

# The Courier

December 13, 2023 Volume 24 Number 14



**Spirit** - The PreK-3 students at Ocean City Elementary are in the holiday spirit. Their elf "Jingle" surprised them with ornaments to color and hang on their classroom tree. Pictured: Kara Casale and Grace Heflin's PreK-3 class with their special ornaments.





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# Annual Penguin Swim returns

Get ready to dunk your penguin tail in the frigid waters of the Atlantic Ocean! Atlantic General Hospital's 30th Annual Penguin Swim is set for Monday, January 1 and will take place once again on the beach at The Princess Royale Oceanfront Hotel at 91st Street in Ocean City, Maryland!

All participants are required to register either online or in person, and check in on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day to receive a wristband that allows access to the swim area. Advance online registration is recommended. Participants can register online by visiting [www.aghpenguinswim.org](http://www.aghpenguinswim.org). The registration fee is \$30

per participant if registering on or before December 30. The registration fee is \$35 per participant if registering on December 31 or January 1.

Participants are encouraged to come to pre-registration and advance check-in at the Princess Royale from 2 p.m. 4 p.m. on New Year's Eve. Avoid long lines on event day and pick up wristbands and shirts early. Participants will also receive an additional Penguin Swim item during advance check-in!

Event day registration and check-in will begin at 9 a.m., ending promptly at 11:30 a.m., with the main event at 12 p.m. on the beach at 91st street. The time in between will be chock full of fun activities the whole family will enjoy: costume contests, face painting, mermaids and more. The Bull on the Beach team will parade down the beach at 11:45 a.m. from 94th Street to the swim area in front of the Princess Royale. Spectators are welcome.

The awards ceremony will take place in the atrium immediately following the swim. Special recognition awards will be given to Oldest and Youngest Penguins, and the Penguin who traveled the furthest. Trophies for first, second and third place will be awarded to those who raise the most money in divisions for: Adults (19 & over); Youth (18 & Under); Teams/Businesses; Community Groups/Organizations; Youth/Family.

Unable to attend? No problem. You can still participate in the Cyber Swim. Register online, then take an ice-cold dip wherever you are and post a photo or video of your personal Penguin Swim on social media using #OCPenguinSwim. Make sure your post is public so we can see it!

Contact Laura Powell at the Atlantic General Hospital Foundation office at 410-641-9671 or go to [www.aghpenguinswim.org](http://www.aghpenguinswim.org) for more information.



## Health Dept. seeks mini-grant proposals

The Worcester County Health Department requests mini-grant proposals from community-based organizations, workplaces, churches, or other interested organizations for youth teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection (STI) prevention education: True You Maryland Teen Health Community Education program. To be eligible for up to \$6,500 in grant funding, your program must be an organization that serves young people in Worcester County. Funded organizations will be expected to deliver the True You Maryland Teen Health Community education program to a minimum of 25 Worcester County youth ages 14-19.

"We're encouraging groups that work with youth in Worcester County to apply for True You Maryland Teen Health education grant funding to help us spread awareness about comprehensive sexual health education and teen pregnancy and STI prevention," said Mimi Dean, Director of Prevention Services, Worcester County Health Department.

Proposals should be submitted to the Worcester County Health Department by 4:30 p.m. on January 5, 2024. For more information or to request an application packet, please call the Worcester County Health Department Prevention Services at 410-632-1100 ext. 1103.



**Donation** - The Ocean City-Berlin Optimist Club recently donated \$3,000 to Toys for Tots. Accepting the check for Toys for Tots is **Dena Holloway** (left). **Christina Dolomount-Brown** (right) is presenting the check.

### The majority of people hear Christmas and naturally think of December 24 and 25.

For millions of Christians, these two dates mark Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, respectively, which is when Christians commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ. In fact, the word Christmas comes from the phrase "Mass of Christ." However, there are certain faithful who will not be celebrating Christmas on December 25. These are namely those who belong to Orthodox, Greek Orthodox and Coptic Orthodox churches, among others. These churches primarily trace their origins to Eastern Europe and portions of Asia and Africa, including Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Serbia, Greece, Armenia, and Ethiopia. The churches utilize the former Julian calendar for religious observations. This places Christmas on January 7. It also is believed that 12 days after Jesus was born, three magi visited him to shower him with blessings and gifts, an event known as the Epiphany. Some recognize Christmas as occurring on this day, which is January 6. In fact, the "true" Christmas holiday takes place between Christ's birth and the Epiphany, or the 12 days of Christmas. Candlemas, which comes 40 days after Christmas, also is considered the official end of the Christmas season for some.



# Self-care strategies to protect long-term mental health

Mental health has always been important, but the need for people to prioritize their emotional, psychological and social well-being gained greater attention during the COVID-19 pandemic. Social distancing restrictions designed to reduce cases of COVID-19 contributed to feelings of isolation, depression and anxiety in millions of individuals across the globe, sparking a heightened sense of curiosity about what people can do to safeguard their mental health in the short-term but also over the course of their lives.

Pandemic-related restrictions have long since been lifted throughout much of the world. But the need to pri-



oritize mental health remains. The National Institute of Mental Health notes that self-care can play a vital role in maintaining mental health. With that in mind, individuals can consider these strategies as they look to safeguard their mental health over the long haul.

**Exercise regularly.** Exercise benefits the body in myriad ways, and those benefits extend to mental health. The NIMH reports that a 30-minute daily walk can boost mood. In addition, the United Kingdom-based Mental Health Foundation reports that regular physical activity positively affects self-esteem and can even lead to a reduction in stress and anxiety. That's important to note, as the online medical resource Healthline reports that chronic anxiety can adversely affect the body's nervous, cardiovascular, digestive, im-

mune, and respiratory systems.

**Maintain social connections.** The NIMH also touts the benefits of maintaining social connections, including relying on friends and family for emotional support and practical help. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that people who are socially connected and maintain stable and supportive relationships are more likely to have better mental health outcomes than those who don't.

**Eat a nutritious, balanced diet.** The American Society for Nutrition notes that diet can be an important ally for people looking to improve and preserve their mental health. Numerous studies have examined the relationship between diet and mental health, and the ASN notes a growing body of research suggests a strong connection between a healthy diet and mental health. A 2019 review published in The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found that increased consumption of fruits and vegetables positively affects psychological health. That same review also indicated daily vegetable consumption provides a therapeutic effect that can help to reduce symptoms among people with

clinical depression.

**Resolve to read more.** Much like exercise, reading has been linked to a host of positive health outcomes, including mental health benefits. A 2009 study from researchers at the University of Sussex found that reading can reduce stress by as much as 68 percent. Escapism is another potentially potent benefit of reading, as a recent report in *Psychology Today* noted that researchers believe narrative absorption, which refers to the experience of being immersed or engaged while reading a story, provides an escape or opportunity for mental reflection.

**Self-care can go a long way toward promoting long-term mental health.** Various strategies and activities fall under the umbrella of self-care, and each can have a profound and lasting effect on mental health.



## Winner

Usually, Alex Marginean walks to her job at the Princess Royale Hotel on 91<sup>st</sup> Street from her home in Ocean City. That all may change now that the raffle ticket Alex purchased months ago was pulled from a bin on Veterans Day, awarding her a new electric bike.

The annual electric bike raffle was held again this year by the First State Detachment of the Marine Corps League, whose members sold raffle tickets at events in the Ocean City area and lower Sussex County, DE. Proceeds were raised to benefit the Semper Fi & America's Fund and the Believe in Tomorrow Foundation.

The Semper Fi & America's Fund supports critically wounded, ill, and injured service members and their families. Believe in Tomorrow offers hospital care and vacation respite services for families with critically ill children. The foundation has four vacation homes in Ocean City/Fenwick Island.

Getting ready for the next raffle, the Marines have already begun assembling the electric bike that will be raffled off in 2024, where once again the Men in Red will be visible, selling tickets at events around the region.

Above: Some of the First State Detachment members with Alex Marginean.

## The origins of 'The 12 Days of Christmas'

Christmas carols can be heard far and wide from Thanksgiving weekend through Christmas Day. "The 12 Days of Christmas" is one of the most recognizable carols, and for good reason, as the popular song can trace its history back several centuries. Researchers have traced the earliest printed version of the poem on which the song is based all the way back to 1780. That's three years before the signing of the Treaty of Paris, which officially ended the American Revolutionary War. The song has long been suspected to have been a way for Catholics in Britain to teach their children the catechism, as the 1700s was a controversial period for Catholicism in the country. However, no documentary evidence exists in support of that theory, and many historians feel it is inaccurate. Others indicate that, while 1780 is likely the first time the poem was printed, the poem is likely much older than that, with origins potentially in France or Scotland. What is known is that the version many people recognize today, namely in song form, can be traced to the early twentieth century, when English singer and composer Frederic Austin first popularized the melody for the song. Austin performed that version of the song beginning in 1905, and it was first published in 1909.



## The decorating fanatic

It's that most wonderful time of year once again when my wife turns into a Christmas decorating fanatic. The transformation occurs shortly after the Thanksgiving leftovers are put away and lasts until just about Christmas Eve. The

inches to the left one year so there would be room for the Christmas tree. My pride in this accomplishment was as short lived as my breathing, when informed the tree was to go in another room.

Most families enjoy the process of decorating the Christmas tree. It's supposed to be a fun time when everyone comes together, singing Christmas carols, as they place ornaments on the tree. At our house when the tree goes up, I'm banished to another room. My wife is a stick-

ler for how the lights should be placed on the tree. It's frightening how she becomes unrelenting in her pursuit for the perfectly lit tree. One year, I think it was 1992, I thought I would surprise her by putting the lights up myself. She walked into the room, looked at the tree and then looked at me with a look that would have melted Frosty the Snowman regardless of the outside temperature.

She then proceeded to undo what I had done, rearranging the lights, making sure they were not just on the tips of the branches but also inside the boughs as well. This gave the tree depth I was told unlike my concept of throwing the light strings in the air and letting them land haphazardly on the tree.

For about 50 weeks out of the year my wife is a very kind, decent and understanding person. However, during the two-week process of decorating the house, she can become Imelda Marcos on steroids as she displays, among other decorations, at least nine different nativity scenes, places a dozen pieces of lighted ceramic pieces given to us by my grandmother, erects and decorates five differently-themed Christmas trees and prepares to bake treats for family and friends.

In the end though our home always looks wonderful. Despite her difficult manner during the decorating periods, my wife is tremendously talented and it shows. The fact I only emerge from behind the sofa after she is finished in no way diminishes my respect for her abilities.



### ***It's All About...***

By **Chip Bertino**

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time in between is a nail-biting experience for those living in the house or who get anywhere near her. In short, that's me.

No fool am I. I learned a long time ago that there is no practical way to interrupt the process that unfolds more grandly each year. During the early years of our marriage, I attempted to make suggestions, even offering to assist in putting up decorations. These entreaties were met with either blank stares or, if I had attempted to, for instance, arrange a manger scene, comments like, "this looks nothing like a manger scene, *you idiot*." I added those last two words for dramatic effect. Because even though the words weren't uttered, my wife was no doubt thinking them. It would come as no surprise if in a previous life my wife was at the original manger scene orchestrating where the Holy Family should sit, where the camels should graze and when the little Drummer Boy should begin playing. Cue the Wise Men.

We have celebrated 40 Christmases together, a reality that makes me happy. Yet early on, it became apparent that my attempts to assist in decorating were akin to swimming against a raging current. A lot of effort was expended but when all was said and done, I got nowhere. So, I resign myself to sitting in a corner chair waiting for instructions to either retrieve or return a box to the attic.

During the early years, I have made some contributions. For instance, it was me who moved the 700-pound television armoire two

## GREAT STOCKING STUFFER



Author and columnist Chip Bertino's book, *It's All About... Some of My Favorites*, is a collection of some of his favorite columns written during the past two decades.

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# That's Right!

By Carol Frazier

## Folks, it didn't start with college

We've all seen the news coverage of the pro-Hamas/anti-Israel protests on college campuses and in major cities around the country. Well, if you watch the "right" media and pay attention to certain news websites you've seen it. If not, maybe you're blissfully unaware that, less than 80 years after the end of World War II, antisemitism has raised its ugly head here in America.

I find it highly doubtful that your normal high school student just goes off to college and within a few months becomes a raging antisemite calling for the destruction of the "apartheid" Jewish state and the elimination of Jews everywhere. The seeds have already been planted.

How did we get to the place in

which the presidents of three of our finest, "elite" institutions of "higher learning" have to say, in Congressional testimony, that whether or not marching for the destruction of the Jewish state and calling for the death of Jews is only "a violation of university policy" based on "context". What "context" would apply here? Were the same students calling for the death of all Muslims, would "context" be required in order to find this evil and a violation of university policy?

How did we get to the place in which not one of our left wing, Democrat-allied women's rights organizations can bring itself to criticize and condemn the horrific rapes by Hamas terrorists of Jewish

women - rapes so brutal that, in some cases, their pelvises were broken? You know, the women's rights organizations whose leaders most likely majored in "women's studies" at these and other "elite" institutions?

As I stated in my opening, this didn't start in college. I believe that what we see happening in our country since October 7 is a result of the indoctrination of American students for the last three to four decades through alteration of the history curriculum, and then more recently, within the last 15 years of so,

Through the inclusion of Critical Race Theory, which has been slipped into school curriculums unbeknownst to most parents. So, students were indoctrinated and well-prepared for the full-on hardcore "CRT" they get in college. At its base, CRT teaches that all white people are racists who must apologize to "people of color" for their "privilege." Somehow, all Jews have been deemed "white" which would really surprise my friend Miriam.

I believe the proof of my contention is contained in a survey from 2020 wherein "almost two-thirds of young American adults do not know that 6 million Jews were killed during the Holocaust, and more than one in 10 believe Jews caused the Holocaust". (my note: just as the Palestinians of today and a lot of American Democrats are blaming the Jews for the horrific, barbaric October 7, 2023 terror attack in Israel that murdered

over 1,200 Jews including babies). In addition, "almost a quarter of the respondents said they believed the Holocaust was a myth, or had been exaggerated, or they weren't sure. One in eight said they had definitely not heard, or didn't think they had heard, about the Holocaust". See The Guardian, September 16, 2020.

Just so you know, the people surveyed were 18 to 39 years old.

I need to add that just yesterday, December 7, I was asked by a young woman (early to mid-twenties) the date. I replied, "December 7, a date which will live in infamy". She stared at me blankly and I asked her if she understood. She said no, it didn't mean anything to her. So I'm guessing she probably doesn't know about the Holocaust or WWII, and maybe even doesn't know where Pearl Harbor is.

I truly believe that our schools here in Worcester County have been mostly free from this indoctrination because I know many teachers, both active and recently retired, many of the administrators and several of the school board members and I know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that they would never knowingly allow it. But I believe it is more than obvious that in many parts of America, including Maryland, this has been going on for decades.

The fact that we know this now and can combat it is the one thing for which we can thank COVID.

## Courier Almanac

On December 13, 1925, Dick Van Dyke, the quintessential "nice guy" actor who would become known for his performances in such movie classics as *Mary Poppins* and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, as well as the popular 1960s TV sitcom *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, was born in West Plains, Missouri.

## Where's the in-depth reporting

### Editor:

I find it interesting that following BOEM's presentation of the environmental impacts of US Wind's proposed power plant to be built a mere 8.5-14 miles off our coast, the media has failed to produce any in-depth reporting on this issue so vital to our community. Rather, publications have printed misrepresentations from US Wind's Dave Wilson on page after

page.

Has any reporter even tried to read the official review of the Draft Environmental Impact statement Ocean City produced? Our town painstakingly devoted time and resources to provide vital information to BOEM and its citizenry regarding this project. Our town enlisted experts in cultural and visual resources, underwater acoustic, economics, marine biology, marine mammals and ornithology to properly communicate the impacts of

please see **letter** on page 11



Christmas trees are a key component of many people's holiday season. It's a family tradition to choose (or take out) the tree each year and then adorn it with ornaments, tinsel, family mementos, and a beautiful tree topper. In regard to tree toppers, most people fasten the top bough with an angel or a star. The first tree toppers were the infant Jesus, but toppers are now available in other options symbolic of the Nativity of Jesus. The star refers to the Star of Bethlehem, which guided the Magi to the birthplace of Jesus. The angel represents the messengers of God as well as the Angel Gabriel, who visited Mary to share the news that she would be giving birth to the Son of God. People can choose whichever topper they prefer, but many refer to the religious significance of Christmas.



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# The Courier



# Consider family meeting to discuss estate plans

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

At some point, you'll want to share your estate plans with your loved ones — and the first step in this process may be to hold a family meeting.



**John Bennish**

The best time to hold this meeting is when you're still in good mental and physical shape, and the enactment of your estate plans may well be years away. But what topics should you cover?

Consider these main areas:

**Your wishes — and those of your family.** Use this meeting to introduce your estate plans and, in a basic sense, what you hope to accomplish with them — leave money to your family, support charitable groups and so on. You'll want to emphasize that you want to be equitable in what you leave behind, but there may be issues that

affect this decision, such as disparities in income between grown children or an allowance for a special-needs child. But you'll also want to listen to what your family members want — and you might be surprised at what they tell you. Consider this: More than 80% of the millennial generation would rather know their parents are financially secure throughout their retirement, even if this means that their parents will pass on less money to them, according to an Edward Jones/Age Wave study.

**Estate planning documents** — At the time of your family meeting, you may or may not have already created your estate planning documents, but in either case, this would be a good time to discuss them. These documents may include a will, a living trust, financial power of attorney, health care power of attorney and possibly other arrangements. At a minimum, you'd like to give a general

*please see plans on page 8*



## A Perfect Face Day Spa Supports Coastal Hospice

*Pamper Yourself for Charity* raised a total of \$6,140.00 and presented a check to Coastal Hospice for \$3,507.00 this past Giving Tuesday.

Carol Withers, Owner of A Perfect Face Day Spa and staff have arranged this special fundraiser, "Pamper Yourself for Charity" for 28 years - in honor of Carol's mother, Elizabeth "Libby" Chaney, who passed away from breast cancer in 1995, while under the care of Coastal Hospice at home. This year the proceeds go to two of her favorite organizations, Coastal Hospice - The Macky and Pam Stansell House and American Cancer Society.

Pam and Macky Stansell were introduced to hospice when Pam's mother, Jacque Donovan passed away prior to Libby. Pam and Macky became involved with Coastal Hospice after her passing, which led Macky to sitting on the Board and becoming Coastal Hospice Board of Directors Chair and major donor for the now, Macky & Pam Stansell House, which opened its doors to the first patients in July 2019.

To learn more about Coastal Hospice, its services, and the many ways people can donate, please visit [www.coastalhospice.org](http://www.coastalhospice.org).

*Pictured left to right: Tammy Patrick, Coastal Hospice, Director of Advancement; Carol Withers, and Pam Stansell.*



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# A Christmas present for St. Martin River

Christmas is a time for giving and giving to the needy leaves you with a wonderful feeling. That's why I am suggesting that we give a special present to our very needy friend, the

your help.

The 1972 Clean Water Act has pretty much put a stop to routine pollution from point sources like sewage treatment plants and indus-



St. Martin River, which has a history of being a very poor habitat for fish and aquatic grasses.

Our river has the worst quality rating of the seven bodies of water that constitute the Maryland's Coastal Bays. In the 2013 study, the St. Martin River scored the lowest over-

trial waste dumping. The perennial problem is the non-specific pollution sources such as fertilizer run off, household cleaning fluids, accidental toxic material spills, etc. The EPA has a hard time getting its arms around these distributed sources of pollutions but that is where our good citizens, the oysters, come in.

Oysters can be the heroes of clean water! Besides being great tasting and the building material of reefs for other aquatic life, a mature oyster is a natural vacuum that filters around 50 gallons of water a day for nutrients like carbon to make the calcium carbonate for their shells and nitrogen to grow fleshy bodies. Most of the nutrients come from digesting algae which, in turn, promotes the return of

dissolved oxygen that is essential to a healthy aquatic environment but oysters also capture and sequester passing pollutants like micro plastics and heavy metals.

This is not a new concept. Work to revitalize the Maryland waterways by reintroducing oysters has been underway for some time. In 2008, then Governor Martin O'Malley initiated the Marylanders Grow Oysters program but, more recently, the thought of an unhealthy river has driven the Protectors of the St. Martin River volunteer group to get organized and do something about it.

The Protectors champion 'oyster gardening.' They work through the tasks of getting the fertile oyster eggs to larva, to spat, and to young oysters. Then they make the little guys available in a container that is

suitable for hanging off a dock or bulkhead. The care and feeding of the young mollusks is fairly easy. The custodian has to look in on the oysters every week or so and clean away unwanted sea gook like barnacles and flip the bag or cage to assure the younglings are maturing evenly. In about 18 months to 2 years, they are ready for prime time.

One of my neighbors already has an oyster garden rig and is getting a couple more for Christmas presents. I think I am going to give it a shot too.

But wait! There are a couple considerations before you breakout the lemon and cocktail sauce. Although the oysters have been cleaning the water in and around the canals and marinas of Ocean Pines, they need to be moved onto their real job, the St. Martin River. The idea is to build sustainable oyster beds in the river that will clean the river and reproduce. The state is, in fact, accepting the adolescent fostered oysters and is putting them to work on a developing oyster bed near the Route 90 Bridge.

The second consideration is their diet. Let's not start shucking them until we test their toxicity. The early

crops will have enjoyed a fantastic life feeding on a cornucopia of excessive river nutrients and nasties including potential pathogens. If the mollusks have done their job, they will have captured and concentrated some potentially hazardous pollutants. It could take a couple generations of hard sucking oysters to improve the water quality to the point that the oyster's entrained pollution content has dropped to acceptable levels for human consumption.

And finally, cleaner water will hopefully increase fish habitats and aqua grass but the new reefs will need to be declared sanctuaries. They will need to be protected from poaching for several years, until critical mass is obtained and the oyster beds become self-sustaining. Otherwise the river's ecosystem will continue to deteriorate and the Grinch wins.

For more information, contact the Maryland Coastal Bays offices.

Merry Christmas, St. Martin River, and to all, bon appetite.

Stay safe. Stay dry.

*Dan Collins can be reached for comment at [dancollins.ocean-pines@gmail.com](mailto:dancollins.ocean-pines@gmail.com)*



Photo by Signe Langford

all Water Quality Index (WQI) and was the only body of water that completely failed three of the four criteria – dissolved oxygen, total nitrogen, and total phosphorus – and recorded the lowest rating in the remaining criteria – chlorophyll. Sadly, its most recent ominous assessment of "Very Degraded" was a continuing deterioration from its previous assessment of "Degraded" performed 10 year earlier.

The gift we can give our distressed friend is oysters. At one point, oysters were the iconic cash crop of the Chesapeake Bay and our local waters but over fishing and pollution essentially destroyed the industry. However, a comeback is nigh. We can reintroduce these good citizens, these natural pollution fighters in massive volumes with

## plans

from page 7

overview of what these documents mean, but at an initial family meeting, you don't necessarily have to get too detailed. For example, you might not want to talk about specific inheritances. This is also an opportunity to inform your loved ones of the professionals involved in your estate plans, such as your attorney and your tax advisor.

• *Roles of everyone involved* – Not only does a comprehensive estate plan involve moving parts, such as the necessary documents, but it also includes actual human beings who may need to take on different roles. You will need an executor for your will and, if you have a living trust, you'll need a trustee. Even if you choose to serve as the initial trustee, you'll still need to identify one or more successor trustees to take your place if you become incapacitated, or upon your death. Plus, you'll need to name people to act as your power of attorney for health care and finances. Choosing the

right people for these roles involves thought and sensitivity. Obviously, you want individuals who are competent and reliable, but you also need to be aware that some family members could feel slighted if others are assigned roles they feel they could do. By being aware of these possible conflicts, you can be better prepared to address them.

Here's one more suggestion: Let your family know that this initial meeting doesn't mean the end of communications about your estate plans. Encourage your loved ones to contact you with questions whenever they want. You may need to hold additional family meetings in the future, but by laying the initial groundwork, you will have taken a big first step in establishing the legacy you'd like to leave.

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



# Why are Christmas colors red and green?

Many people may not get in the holiday spirit without decorations and all the trimmings. Chances are strong that if you have containers full of items just waiting to see the light of day again this holiday season, those items are red or green or some combination thereof.

Red and green have become the traditional colors of Christmas, just as blue and white symbolizes Chanukah. But how did this color palette come to evolve?

Just like many traditions of Christmas, the red and green scheme has origins that pre-date the Christian celebration. Christmas has borrowed from many of the customs of winter solstice celebrations of ancient peoples, including the Celts. Ancient Celtic people revered holly plants, believing they brought beauty and good fortune in the middle of winter. A time when the landscape is normally bleak and holly plants thrive and stand out. Celts would regularly bring in sprigs of holly and decorate their homes with the plants, which feature shiny, serrated leaves and bright, red berries, as a way to guarantee a prosperous new year. Holly also came to be associated with the crown of thorns Jesus Christ was forced to wear during his crucifixion.

The custom of using red and green continued into the 14th century. Dr. Spike Bucklow, a research scientist at the University of Cambridge, says red and green also were used to paint medieval rood screens, which were partitions installed in churches to separate the congregation from the priest and altar. Dr. Bucklow notes that Victorians also extended the association of these colors as a physical boundary to another boundary: the marking of the end of the old year and the beginning of a new one at Christmastime.

While red and green had associations with Christmas in early times through holly and other sources, the connection was perhaps best solidified thanks to a man named Haddon Sundblom. Sundblom was an artist commissioned in 1931 by the Coca-Cola company to create an image of Santa Claus for the company's upcoming holiday ads. Until this point, versions

of Santa were rarely consistent, with his clothing vacillating between green, blue and red. He also wasn't the plump, jolly fellow associated with Christmas as we know him today, but rather thin and elf-like. Sundblom portrayed him as a chubby man wearing red robes, likely as a nod to Coca-Cola's own red logo, even though the company denies the connection.



Santa was featured in front of a green background. The ads proved popular and Sundblom's Santa became the preferred depiction. Santa's red robes perfectly complemented the green background and other green components of the holiday, such as Christmas trees and holly, that already had been solidified as Christmas imagery.

Color plays a strong role in creating Christmas nostalgia. Red and green are put on vivid display throughout the season.

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# Winter is coming

By **Erin Smith, DPT**  
Hamilton Physical Therapy

Winter is coming, along with some of our favorite holidays. Despite all of the joy this season can bring, it also produces the most injuries. Whether you're decorating your home, raking leaves, shoveling snow, or traveling to see family, dangers are all around you. Here are some tips to help keep you and your family safe during this festive time.



Erin Smith

If we are not very active throughout the year, and start performing a straining activity such as raking leaves or shoveling snow, it can sometimes be too much for our body to take. Heart attacks are very common with these activities because it is hard for the heart to adjust to a new level of intensity all at once. Falls can occur if you slip on ice, misstep, or trip over roots, and can lead to fractures, hypothermia, and dehydration. To avoid some of these problems and still get the job done, you'll want to take some precautions. Some things you can do are dress warmly for the weather, drink plenty of water, take frequent rest breaks, focus on your breathing, ask for help performing the chore, and always have your cell phone with you so you can call someone if a problem does arise.

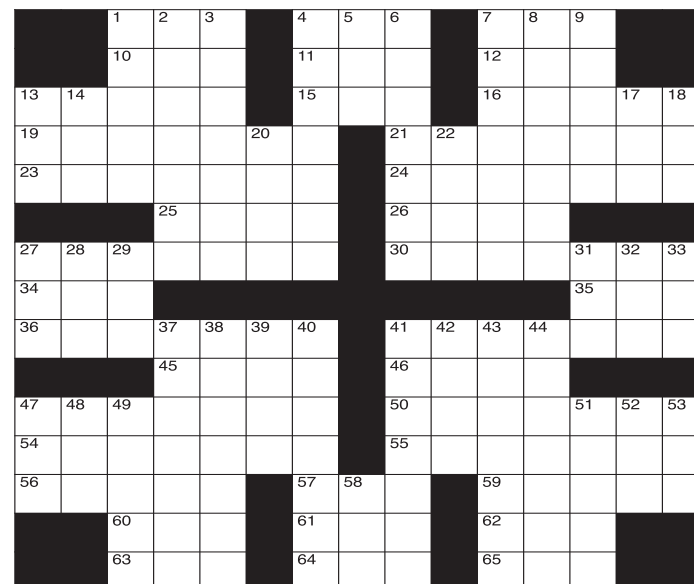
A majority of people decorate their home in some way during the holidays which can require some heavy lifting. Proper body mechanics are essential for this task, whether it is lifting boxes with decorations, hanging garland, or putting up a tree. There are four steps that you should perform when lifting heavy objects off of the floor: (1) Spread legs shoulder width apart to increase your base of support; (2) tighten your core to support your spine; (3) keep your back straight opposed to curved; and, (4) bend with your knees to pick up objects, not your back. These simple steps can prevent muscle strains, herniated discs, radiating pain down your legs, and other debilitating injuries. Also remember, if the boxes or your tree are too heavy, you should ask for help and carry them with two people. Decorating can be very stren-

uous and taking rest breaks can help prevent an overuse injury and soreness.

By placing extension cords and decorations in low-traffic areas, you can avoid creating trip hazards in your own home. Make sure you turn on the lights when walking through your home at night to prevent unnecessary falls and injuries. When having to reach overhead, selecting an appropriate step stool or ladder can save our shoulders from injury. However, you want to make sure you have someone hold your ladder to prevent falls.

House fires often occur during the holidays due to an increased use of candles, faulty lighting, placing trees and decor too close to heat sources, and leaving lights on while you are out of the house or asleep. If you like celebrating Christmas with a live tree, make sure it is a fresh tree. Fresh trees are green and the needles are hard to pull from the branches. When the needles are bent between your fingers they do not break. The trunk is also sticky with resin. Make sure to water the tree daily and keep it away from heat sources to prevent it from drying out. If you like celebrating Christmas with an artificial tree, ensure they are fire resistant by checking their label. Throw away any broken or fraying lights and be sure to blow out lit candles before going to bed. Lastly, if you are celebrating Hanukkah, make sure your menorah is away from anything flammable.

By doing these few things this holiday season you can prevent bodily injuries, protect your home from fires, and have a holly jolly Christmas-hanukwanzakah and a happy New Year.



## CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Mimic
- 4. Payroll firm
- 7. Perform in a play
- 10. Opine: \_\_\_ philosophical
- 11. Crony
- 12. Political action committee
- 13. 1991 Wimbledon winner
- 15. Affirmative
- 16. Exclamation of disgust
- 19. Action of connecting
- 21. A way to calm
- 23. Especially fine or decorative clothing
- 24. Walked proudly
- 25. Group of people related through male heir
- 26. Supplemented with difficulty
- 27. Soft touch
- 30. Erases
- 34. Spanish river
- 35. A princess can detect it
- 36. Clouds of gas
- 41. A way to get through
- 45. Part of a book
- 46. Southwestern US state
- 47. Fields where rice is grown
- 50. Area in Ghana
- 54. Sayings
- 55. Involve deeply
- 56. Compels to act
- 57. "Ignore all rules"
- 59. Indoor entertainment space
- 60. Born of
- 61. Back muscle
- 62. Sea dweller
- 63. Tools that resemble an axe
- 64. Prefix denoting class or kind
- 65. Tooth caregiver

## CLUES DOWN

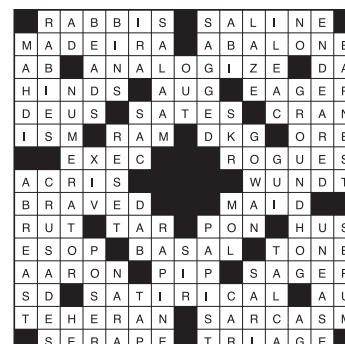
- 1. Inspiring
- 2. Put into a box
- 3. Breathes out
- 4. Pacify
- 5. Patriotic society for women
- 6. Fell down
- 7. Clothing
- 8. Dishwasher detergent brand
- 9. Former French republic
- 13. Single lens reflex
- 14. Men's fashion accessory
- 17. Consumed
- 18. Marry
- 20. \_\_\_ up: intensifies
- 22. Body of water
- 27. People of southern Benin
- 28. Decorate a cake with frosting
- 29. Snag
- 31. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
- 32. Records brain activity (abbr.)
- 33. Car mechanics group
- 37. Brought up to snuff
- 38. \_\_\_ faire: Economic approach
- 39. Phil \_\_\_, former CIA
- 40. Affixed
- 41. Period of adolescence
- 42. Substance
- 43. Danced
- 44. Baked without its shell
- 47. Parts per billion (abbr.)
- 48. Satisfaction
- 49. Balkans river
- 51. Christmas carols
- 52. Partner to tonic
- 53. "The Godfather" character Johnny
- 58. Swiss river



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Answers for December 6



letter  
from page 6

this project. One would think a newspaper would have been interested in researching and printing this information or, at the very least, using it to challenge Mr. Wilson's assertions.

Maybe, if there was interest in the truth by our media, Mr. Wilson would have been questioned on his assertion the turbines would have aviation lights that only turn on a few hours a year. Maybe, we would know that technology has yet to be fully developed or approved by the FAA for this use and that actually

those lights will blink 24/7, one minute on, one off causing such massive light pollution every home in Ocean City would need blinders.

Perhaps, if this 39-page document was more widely read, an investigative reporter would research the multitude of NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) violations. For example, one might recognize there are other areas more suitable to construction that would not destroy scallop beds or the vitally important Shuster Horseshoe Crab Reserve. Maybe, just maybe, the readers of the local press, or the listeners of local television stations would know the importance of

horseshoe crab blood in our medical industry and that it is sustainably harvested like human blood. Sadly, instead, what we know is that Orsted is now sponsoring WBOC's West Ocean City Weather Cam and that short term monetary gains far outweigh any long-term outlook.

The states to the north and south of Maryland understand the absolute devastation to the ecosystems and economy if these power plants are allowed to be built. They are fighting hard in all aspects of media and courts. NJ has multiple active suites. CFACT is in the preliminary processes of filing suits in VA and VA Beach has just denied Dominion

the ability to land high voltage cables on its shores (Delaware should do the same). I understand battles are readied to defend Delaware as well.

The business and residents of Ocean City must show our town and it's elected officials that we are appreciative of the efforts put forth to inform and fight for our coast, our town, our livelihoods. We must all flood the Mayor's office and Town Council with our desire for them to join our fellow coastal states in an all out effort to save our shores.

**Dianna Harris**  
West Ocean City

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