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The Courier

September 13, 2023 Volume 24 Number 2



Donation - Don McMullin presents check to representatives of the Worcester County Humane Society. The donation was made possible from the proceeds of the Hops Scramble. See story on page 4

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WCPS announces new school safety protocols

As the school year begins, Worcester County Public Schools (WCPS) has announced a new set of protocols to boost school safety efforts and create common language among the school system, emergency services partners, and the school system community.

The school system has adopted the Standard Response and Reunification Protocols created by the I Love U Guys Foundation (<https://iloveuguy.org>). The Foundation conducted a full day of training with all school system administration and emergency services partners during WCPS's annual two-day Safety Summit in July. Since that time, all staff within WCPS have been trained in the protocols and how they are applied to their specific classrooms and schools.

"School safety is a critical component to enable our students and staff to bring their best to school every day," Chief Safety and Academic Officer Annette Wallace said. "It is our responsibility to ensure that everyone, including our families, are aware of what to expect and what to do in the event of a crisis. This is precisely why we have placed such an emphasis on training since this summer's safety summit."

School system families will receive

Chorus hosts guest night

The Delmarva Chorus, a chapter of Sweet Adelines International, is planning a Wine & Cheese Open House / Guest Night to celebrate its 20th anniversary on Monday, September 25, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Ocean Pines Community Center. All ladies who love to sing are invited to attend to find out all about the chorus. Former members are also invited to join. Fun, smiles and laughter are guaranteed. For more information, call Mary at 410-208-4009, go to www.delmarvachorus.org or search "Delmarva Chorus" on Facebook or Instagram.

information on the protocols, educating them in the five school safety statuses: Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter. Each of the statuses is labeled by a specific icon and a directive for students and staff. Schools will communicate with families any time the school enters into a school safety status; this communication will also provide expectations for families, which in most cases is requesting families to wait for further instruction or notification that the school has returned to normal operations.

"By providing clear expectations on when and how schools will communicate with families in the event of a school safety status change, we reassure them that our schools are actively

and appropriately responding to whatever is occurring," Coordinator of Public Relations and Special Programs Carrie Sterrs said. "At the same time, families are educated that in these instances, coming to the school is not always the best course of action, and waiting for that additional communication or instruction is the best way they can help in times of crisis."

In addition to the new protocols, schools will continue to emphasize the importance of reporting suspicious or concerning behaviors within our schools. Worcester County utilizes the Maryland Center for School Safety's anonymous tipline (833-MD-B-SAFE or <https://schoolsafety.maryland.gov/Pages/Tipline.aspx>) to provide students, staff, and members of our com-

munity with the means to report a tip. Tipline access information is readily available on all school websites.

"Tips that come into the Safe Schools Maryland tipline are completely confidential," Coordinator of School Safety Shawn Goddard said. "It's so important that we can provide the means for anyone to report a tip. The earlier we know about potential threats to our school environments, the quicker we can appropriately address them, and as we all know, time is critical in any safety response."

Additional information about the WCPS' new School Safety protocols can be found on a newly established page on the school system's website at <https://www.worcesterk12.org/page/school-safety-protocols>.



Marlene Ott

Associate Broker, CRS LTG







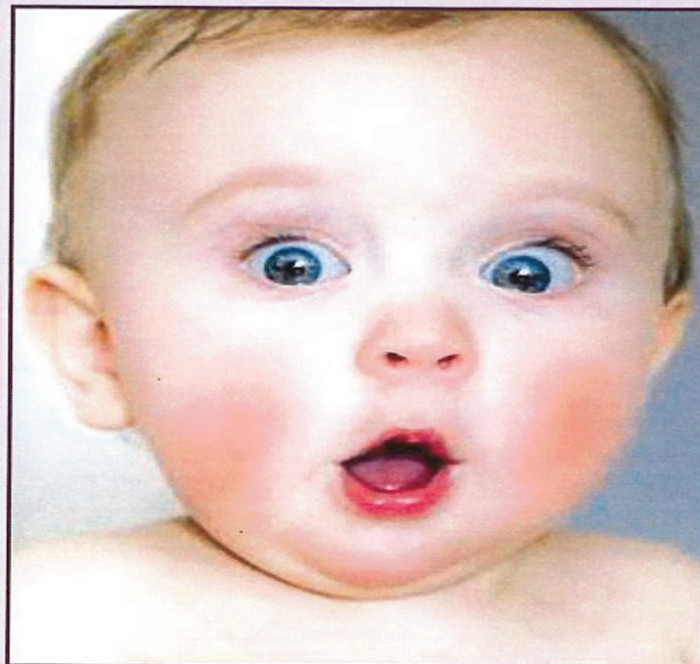
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New OPA law firm gets introduction

Included in the Ocean Pines Annual Meeting reports on August 26 were an overview of legal services by law firm Ayres Jenkins Gordy & Almand, and the yearly audit report from UHY LLP.

Attorney Bruce Bright of Ayres Jenkins Gordy & Almand spoke on the firm's history and current duties with Ocean Pines, while Chris Hall summarized the annual audit process.

Bright said his firm was newly retained in May, so there's "not a lot of activity to report" just yet.

He said Ayres Jenkins Gordy & Almand was established 50 years ago, in 1973, in Ocean City. The firm has represented the Town of Ocean City for the last four decades, has represented the Worcester County School Board for many years, and currently represents the Town of Snow Hill.

"We are happily accustomed to representing important institutions in this local area," Bright said.

Bright said the firm also has experience serving HOAs and condominium associations, both locally and as far away as Easton. He said Ayres Jenkins Gordy & Almand is presently comprised of 11 attorneys, including eight partners and three associates.

"We will take a team approach toward fulfilling the legal needs of Ocean Pines," Bright said, adding that he will serve as the principal attorney, with firm partner Maureen Howarth serving as co-counsel. Howarth previously served as the Worcester County attorney and has ample experience representing community associations.

As general counsel to Ocean Pines, Bright said his firm will cover "the full array of legal services," including representing the community in any litigation, and providing legal support and advice to the general manager, various departments, and Board of Directors. They will also assist with contracts and represent Ocean Pines in assessment collections.

"We do that kind of [collections] work for dozens of condominium associations and HOAs, so we're well prepared," he said.

Bright added his firm will supply all those services "at two-thirds the hourly rate of our predecessor."

"We're hopeful to be a lot more cost effective in delivering these services to Ocean Pines and its members, and we're really looking forward to a productive relationship between one of the oldest law firms on the Eastern Shore and the largest community association on the Eastern shore," he said. "We're very proud to serve in this capacity, going forward."

Later in the meeting, Hall supplied the annual auditor's report. If his name sounds familiar, Hall previously served Ocean Pines with the TGM Group.

"We merged our firm a few years ago ... [and] are now part of a larger firm," he said. "We're the 28th largest firm in the country, so we have a lot of resources and expertise behind us."

Hall added the UHY offices remain locally based, with "the same partners [and] the same staff."

As the auditor, Hall said UHY audits and renders an opinion on the Association's financial statements each year.

He said the process starts each April, with internal control documentation and risk assessments, and continues through the spring and early summer with inventory counts, balance sheet and income statement testing of accounts and transactions, and other fieldwork.

The process generally wraps up in July with a review of the final fiscal-year financial statements.

Once again, Hall said Ocean Pines earned a "clean" and unmodified opinion.

"That's the highest level of assurance that any independent financial firm can give," he said.

Hops Scramble benefits local charities

The Ocean Pines Golf Club on August 25 played host to the successful return of the Ernie Stiles Bavarian Hops Scramble.

After several years off because of the COVID pandemic, the 16th annual event paid homage to the late Ernie Stiles, who founded the event in the early 2000s as a fun, boozy fundraiser for local charities.

During the tournament, 62 players teed off for a nine-hole experience accompanied by four refreshing hops beverages.

Karen Lill earned the coveted "hops hat" with her closest-to-the-pin shot of 8 feet, four inches on the seventh hole.

Golf member Bob Long said the tournament also featured "a grand tee box party on the seventh that featured live music by the Bearded Men Society."

"There were shots and hors d'oeuvres, along with a noise that rivaled the 16th at the Phoenix Open – well, almost!" Long said with a laugh. "Following play, Judie Scotti and the Clubhouse Bar & Grille crew hosted a nice dinner that was well attended."

Proceeds this year went to a \$1,035 donation to Diakonia and a \$1,000 donation to the Worcester County Humane Society. The tournament has raised more than \$30,000 for local charities since its inception.

"Thank you go to Don McMullen and Patty Curtin, who coordinated the event, and to the Bearded Men Society who donated their time and expertise to make the seventh-hole tee box party a grand event," Long said.

Annual meeting FAQ outlined

The following questions were asked during the 2023 Ocean Pines Association Annual Meeting:

Q. What do motions by homeowners at the annual meeting actually do?

A. According to Ocean Pines Bylaws Section 4.02.(a) "Issues not contained in the notice of the meeting ... shall not be binding on the Association or the Board of Directors."

Doug Parks, at the time serving as Association President, summarized, "If [the motion] passes, it will be a recommendation from the membership to the Board for further consideration."

To view the bylaws, visit <https://www.oceanpines.org/documents/10184/90460/Amended+and+Restated+By-Laws+Amended+5-24-2022.pdf>.

Q. How can a homeowner ini-

tiative a referendum?

A. According to Ocean Pines Bylaws Section 4.07. "A petition may be used to propose action requiring a referendum ..." According to Section 4.07.(c)(2) "For issues for referendum ... a petition requires signatures of members who are eligible to vote representing at least ten percent (10%) of the votes in the Association as referenced in Section 3.01(a)."

To view the bylaws, visit <https://www.oceanpines.org/documents/10184/90460/Amended+and+Restated+By-Laws+Amended+5-24-2022.pdf>.

Q. Ocean Pines has about 8,500 homes, but the Elections Committee only sent some 7,000 ballots for the 2023 Board of Directors election. What happened to the others? Are people on monthly payment plans eligible to vote? If not, can that be

changed?

A. For the 2023 Board of Directors election, 7,781 ballots were mailed to members who are eligible to vote. Alternatively, 701 letters were sent to members informing them that they were ineligible to vote.

Members' voting rights are stated in Section 3.01 of the Ocean Pines Bylaws: "Payment of the annual charge levied by the Board of Directors is a prerequisite to the right to vote. No member may vote if, thirty-five (35) days prior to the voting deadline (July 6, in 2023) the member has failed to pay the annual charge, including any assessed interest levied by the Association."

Accordingly, members on payment plans are ineligible to vote. Changing this section of the bylaws to allow voting by members on payment plans would require a referendum.

To view the bylaws, visit

*please see **faq** on page 10*



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Shoes, shoes everywhere

I have a tendency to channel Mr. Rogers, kicking off my shoes wherever I'm standing at the time and retrieving my slippers which are always found under my bed. The result is that at the dawn of each day, finding my shoes is a scavenger hunt because I don't recall where I took them off. I could have done



It's All About. . .

By **Chip Bertino**

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so in the living room, bedroom, family room, sun room or the hallway. I know it would make more sense to take off my shoes, place them in the closet and then slip on my slippers. But I don't do that.

The result - searching the house in stocking feet looking for the brown loafers I kicked off two days before. While going from one room to another, it's inevitable that I think to myself, "why don't I just put my shoes in the closet so I can retrieve them quickly? From now on, that's what I'm going to do." It never happens. Such thoughts rescind to the shadows as soon as the loafers are found.

On an early Sunday morning not long ago, while walking through the family room, still dark because the blinds were closed, I tripped, nearly doing a Dick Van Dyke ottoman fall. "What the h*** was that?" I muttered after regaining my balance. Snapping on the light, it became all too obvious what the h*** it was. There, built up beside the coffee table was a pile of shoes. Judging from the height, it appeared to be about four-days-worth of kicked-off footwear - sneakers, deck shoes, boondockers and black dress shoes. I couldn't help but chuckle. I scooped them up and took them to my bedroom closet, yet again promising silently that from now on each time I took off my shoes I would return them to where they should always go when not on my feet. The hope of that promise evaporated more quickly than a New Year's promise to exercise more and eat less.

The irony of all this is that when my children were living at home, I was on them constantly to put their shoes in their room when they took them off. Our youngest son was the worst offender. Not only would he discard his shoes anywhere in the house, it wasn't uncommon to find his left shoe in one part of the

house and the right shoe in another room. How could this be? Your guess is as good as mine. When I would ask him in a tone that all parents express when they are exasperated, "Why did I trip over your left shoe in the living room and your right shoe in the dining room?" He would look at me with his familiar, "I'm going to make you laugh," expression and respond, "I don't know." The reality of those exchanges was this: he really couldn't explain the shoe separation phenomenon and I would laugh at his response.

As I think about this situation more, I realize it's not just shoes with which I have an issue. Challenges exist with my reading glasses. I have multiple pairs of reading glasses positioned strategically around the house so that wherever I am, they are handy, or at least should be. A pair is kept in, among other places, the family room, next to my rocker in the sunroom, on the kitchen counter and on my night stand. I also keep a pair on the garage workbench and in the truck. As you read this, you may be thinking, that's what you do or that I'm onto a good idea, one you should try yourself. Let me let you in on the Achilles heel of my strategy. During the day, I absentmindedly collect my reading glasses. When finished reading in the sunroom, I'll fold my glasses and drop them in my pocket and head out to the garage where I'll wear that pair glasses while working on a project. When done, I'll fold the glasses and hang them from my shirt collar, forgetting that I already have a pair in my pocket. At the end of the day when changing into my pajamas, I realize I've collected multiple pairs of glasses, sometimes with two pair hanging from my shirt collar. The next day, not only can't I find my shoes, but when I sit down to read, I can't find my glasses.

It dawns on me that I often take my shoes off where I pick up and use my reading glasses. Wait a minute! A solution could be at hand. I should make a concerted effort to return my glasses to the side table when I'm finished reading and pick up my shoes to put them in the closet. This would avoid a pile of reading glasses on my bureau and shoes scattered around the house. Will I remember to do this? I'm reminded of my son's response when I asked him why he left his shoes around the house - I don't know.

The more accurate answer? I doubt it.

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Rick Farr's journey: outcast to president

One of the more astounding stories in the 50+ years of the Ocean Pines Association is the journey of Rick Farr from rejection as a board candidate in

regard to his OPA property ownership via some sort of a family trust. The challenge came after election ballots were in the hands of OPA voters.

a closed session to consult with counsel on Farr's eligibility to be a candidate. Minutes of the meeting state: "Secretary Camilla Rogers declared Mr. Farr ineligible during the closed session." The minutes then contain the following motion by Larry Perrone: "I move that since the Association Secretary de-certified Mr. Farr as a candidate for the board election, to continue the election process, to not count the votes recorded for Mr. Farr, and to let the votes be recorded per our bylaws and resolutions." Seconded by Ms. Rogers, the result was "4 in favor, 3 abstain."

Many political events and changes took place after that July 30, 2021 special board meeting when Farr was declared ineligible. Not one member of the then board of directors was at the board table when Farr was elected president last Saturday. Two individuals appointed to fill board vacancies by the prior board majority who rejected Farr lost in their effort to gain an elected seat on the board in the 2022 election.



Commentary

By Joe Reynolds
OceanPinesForum.com

July of 2021 to his election as president of the Ocean Pines Association on September 9, 2023.

Farr's saga began when he was a candidate for election to the OPA Board of Directors in 2021 and questions were raised about his eligibility. During a special board meeting on July 30, 2021, the then Board of Directors challenged Farr's eligibility with

Farr attended that special meeting and rose during the public comments period. Minutes of the meeting state: "Mr. Perrone called for a break to allow Mr. Farr to discuss his ownership status with Jeremy Tucker (OPA Attorney)." Tucker subsequently informed the board that Farr was eligible to make public comments.

However, the board then went into

Over the course of that special meeting, one had to marvel at Farr's composure during such a trying public process. Regardless of anyone's view of the politics involved at the time, Farr's calmness and deliberative demeanor were exceptional under the circumstances, perhaps due to his long service in the United States Air Force in Human Resources. He handled a difficult situation calmly and with dignity.

Farr comes to the OPA presidency with what appears to be a solid five-member board majority. His election as president was unanimous. Bruce Bright, the lawyer who battled and won Farr's case in court, is now OPA counsel.

In 2007, Farr retired from the Air Force after 22 years of service, continuing his Human Resources service-related work in the private sector. A full-time resident of Ocean Pines since 2019, he is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Worcester County Veterans Memorial at Ocean Pines Foundation.

However, Farr did not just accept the board's decision and walk away. He hired attorney Bruce Bright to challenge the decision in court. Political divisions formed in the community, a few remaining even today.

Association members hopefully look forward to a year of little political drama with a board united under Farr's solid policy leadership and continued exceptional operational control by General Manager John Viola.


Farr prevailed. The court found the OPA Board of Directors had acted in bad faith. Even after all the publicity during the actual election process, when the votes were eventually counted, as directed by a judge, Farr received more votes than any other candidate and finally took a Board of Directors seat on January 15, 2022 - nearly six months after the normal August election time.

Asked at the Saturday meeting how he felt about becoming OPA President, Farr said, "I am very humbled and honored to serve the OPA Membership and will do my best for the community."


The Dispatch newspaper quoted Farr as saying, "We do have to move on. The judge did his ruling, like it or not, and we have to move on. I'm not here to boast about what happened, I'm here to do the business of the community. Not the best interest of the board but the best interest of every citizen here."

Courier Almanac

On September 13, 1990, the drama series *Law & Order* premiered on NBC; it will go on to become one of the longest-running primetime dramas in TV history and spawn several popular spin-offs. According to the now-famous *Law & Order* formula, the first half of the hour-long program, which is set in New York City, focuses on the police as they investigate a crime, often inspired by real-life news stories, while the second part of the show centers on the prosecution of those accused of that crime. Each episode opens with a narrator stating: "In the criminal justice system, the people are represented by two separate yet equally important groups: the police, who investigate crime, and the district attorneys, who prosecute the offenders. These are their stories."



A survey from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) found that 46.3 million people aged 12 or older met the applicable criteria for having a substance use disorder (SUD) in 2021. The SAMHSA survey also found that the percentage of people classified as having a past year SUD was higher among young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 compared to youth and adults age 26 and older. Perhaps the most troubling finding in the SAMHSA survey concerned treatment for SUD. The survey found that 94 percent of people aged 12 or older with an SUD did not receive any treatment, and nearly all of those people indicated they did not feel as though they needed treatment.



Letters sent to The Courier for publication consideration must be signed and include a telephone number where the author can be reached to verify authenticity, if necessary. Letters are not corrected for spelling or grammar and priority will be given to letters of 300 words or less. Letters must be received by Friday at 5 p.m. They can be e-mailed to:

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Molecular shenagins in the air

By **Robert Pellenbarg**

Our investigation of the air begins with the concept of molecular bonding. Most chemical elements (ie. iron, oxygen, calcium, gold and many others) will form chemical bonds with each other to form compounds. Thus, iron and oxygen combine to give rust, hydrogen and oxygen will form water, and so forth. Elemental bonds may be strong, or weak, depending on the elements in the resulting molecular compound. Further, the compounds can be solids (rust), liquids (water), or gases (ammonia).

Note that Earth is continuously bombarded with solar radiation. This radiation will heat Earth's surface, and this heat will migrate away from the heated surface. Walk with care on an asphalt surface on a sunny, summer day.

Now, since Earth has air, the amount of solar radiation entering the atmosphere may not be the same amount of energy which leaves the planet. Ponder the moon for a moment. Luna has no atmosphere to trap radiation. When the sun shines, the lunar surface is beyond scalding hot.

Once the sun sets on the lunar landscape, bitter cold appears, instantaneously. Indeed, if Earth's atmosphere (air) did not contain certain key gases, the average surface temperature would be roughly 0°F, which is way below freezing.

So, what key gases are important in keeping average global temperature from plummeting? Water vapor, methane (carbon combined with hydrogen), and carbon dioxide are crucial in this atmospheric temperature balancing act. Curiously, while these three gases are essentially inert in the lower, near ground atmosphere, the gases do interact with the solar radiation. Specifically, the bonds in these gaseous molecules absorb infrared radiation (IR). IR is what one feels holding a hand close to a hot stove, or a hot asphalt road, or what is used (an IR lamp) in a restaurant to keep food warm prior to being served.

As the bonds in the three important gases absorb IR, this radiation is trapped. The bonds in the gases may stretch, bend or vibrate, but the bonds do absorb IR. A very good example of

this mechanism is the desert. By definition, a desert is dry, and the air in a desert is also dry. During the day, a desert can become quite hot, but, once the sun sets, the desert will cool markedly, and rapidly. Death Valley may be scorching in the day, but come evening, a jacket may be just the ticket in the cool of the late evening. This cooling is a result of the fact that there is little to no water vapor in the atmosphere to retain solar energy from the daytime.

Water vapor is a key molecule able to retain IR, and water vapor in the atmosphere varies depending on season, geographical location, and local tem-

perature. However, methane and carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere are influenced by biological activity. Dairy cows burp methane, and rice paddies ooze methane into the atmosphere, for example. Fires, metabolic processes (we breathe in oxygen, and exhale carbon dioxide), and certain volcanic activity release carbon dioxide. Thus, as methane and carbon dioxide permeate and build in the atmosphere, more IR can be trapped. Recall that certain levels of these gases boost Earth's surface temperature to well above freezing. However, too much of a good thing, too much of key gases, could be detrimental.

OPA Board selects officers, meeting dates

Rick Farr will take over as Ocean Pines Association President after a unanimous vote during an organization meeting, Saturday, September 9 at the Golf Clubhouse.

Also decided during the meeting, Stuart Lakernick will serve as Association Vice President, John Latham will be secretary, and Monica Rakowski will be the treasurer. Each was a unanimous selection.

Other Board appointments included Linda Martin as assistant secretary, Steve Phillips as assistant treasurer, UHY as the auditing firm, Bruce Bright (Ayles, Jenkins, Gordy & Almand) as legal counsel, and Doug Parks as parliamentarian.

Directors also set the regular Board meeting schedule for the next year:

- Saturday, Sept. 30
- Saturday, Oct. 28
- Saturday, Nov. 18
- Saturday, Dec. 16
- Saturday, Jan. 20
- Sunday, Feb. 4 (town hall)
- Saturday, Feb. 17
- Saturday, March 23
- Saturday, April 20
- Saturday, May 18
- Saturday, June 15
- Saturday, July 20
- Saturday, Aug. 10 (annual meeting)

To view a video of the meeting, visit <https://youtu.be/UKHMHktbXxM>.



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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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faq
from page 4

<https://www.oceanpines.org/documents/10184/90460/Amended+and+Restated+By-Laws+Amended+5-24-2022.pdf>.

Q. Some homeowners throw grass clippings and other lawn debris into the canals, as well as cigarette butts and other trash. This can increase harmful levels of nitrogen and phosphates that damage the environment. What can be done to address this issue and to increase public awareness?

A. Any policy related to the canals would fall under the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), as there is currently nothing in Ocean Pines' governing documents to allow for enforcement. The Association will reach out to DNR, with the goal of having more publicity on this issue published in a future Ocean Pines newsletter.

Q. Why does OPA use Northstar for financial processes, instead of something much cheaper like QuickBooks?

A. Northstar, rather than just serving as financial software, helps to run many of the Association's operations and is considered "club management software." Along with running everyday financial systems, it also runs processes for billing, accounting and membership, and the public and private sides of the oceanpines.org website.

Q. Has OPA considered using electronic signs instead of the old marquee signs? What will the signs look like and what will the upkeep costs be?

A. The Communications Committee has proposed converting the North Gate marquee sign to a digital sign, although a motion to do so failed during the 2023 annual meeting. A 2023 online survey of 401 people found that roughly 61% said that, in general, they are "in favor of replacing the current signs with new digital signs."

A mockup of the signs submitted by the committee showed a 36x60-inch LED sign that was white with black letters.

For more information on the proposed signs, contact the Communications Committee here:

<https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/communications-committee>.

Q. Has OPA considered converting the North Gate exit onto Route 589 to two lanes, to help improve the flow of traffic and avoid backups?

A. The Association will consider this in the future, but any decision would need to involve Maryland State Highway, as the change would involve access to a state road and would also require a redesign of the North Gate Bridge.

Q. Has OPA considered changing the governing documents to allow for fines of continuing ARC violations?

A. While certain section of Ocean Pines already have in their Declaration of Restrictions (DRs) the system for fines (Sections 12, 15B, 17, 18C, 18E, 18F, 18G, 18S, 19, and 20), adding fines in the remaining sections of Ocean Pines would require a change to the remaining DRs. Doing this would require 50%+1 of the owners of each section approving adding fines, which would need to be done by a referendum vote.

Q. Some violations lead to multiple letters, and then action taken in court, but the process is currently very slow. Can anything else be done about these violations to help protect property values?

A. Resolution M-01 states the violation process. While some consider the process to be slow, it is in place to assure that all rules and regulations are followed prior to going to court for the violation. To view M-01, visit <https://www.oceanpines.org/documents/10184/122647/M-01+5-2-20.pdf>.

Q. Does OPA offer guest passes to pools, for homeowners to give out to their guests?

A. The Association currently does not offer guest passes. However, guests may purchase a daily pool pass.

Q. Why can't the Yacht Club be an adults-only pool or have times for adults only?

A. Because of Ocean Pines Association's 501(c)(4) nonprofit status,

all amenities by law must be open to the public and cannot discriminate against certain groups because of age or other reasons. This is based on a 2012 U.S. Court of Appeals decision involving the Association that found, "...to be exempt from taxation, the trade or business undertaken by a tax-exempt 501(c)(4) organization must itself causally advance or contribute importantly to the organization's promotion of the common good and welfare of the general public."

Q. Can anything be done about the abundance of noisy, young children at the Yacht Club Pool?

A. The lifeguard on duty should immediately address any safety situations, such as a child being unruly or causing harm to other guests. Normal play noises are not considered a safety issue.

Q. What can be done about speeding and other safety issues affecting pedestrians, bicyclists, dog walkers, etc. along Ocean Parkway and other streets in the community? What is Ocean Pines doing overall to enforce traffic laws in the community?

A. The Ocean Pines Police Department (OPPD) would like to remind all residents of their responsibility to adhere to traffic regulations that exist to promote

safety. All drivers in the Pines are requested to respect the posted speed limits, while all pedestrians and cyclists are reminded of their responsibility to walk and ride on the correct side of the road.

Walkers and joggers are permitted to walk or run on the opposite side of the road facing traffic, while cyclists are required to ride with the same direction of the traffic flow. Cyclists are also reminded they have the same responsibility to adhere to traffic related signage that cars are held to, including stopping for stop signs.

The OPPD takes the safety of residents seriously and will be patrolling throughout the community and will be monitoring the speed of motorists with the use of radar.

Q. What can be done about improperly parked cars in Ocean Pines? What is the best way to handle such issues?

A. Maryland law allows vehicles to be parked on the street if they do not interfere with the flow of traffic. As for vehicles parked on a property (such as on the grass) instead of the designated driveway, the Compliance, Permit and Inspections (CPI) Department will initiate a violation for these vehicles. To contact CPI, visit <https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/cpi>.

For additional questions, contact info@oceanpines.org.

OPA announces Hitchens as new Aquatics manager

Ocean Pines Association announced a transition within the Aquatics department, as General Manager John Viola last Tuesday introduced Michelle Hitchens as the new Aquatics manager.



Michelle Hitchens

Hitchens grew up outside of Philadelphia and moved to the Delmarva area in 2004. Starting at a young age, she worked at an array of recreation and aquatic facilities.

Hitchens, the mother of four children, moved to the Berlin area

and joined the Aquatics department for Ocean Pines 11 years ago.

With Ocean Pines, she has coordinated Aquatics exercise classes and programs, taught exercise classes and lessons, supervised instructors and employees of the department, and helped the department to run smoothly overall.

Hitchens said she is excited to move forward into the Aquatics manager position. She loves working for the Ocean Pines Association and for the Aquatics department.

She plans to make the transition as smooth and comfortable as possible for the staff, and to make the department and facilities a joy for all to take part in.

Third annual Oktoberfest pickleball tournament scheduled

One of the biggest racquet sports events of the year returns next month with the third annual Oktoberfest pickleball tournament, September 29-30 and October 1 at the Ocean Pines Racquet Center.

The event each year draws several hundred players and hundreds more spectators, and is the only pickleball tournament with cash prizes held on the Delmarva Peninsula.

"The Oktoberfest tournament is a chance for members and visitors to en-

gage in friendly competition at what we think is the premier racquet sports center on the shore," Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks Director Debbie Donahue said. "The tournament showcases our facility, and it helps connect players from diverse skill levels and backgrounds across several states."

Tournament Co-Directors Cathy and Darryl Noble said the event is also a wonderful demonstration of the sport, which continues to be the fastest growing in the U.S.

"Pickleball combines the best of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong, and is an absolute gem in the world of recreation," Cathy Noble said. "Its versatility, fast-paced nature, and easy accessibility make it a game loved by people of all ages and skill levels. The Oktoberfest tournament is a great way for spectators to see what all the fuss is about."

The Oktoberfest pickleball tournament will include onsite food vendors serving breakfast and lunch, as well as

a beer truck and other beverage options for sale.

For players, registration is \$45, and the registration deadline is Sept. 15.

Tournament organizers will post the full tournament schedule, including match start times, two weeks prior to the tournament. Organizers will break out age/skill brackets accordingly about three weeks prior to the tournament.

For more information, contact Cathy Noble at cmznoble@gmail.com.

Organizers are also seeking sponsors for the event at three different levels: gold (\$1,000), silver (\$500), and bronze (\$250). For information on sponsorships, contact Donahue at ddonahue@oceanpines.org.

Power Squadron to offer safe boat course

The Ocean City Power Squadron, a unit of the United States Power Squadrons, will present a comprehensive safe boating course beginning September 25.

This is an eight-hour course and will be given on four consecutive nights at the Ocean Pines Community Center starting on September 25 and continuing September 26, 27 and 28. This includes a review and exam on the last night. Registration can be made on-line at ocpsabc@gmail.com. The course

will run from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. each night.

There is a \$25 fee for the course material. Middle and high school students age 18 and under can take the course, including material, for free.

Anyone born after July 1, 1972, is required to satisfactorily complete a safe boating class to operate a recreational vessel or personal watercraft in Maryland. (January 1, 1978 in Delaware). Successfully completing this class also satisfies the require-

ments nationwide.

This course covers basic boat handling, rules of the road, navigation, federal and state regulations, aids to navigation, and required equipment, among other topics.

Statistics show that in 82 percent of boating fatalities, the captain had no formal boating education. The Ocean City Power Squadron encourages all boaters to complete a boating safety class.

For information and early registration, call 443-604-5851.

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The Blarney of Ireland

I started to write this column as a comparison between the Chesapeake Bay's skipjacks and the Galway Bay hooker boats. Both are task specific designed working boats that have served their watermen well. It would have been an interesting article but I got distracted.

Instead, I visited Ireland last month for the first time. The Emerald Isle was as charming as advertised: green, low rock fence lines, castle ruins, pleasant abuses of the English language, and a zillion excuses and places to imbibe.

The Irish charm is rooted in its past. Since the beginning of the potato famine in 1845, Ireland's chief export has been emigrants. Today, Ireland is



more like the Promised Land for visitors returning to connect with their ancestry; but, in reality, Celtic's history is laced with conquest and oppressions, by the Vikings and Brits in particular.

The Vikings marauded Ireland using long ships that could be rowed or sailed and could be configured for passengers or cargo or fishing or combat. Viking prowess knew no bounds and their ships were only limited by their wooden hulls.

Then the Brits built walled fortresses to keep 'their kind' safe from the indigenous Irish barbarians and deprived the Celts access to modern thinking, human rights or commercial prosperity for centuries. This slowed Irish development and reduced their social maturation to clannish bickering.

It wasn't until 1921 that the Republic of Ireland overcame its hallmark kind spirit and docile individuality and

mustered enough political indignation to seek and gain its independence but the Irish persona has always been too laid back and internally focused to project an aggressive global military influence. There is so little military presence in Ireland that the organizers of the Notre Dame – Navy college football match (in the US we call it a game) which was played in Dublin on August 26, had to solicit the US Embassy Marine honor guard to present the colors before the match/game.

Apparently, the Irish DNA of clannish bickering, and their enthusiasm for hurling – the precursor of Canadian ice hockey, and intramural barroom brawls – think John Wayne and 'The Quiet Man' satisfy any appetite for good, clean competition.

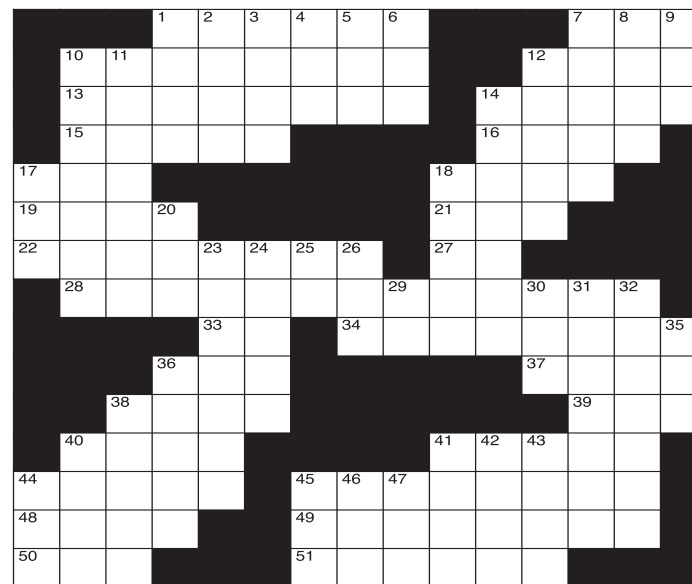
Today, the most noteworthy contributions that Ireland is making to humanity are Guinness stout and blarney. Never mind that Barack Obama has a truck stop named for himself near his Irish ancestors' home or that there is a statue of JFK in a Galway park. It's Guinness and blarney.

In Dublin, they deliver Guinness in tanker trucks to retail establishments like we deliver gas to gas stations. Take a close look at the nearby photo. Tis beyond me verbal skills to effectively describe the joy and decibel level in these pubs.

For the temperance minded who abhor 'a taste,' let me assure you that Ireland has more to offer. With all me wits about meself and all my previous Guinness and Jameson indulging well down stream of me kidneys, I experienced enlightenment. I visited Blarney Castle.

It was there that meself saw the future. The little people who dash about in the broad daylight shadows teasing the visitors with pots of gold have discovered something more valuable than gold. One leprechaun giggled and

please see blarney on page 14

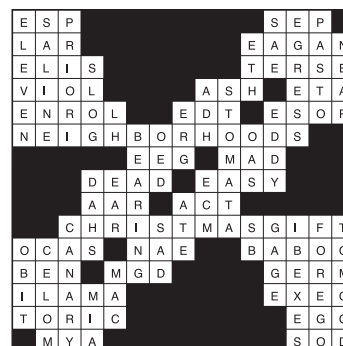


CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Type of crayon
- 7. Fashion accessory
- 10. Most cerebral
- 12. Incline from vertical
- 13. Dependent on
- 14. Broken in
- 15. Strongly desires
- 16. Mounted soldier
- 17. Ad __: when necessary
- 18. Cattle
- 19. Ottoman military commanders
- 21. __ student, learns healing
- 22. Composed in poetic meter
- 27. Promotional material
- 28. Where people live
- 33. Sodium
- 34. Embarrassing
- 36. Medical man
- 37. Mother of Hermes
- 38. One who saves the day
- 39. Tooth caregiver
- 40. Not clothed
- 41. Slope covered with loose stones
- 44. Used to cook
- 45. Praises enthusiastically
- 48. Rooney is a famous one
- 49. Beekeeper
- 50. Pigpen
- 51. Potato chip brand

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Living quarters
- 2. Horizontal passage
- 3. Attacks
- 4. Vietnamese offensive
- 5. Midway between east and southeast
- 6. Confined (abbr.)
- 7. Book of Esther antagonist
- 8. Port in Yemen
- 9. CNN's founder
- 10. Type of bulb
- 11. Prepare
- 12. Promoted
- 14. Dinner jackets
- 17. Partner to cheese
- 18. Nebraska city
- 20. Human gene
- 23. Pays no attention to
- 24. Lowland South American plain
- 25. Blood group
- 26. Mauna __, Hawaiian volcano
- 29. Atomic #37
- 30. Unit of electrical resistance
- 31. Jeweled crowns
- 32. Nastiest
- 35. Traditional cars need it
- 36. Bowler hat
- 38. Robust
- 40. Not straight
- 41. Stony waste matter
- 42. Have an interest in
- 43. Jacob __, journalist
- 44. Maintains possession of
- 45. Swiss river
- 46. Average cost of market goods
- 47. Spanish soldier: El __



Answers for September 6

Arts Council appoints new board member

The Worcester County Arts Council announced the appointment of Barbara A. Johnson of Berlin, MD to its Board of Directors.



Barbara Johnson

Barbara is a retired elementary school teacher and media specialist. Born and raised in the Chicago area, she graduated from Northern Illinois University with a bachelor's degree in elementary education.

During her teaching career, Barbara incorporated art into many aspects of the school curriculum.

"It is important to bring different forms of art into the lives of children and adults." Since moving to the Eastern Shore, Barbara has volunteered with Rackliffe House and Worcester County Arts Council (WCAC). Barbara looks forward to using her skills and experiences with WCAC and community leaders to encourage art programs throughout the county.

Interested in joining the Arts Council's Board? The WCAC is currently seeking new board members, specifically those who reside in the southern communities of Worcester County - Snow Hill and Pocomoke City. Board members are elected for a three-year term and may be elected to a second term for a total of 6 years of service. We seek a balance of representation on the board - geographic, artistic discipline, constituent/non-constituent, age, racial/cultural background, gender, and organizational experience.

Each board member adds value to the organization by bringing their experiences as a resident of the region, a member of their community, an artist in their discipline, and many other circumstances that influence their whole being.

For more information, please contact Anna Mullis, Executive Director at 410-641-0809 or anna@worcester-countyartsCouncil.org.

To learn about the Worcester County Arts Council's programs and community services, please visit www.worcestercountyartsCouncil.org.

Church to host crab feast

The Church of the Holy Spirit at 100th St. and Coastal Highway in Ocean City will be having a fundraising crab feast on October 1 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Food will be served until 4:30 p.m.

The dine-in menu will include crabs, fried chicken, corn on the cob, hush puppies, lemonade, iced tea, soda and desserts. Carry-out will also be available. The carry-out meal will include six crabs, two pieces of chicken, corn on the cob, hush puppies, dessert and a drink.

Crabs are medium large/large and will come from Rippon's Seafood. The chicken is being provided by Higgins Crab House.

In addition to the food, there will be a chance auction and a 50/50 drawing.

The cost for adults is \$45; for children ages 6 to 10, it's \$20; children under 6 eat free.

Tickets are available now by contacting the Church office at 410-723-1973 or by calling Monica at 443-235-8942. There will be a very limited number of tickets at the door, so pre-sales are strongly encouraged.

Proceeds will benefit the Church of the Holy Spirit and its outreach programs.

Refunds will be provided only in the event that the crab feast must be canceled.

Bring your own mallet!

Butt Tales

Dateline: Susquehanna Flats, 70s or 80s

By Joe Reynolds
OceanPinesForum.com

By any measure, it was an exceptional afternoon on the water. Fishing buddy Chuck Edghill and I launched Chuck's boat a few hours before sunset at the Havre de Grace public boat ramp at the head of the Chesapeake Bay. Sweater weather. No wind. Suprisingly, as we motored from the ramp area out onto the Susquehanna Flats, not one other boat could be seen. We were hoping to hook up with some trophy rockfish on fly tackle. Little did I know the afternoon was to produce a memorable Butt Tale.

The Susquehanna Flats is a vast six-mile-wide shallow area just below the end of the more confined half-mile wide Susquehanna River. Captain John Smith was one of the first Europeans to survey this area in 1608, and he named the river for the Susquehannock tribe of Native Americans. The Susquehanna River originates near Cooperstown, New York, some 444 miles from the upper Chesapeake Bay. Eons ago, the river free-flowed all the way to the continental shelf south of Ocean City at the Norfolk Canyon, ending in a massive waterfall. Back then, the ocean was about 60 miles east of Ocean City.

In more modern times the Susquehanna Flats is home to a variety of fish and waterfowl attracted to the expansive area of shallow water and extensive aquatic vegetation. The Flats has seen ups and downs from an environmental standpoint, with Hurricane Agnes destroying much vegetation and depositing massive amounts of silt. Incredibly, the

Susquehanna River represents 50% of all the freshwater flowing into the entire Chesapeake Bay, delivering about 24 billion gallons on a typical day.

Then there is "body booting" on the Flats, a rather extreme way to hunt waterfowl wearing chest waders while standing among a spread of decoys in shallow water.

Returning to the Butt Tale, the striper fishing was exceptional, at least until my cigarette lighter failed. A catastrophe of Biblical magnitude. Anxiety swept over me like a continuous wave of cold water. What to do? What to do? Edghill was no help. He did not smoke. I checked tackle boxes for matches. Barren.

While debating whether to ask Edghill to run miles back to the dock for matches, it hit me. The idea was pure genius. Cut a small piece of cloth from my undershirt, grip it with a pair of fishing pliers, and create a makeshift, improvised giant Q-Tip.

I turned to Edghill and said, "Chuck, I'm gonna dip the cloth in gasoline. Then I'll remove one of the engine spark plug covers and hold the gas-soaked cloth between the plug and the cover. You turn the motor over and the spark will ignite the cloth."

He replied, "Are you nuts?"

"It will work," I insisted.

"Not with my engine," he barked. But Edghill had my back, and a big smile crossed his face. He reached into a locker box, pulled out an emergency boat flare, and gave me a light. Chain smoking was then the order of what remained of the day.

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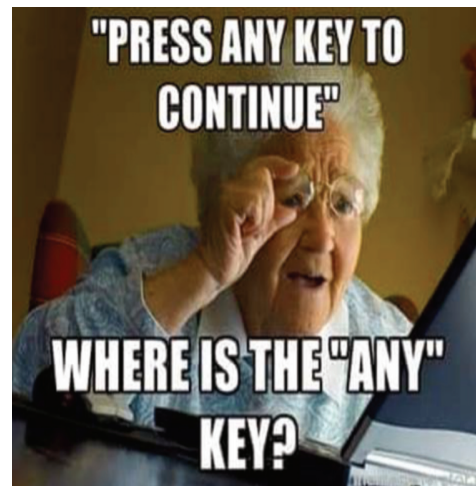
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Some things to think about

Gathered from the internet by **Jack Barnes**



"Your insurance will cover either the vasectomy or the anesthetic. Your call."

In case you feel bad about missing your exercise today, ponder this:

- The inventor of the treadmill died at the age of 54.
- The inventor of gymnastics died at the age of 57.
- The world bodybuilding champion died at the age of 41.
- The best footballer in the world, Maradona, died at the age of 60.
- James Fuller Fixx, credited with helping start America's fitness revolution by popularizing the sport of running, died of a heart attack while jogging at age 52.

BUT ...

- The KFC inventor, Colonel Sanders, died at 94.
- Cigarette maker Charles Winston died at the age of 102.
- The inventor of opium died at the age of 116, in an earthquake.
- And, the Hennessy Liquor inventor died at 98.

How did smart people come to the conclusion that exercise prolongs life?

The rabbit is always jumping up and down, but it lives for only two years, and the turtle, that doesn't exercise at all, lives 400 years.

Get some rest, chill, stay cool, eat, drink and enjoy your life!

blarney
from page 12

called it intuitive automation.

Himself says to me that at the end of his rainbow, there was a perfect solution where every TV remote, every cell phone, every personal computer, every app, every ATM, every airport kiosk, every self-service gas pump, every automated fast food menu machine, every online 'help' resource behaved the same way and with only one password.

Sure I was smitten by the prospect and asked how I would be getting there. His eyes twinkled as he pointed to the castle. "Go climb the 125 steps and be kissing the Blarney Stone,"

himself says, "and you too will be full of it" – the blarney he meant. Then he laughed and vanished into the souvenir shop. I hurried after the little guy and found himself dangling at the end of a key chain on sale for 4.95€.

Would I ever go back to the Old Sod I ask meself? Maybe, but before I do, I think I will be honing me blarney so I can brag to the barkeeps that Michael Collins, Ireland's George Washington, is me cousin. Who knows? Someone might name a truck stop after me or, at least, stand meself a pint.

Stay safe. Stay dry.

Dan Collins can be reached for comment at dancollins.ocean-pines@gmail.com

Bertino to host town meeting

Worcester County Commissioner President Chip Bertino will host a town meeting on Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 6 p.m. at the Ocean Pines library. Commissioner Bertino will give an update on what is going on around the county.

Commissioner Bertino's guests include Worcester County Sheriff Matthew Crisafulli, Lauren Cooper, executive director of the Cricket Center and Jennifer Keener, director of Development Review and Permitting.

Sheriff Crisafulli will discuss new discipline programs to be implemented within county schools. Ms. Cooper will talk about the Cricket

Center's main objective to reduce trauma to child victims by bringing all necessary local agencies together. Ms. Keener will provide information on the redistricting efforts within the county.

"This will be an informative meeting," said Commissioner Bertino. "There's a lot going on in the county and I believe my guests will have a lot to share."

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