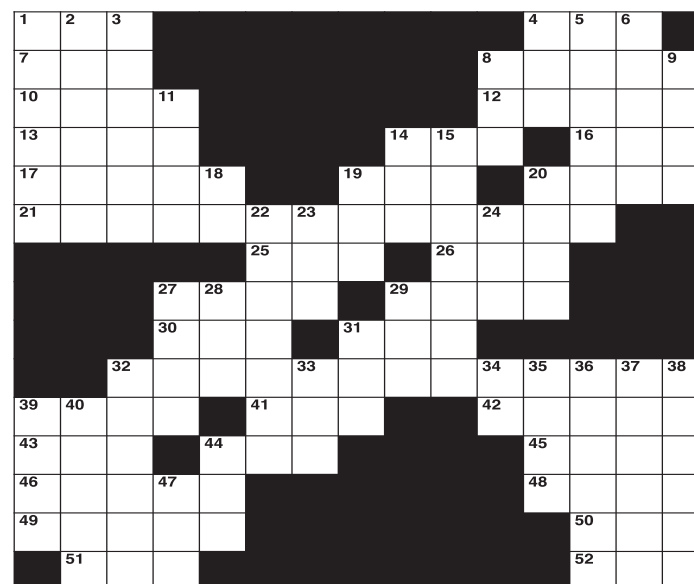
much food as possible can benefit from a little wintertime help. Penn State Extension suggests providing a variety of foods to attract the greatest number of species. Small, black-oil sunflower seeds are preferred by many smaller species of bird and have a high oil content that is nutritionally important for birds. Other sunflower seeds will be appropriate for blue jays and cardinals. Some other popular foods include white proso millet, thistle seed, niger seed, and peanuts.



Consult a wild bird store, which likely sells a birdseed mix that enables you to place a variety of seed into one feeder. "I talk with customers and bird lovers all the time who are passionate about caring for wild birds," said Maureen Kennedy, owner of My Backyard in Ocean Pines. "It's important to understand what wild birds need in winter in order to survive."

In addition to seed, suet, which is made from high-quality animal fat, is crucial for birds in the winter. Families can get crafty by spreading peanut butter onto pine cones and sprinkling seed on top. Hang the pine cones tied to pieces of string from tree branches for homemade feeders.

Birds likely need a little help surviving the winter, when conditions can be bleak. Offering food and observing backyard visitors can be a great way to unwind on winter afternoons.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Second sight
- 4. Standard electrode potential
- 7. Type of gibbon
- 8. John Joseph __; American industrialist
- 10. Manning and Whitney are two
- 12. Abrupt
- 13. Baroque musical instrument
- 14. Post-burning residue
- 16. When you hope to arrive
- 17. Sign up (Brit. Eng.)
- 19. Sun up in New York
- 20. Employee stock ownership plan
- 21. Where people live
- 25. Method to record an electrogram
- 26. Angry
- 27. No longer living
- 29. Simple
- 30. Swiss river
- 31. Portion of a play
- 32. It's under the tree
- 39. Wood sorrels
- 41. No (Scottish)
- 42. Dialect of English
- 43. Former Steelers' QB
- 44. Popular beer
- 45. It can make you sick
- 46. Tropical tree and fruit
- 48. Company officer
- 49. Contact lens term
- 50. Your consciousness of your own identity
- 51. "Ghetto Superstar" singer
- 52. Piece of turf

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Number of players on each side in a football game
- 2. Containing salt
- 3. Reasoning or knowledge: a __
- 4. Car mechanics group
- 5. Leave a place
- 6. Southern Colombian capital
- 8. Old English letter
- 9. Tide
- 11. Walk heavily
- 14. Chemical compound (abbr.)
- 15. Artificial openings
- 18. Luteinizing hormone
- 19. Unit of energy
- 20. Circular movement of water
- 22. A way of holding
- 23. Popular book of words (abbr.)
- 24. States' group
- 27. Dashes
- 28. Body part
- 29. Electronic countermeasures
- 31. Consumed
- 32. Small bird
- 33. Unhappy
- 34. Football's big game (abbr.)
- 35. Valued object offered in good faith
- 36. Wild goats
- 37. Precede in place
- 38. Small edible fish
- 39. Notice of death
- 40. Body cavity of a metazoan
- 44. Partner to cheese
- 47. Not around



Answers for August 23



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OPPD encourages pedestrian and bicycle safety

Ocean Pines Police is reminding residents of the importance of pedestrian and bicycle safety, and asking that walkers and bicyclists follow the rules of the road.

All pedestrians and bicyclists are encouraged to wear light colored or reflective clothing, so they are visible to drivers. Dark colors, worn at night or on overcast days, can be difficult for cars to see and may lead to slower reaction times.

When walking at night, it is also a good idea to carry a flashlight and wear a reflective vest or armbands. Taking a few extra moments to prepare can save someone from an accident, or even death. Safety is everyone's responsibility.

Where a sidewalk is not provided, pedestrians must walk on the left shoulder or the left side of a roadway, facing any traffic that might approach from the opposite direction. Walking on the opposite side is a violation of Maryland Transportation Code 21-506b, and violators are subject to a \$50 fine.

Cyclists must ride on the right-hand side of the roadway, going with the flow of traffic. Riding on the wrong side of the road could put turning cy-

clists in the path of oncoming traffic and would make them at fault in the case of an accident. Violators are also subject to a \$50 fine under Maryland Transportation code 21-1205a.

Maryland Transportation Code 21-1210b states that riders cannot operate a bicycle and wear ear plugs in both ears, including headphones. Many people like to listen to music or have a GPS for directions as they ride, but riders must only cover one ear so they can hear what is going on around them, such as an approaching emergency vehicle or a motorist trying to alert them. This violation carries a \$60 fine.

Helmets are encouraged for all bicycle riders and are required by all persons under the age of 16 riding as a passenger or driver of a bicycle. If a parent or guardian allows such a violation, they may be subject to a \$50 fine.

For more information about pedestrian and bicyclist safety, visit <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/road-safety/pedestrian-bicyclist-safety>.

Chamber to host mini golf tournament

The Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce will host a Mini Golf Tournament on Tuesday, October 10, at Nick's Dino Golf Course on 125th Street in Ocean City at 2 p.m.

Following the same rules and side bet contests as a real golf tournament, this event is for golfers and non-golfers alike. Prizes will be on hand for closest to the pin, hole in one, ball drop, and other fun contests. Mulligans available to gain an advantage. Beverages available along the course for sale. Happy Hour to follow at Grotto's Pizza next door.

Teams are twosomes, \$50/team, shotgun start at 2 p.m. Sponsorships are available To register your team and snag a hole sponsorship, go to: <https://business.oceanpines-chamber.org/events/details/mini-golf-tournament-15149> . Must be at least 21 to register. For more information, visit OceanPinesChamber.org or contact us at (410) 641-5306, kerrie@oceanpineschamber.org.

Tides for Ocean City Inlet

Day	High /Low	Tide Time
Th 7	High	2:11 AM
	Low	8:08 AM
	High	2:56 PM
	Low	9:27 PM
F 8	High	3:16 AM
	Low	9:07 AM
	High	4:05 PM
	Low	10:36 PM
Sa 9	High	4:25 AM
	Low	10:08 AM
	High	5:09 PM
	Low	11:38 PM
Su 10	High	5:24 AM
	Low	11:07 AM
	High	6:01 PM
M 11	Low	12:25 AM
	High	6:11 AM
	Low	12:00 PM
	High	6:44 PM
Tu 12	Low	1:02 AM
	High	6:53 AM
	Low	12:46 PM
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W 13	Low	1:33 AM
	High	7:32 AM
	Low	1:27 PM
	High	7:59 PM

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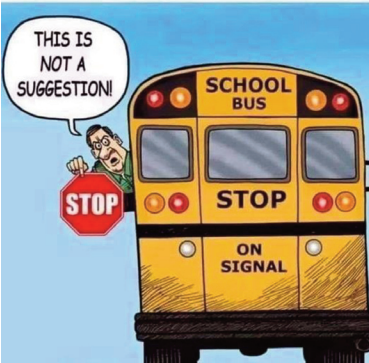
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Some things to think about

Gathered from the internet by **Jack Barnes**

This can not be shared enough



Perhaps they should look at forgiving medical debt for cancer patients instead of student loans. Education is a choice, cancer is not.

The closest I get to a spa day is when steam from the dishwasher smacks me in the face.



My teacher said "Don't worry about spelling. In the future there will always be autocorrect." For that I'm eternally grapefruit!



public works from page 11

year in office.

Additionally, a \$329,656.35 grant to Worcester County from Rural Legacy Funds was approved, which will protect prime agriculture farmland in the Nasawango Creek and the Pocomoke River watershed. "This is some of the most productive agricultural land in the County, and this grant will help preserve our rural way of life," said Carozza.

commentary
from page 6

was checked. Those participating online also had the opportunity to vote on any business coming to the floor or bring motions to the floor. This change was something strongly promoted by former board member Amy Peck.

The reality is this policy is a disaster and should be discontinued. The issue caused OPA staff a great deal of unnecessary stress and confusion during the meeting, not to mention the distracting "bell sound" emanating from in-room speakers during presentations by Parks, Bright, and others. Any association member wishing to cast a vote on a floor motion at an annual meeting should show up at the meeting, and know full well such votes are not binding on the board.

In the past, members in attendance were given a small white card with a number on it, indicating the number of lots they owned when votes were counted. That did not happen this year.

Another Worcester County funding grant is in process to come before the Board of Public Works in the coming weeks. Diakonika, the only provider for homeless men, women, families, and veterans on the Lower Shore, was granted a \$75,000 LBI during the latest legislative session to pay for the acquisition and planning of affordable housing units. Carozza requested the funding for Diakonika.

When a vote came up for a member motion, long-time owner Marlene Ott asked, "What if I have six lots to vote?" The response was unclear. At any rate, the vote on one motion proceeded. It failed.

However, the vote was taken by counting raised hands. If a husband and wife were in the room and each raised their hands, they were counted twice for one lot. We have no idea how many lots were represented by those voting online. In OPA, lot-votes count, not the number of people residing in the home.

There was plenty of member participation at the meeting. This is great, as it is not a board meeting but a meeting of individuals who own lots in Ocean Pines. There was mention of a limitation of five minutes for comments by members. While this is indeed a limitation the board can impose on board meetings, there is a question as to whether such a time restriction can be imposed on members at the annual meeting of the members unless those at the meeting vote to do so.

gm report
from page 4

\$300,000, with Golf, Aquatics, Racquet Sports, and food and beverage operations all trending upwards.

"The surplus has been reinvested into the assessment," Viola said. "It's not like we're just putting this [favorability] somewhere ... we are reinvesting it."

He said the Association is also addressing big-ticket items, including the need for a new south fire station and Golf Course irrigation system, along with the next phase of drainage, bulkhead and road maintenance, and an on-going list of requests from the 14 advisory committees.

Viola said public safety will continue to be a big focus.

"[Public safety] is one of our strengths in Ocean Pines, but there is a cost to it – and it's nationwide. It's going up everywhere," he said.

A decade ago, he said public safety made up about 22-22% of the budget – today it's 35%.

"We have funded – and rightfully so – the increases for safety," Viola said. "We're putting in pensions for the police, the [take-home] cars ... it's all needed to retain talent.

"Let's give them what they need," he added.

Viola credited Administrative Assistance Michelle Ross for doing "a lot of the heavy lifting" in helping to prepare his annual report.

For questions and concerns about Ocean Pines operations, email info@oceanppines.org or call 410-641-7717 during normal business hours.



returns
from page 3

lion as of April 30, 2023.

“You can see the last few years [the Association had] over \$1 million in

surpluses. This year, [OPA was] \$1.113 million favorable to our budget,” he said.

Phillips said the bottom-line fund balance of approximately \$2.6 million includes reserve transfers approved by the Board, and the surplus used to reduce the assessment.

He said assessments overall were trending favorable over the last seven years, starting with \$921 in FY18, peaking at \$996 in FY22, and then dropping to \$883 as of F24 – and marking the second straight year of lower assessments.

Phillips said the Association has roughly \$25 million invested in fixed assets, that includes Ocean Pines’ buildings, roads, land improvements, and furniture and equipment.

“Land improvements would be things such as parking costs, tennis courts, pools, bridges – all your non-building stuff,” he said.

Phillips said reserve projections are also trending upward, from \$6.691 million total reserves as of April 30 of this year, to a projected balance of \$7.695 million by April 30, 2024. The projection includes roughly \$6.2 million for replacement reserves, \$885,000 for roads, \$467,000 for bulkheads and waterways, \$124,000 for new capital, and \$40,000 for drainage.

To view the FY23 audited financials and other Ocean Pines Association financial reports, visit <https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/finance>.

Safe boating course offered

The US Coast Guard Auxiliary is offering the Maryland Safe Boating Course at the Ocean Pines library on September 12, 13, and 14 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 Email: CGAUXOC@Gmail.com.

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