

# The Courier

February 12, 2025 Volume 25 Number 20

## Boat Show Returns

By **Dan Collins**  
*Knots & Knots*

How cold is cold? January set all sorts of cold weather records. Many of the Ocean Pines canals froze over for the first time in years. The ice was pretty thick but I didn't see any ice hockey games breakout. In fact, I didn't see anyone even venture out onto the ice just for the thrill of it.

Why? First of all, I doubt if you can find ten kids in Ocean Pines that own hockey skates. And secondly, the canal and river ice is frozen brine. That takes a lot more coaxing to remain solid and once you do fall through it, rescue is problematic because of the instability of the rest of the ice. Never the less, it was fun to see and combined with the equally infrequent snow fall, it was a photo op and a half.

Despite this year's records, the cold of winter is predictable and we annually prepare for *'Coastie' can ride around the convention center, flash lights, wink, talk to children about safety, and spray water – everything but float.with one of his creations*

We swap out our summer cloths for winter sweaters. We cover our plants, bring in our garden hoses, winterize our boats and brace for high heating bills. There are days that I wish I was a bear and could sleep through all of it but then I would miss the return of the Ocean City-Berlin Optimist Club's annual Seaside Boat Show, February 14 to 16, at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center.

If you are tired of the same old Valentine's exchanges of chocolates and flowers and a nice dinner out, let me suggest you negotiate a sizable home equity loan and take your true love (read that as 'tolerant partner who allows flights of fantasy') to the boat show where you can experience one of the happiest days of your life when you buy that dream boat. By the way, rumor has it that the second happiest day will be when you sell it but I think, a wedding day, first child's birth, last child's leaving for college, and the demise of the neighbor's barking dog should all get votes.

No, seriously, the boat show is a great way to cope with the post football season withdrawals if only for a couple hours and you really don't have to buy a boat.

*please see **boats** on page 12*



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## Film festival kick-off party scheduled

The Ocean City Film Festival, a production of the Art League of Ocean City, kicks off its ninth season with a special party on Saturday, February 15 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The event is free and open to the public, and will take place at the Ocean City Center for the Arts, 502 94<sup>th</sup> St. bayside.

“Our 9<sup>th</sup> annual OC Film Festival is coming up March 6-9, and this is a free celebration to start our next season of bringing the best in independent filmmaking to the resort,” Rina Thaler, executive director of the Art League, said. “We welcome everyone to attend and get a sneak preview of what’s in store this year.”

During the kick-off party, the official 2025 Film Festival poster, for the ninth year designed by Bishopville artist Ian Postley, will be unveiled. During the event, attendees who purchase a four-day Film Festival pass will receive a free limited-edition poster signed and numbered by the artist.

“Our Film Festival posters have become collectors’ items over the past nine years, and our 2025 edition is one to add to that collection,” Thaler con-

tinued.

The Art League will also offer complimentary hors d’oeuvres and drinks during the event.

The Ocean City Film Festival comes to the resort March 6 to 9 bringing four days of independent films both local and from around the world to the Ocean City region. Headliners for this year are two hometown all-stars, John Chester and Erica Cramer Messer, who will bring their film, “The Biggest Little Farm,” to the Ocean City Performing Arts Center on Sunday, March 9. The director and producer will be live on stage at the PAC giving live commentary during the film’s screening and show previews of their new TV series.

Passes to the Film Festival are currently available at [OCMDFilmFestival.com](http://OCMDFilmFestival.com). More information is also available by calling 410-524-9433.



**Recognized** - The recipients of the 2024 Ocean City-Berlin Rotary Club scholarship were recently recognized.

Above are (l to r) **Austin Pusey, Abbigale Weeks, Daniel Karcheuski and Nancy Bradford**, scholarship chair. The Club is accepting applications for the 2025 scholarship from Stephen Decatur High School (SDHS) seniors attending either SDHS or Worcester Tech. Seniors can email [ocberlinrotary@gmail.com](mailto:ocberlinrotary@gmail.com) for an application or visit their school guidance office.

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Ocean City Elementary School held its annual Disney Spirit Day on January 17.

## State flush fee exemption renewed

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has exempted residents in the Ocean Pines Sanitary Service Area (SSA) from paying the \$5 monthly charge to the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) for the upcoming year. This exemption will result in an annual savings of \$60 per household in the Ocean Pines SSA.

“This exemption is due to the exemplary work done by our staff,” Public Works Director Dallas Baker said. “It’s the Public Works professionals maintaining meticulous reporting methods coupled with the knowledge and experience of our Water and Wastewater operators overseeing the Ocean Pines Wastewater Treatment Plant that make this exemption a reality year after year for those residing in the Ocean Pines SSA.”

Commonly referred to as the Flush Fee, the BRF is a dedicated fund financed by residents and businesses served by wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) throughout the State of Maryland. BRF funds are used to upgrade publicly owned WWTPs throughout Maryland, with enhanced nutrient removal (ENR) technology to reduce nutrient discharges to the state’s waterways.

The Ocean Pines WWTP is equipped with ENR technology that meets the criteria for the fee exemption, which requires a maximum effluent concentration of 3 milligrams per liter (mg/l) of total nitrogen and 0.3

mg/l total phosphorous.

“The Ocean Pines WWTP sets the standard throughout the state for environmental stewardship,” Baker said. “For 2024 the Ocean Pines WWTP maintained a yearly flow at 299.5MM gallons, with an average concentration of 2.4 parts per million (PPM) total nitrogen and 0.2 PPM.”

BRF exemptions are valid for one year and must be renewed annually, and WCPW professionals maintain meticulous reporting standards to secure the exemptions annually for those residing in the Ocean Pines SSA.

## Trivia event scheduled

Trivia returns to the Ocean Pines library. The theme is “Hit or Miss” and will include general knowledge questions on many different subjects. Individuals or any size team is invited to attend to test your knowledge. Prizes will be awarded. Refreshments will be served.

The event will be held Wednesday, February 19 at 3 p.m. at the library. Admission is free. No registration is necessary. For more information, contact the library at (410) 208-4014.

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# It wasn't easy

**Author's Note:** *With the boat show this weekend, I thought it appropriate to share again our experience at the 2023 show when my wife and I decided to purchase a new*

somewhere, is lost to history, the excitement of boating, the sheer joy of being on the water, has remained with me, becoming part of my DNA.



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

By **Chip Bertino**

chipbertino@delmarvacourier.com

boat. This column was first published that year a few weeks after we made our decision.

It's often remarked that the two happiest days of a boater's life are the day he buys a boat and the day he sells his boat. There's also the adage that a boat is a hole in the water into which you throw money.

I've shared with you in this space before that I believe boats have a spirit, a personality. That's why I think boaters have relationships with their boats and don't simply own them. My wife will be the first to admit that my boat is my mistress, upon whom I'll lavish whatever is necessary to please her. And history has shown, I lavish. There's a reason for that. You get out of a boat what you put into it. If you skimp on maintenance or care, such behavior will catch up with you, most likely when you're on the water. It's not worth the risk as far as I'm concerned.

There have been very few periods of my life when I haven't owned a boat. Now is one such time. Several weeks



**Susan B.** just before leaving for her new berth.



**Andiamo** behind Assateague on her maiden voyage

ago, we waved good bye to our boat of nearly 19 years as it was towed by her new owner to her

new berth. Despite what some think, it wasn't a happy day. In fact, it was a very sad day. Standing in the driveway watching her leave, memories of so many good times and adventures flashed in my mind: my young children piling onboard to spend the day

behind Assateague; trips down the Pocomoke River heading to Crisfield; voyages up to Cape May, NJ and beyond; my grandchildren screaming with excitement as we skimmed across the water; my wife and I cruising the bay at sunset; fishing trips; the many moments of just being aboard alone; and, so many more.


The decision to sell the boat was prompted by a decision made during the boat show. It wasn't an easy decision. Sitting in a boat on the afternoon of the last day of the show, my wife and I hemmed and hawed, debated and went back and forth. Was it time for something new? Given the magnitude of the question, we called our children asking for their input. Each told us to do what we thought was best. The only objection we encountered, and it was a very forceful objection, came from our 11-year-old granddaughter who made clear in no uncertain terms her displeasure over us getting a new boat. Taking everything into account, we signed the paperwork on the new boat. So engrossed were we in our thoughts, we hadn't realized the show had closed a half hour before. The salesman never said a word.

Less than a week later, I received

in the mail a letter from my granddaughter articulating her reasons why we should not get a new boat. Her tone was sweet and her message was heartfelt. She even included a dollar bill in the letter as a downpayment for her purchase of our boat. She wrote a postscript that the dollar was to be returned if we failed accept her offer.

After reading the letter, I called her. We talked for a good long while as I explained why it was time to make a change. We reminisced about our times together on the boat like the time she and I went out and ate watermelon while sitting on the swim platform, our feet dangling in the water. Although I accentuated the positives about the new boat, she was reluctant to buy in. The best I got from her was that she'll let me know her thoughts when she sees it when she visits.

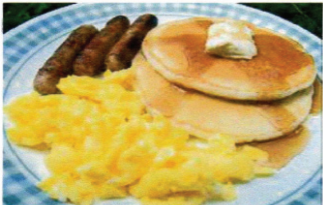
A new relationship will soon begin when the new boat arrives. It won't be the same as the relationship with our previous boat or the boat before that or the boat before that. But it will be exciting. I just hope my granddaughter comes around to believe the same thing. Maybe I should return her dollar with interest.



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# Interesting facts about U.S. presidents

Americans celebrate President's Day each year in mid-February. Though some may see the holiday, which is celebrated on a Monday, as a great opportunity to book a three-day weekend



names, including Drunkard, Tippler and Sweet Lips.

The country's fourth president, James Madison, was a slight man. Madison was five-feet-four and weighed just over 100 pounds. Madison might have put on a few additional pounds had he lived to enjoy the snack cake brand Dolly Madison, which was inspired by the fourth president's wife, Dolley, and introduced in 1937.

John Quincy Adams might be most recognized as the first man to fol-

low his father and hold the office of the president. However, the sixth president had a notable career even after his time holding the highest office in the land. John Quincy Adams argued before the Supreme Court in a case that freed African captives who had rebelled aboard the slave ship Amistad. That rebellion and its subsequent court case was later dramatized in the 1997 Steven Spielberg film "Amistad," in which Adams was portrayed by Welsh actor Anthony Hopkins.

It took some time before the United States had its first American-born president, but that happened upon the election of Martin Van Buren in 1837. Prior to Van Buren's victory, all presidents

Founding father and first U.S. president George Washington was a man with many hobbies, including dog breeding. Alex Hager of the Presidential Pet Museum told History.com that Washington likely developed his passion for dog breeding as a result of his love of fox hunting. Indeed, the American Kennel Club considers Washington the father of the American foxhound. It is also worth noting Washington's predilection for giving his dogs humorous

had been born before 1776 and were thus British subjects at their time of birth.

Many Americans fought long and hard to secure the right to vote, but one president never voted until his own name appeared on the ballot. Zachary Taylor, the nation's twelfth president, acknowledged he had never voted prior to 1848, the year he was elected president.

Only two men in U.S. history have been elected to serve non-consecutive terms as president. The first to do so was Grover Cleveland, who served as the nation's twenty-second and twenty-fourth president. That feat was not replicated until it was pulled off by Donald Trump, who was elected in 2016 as the nation's forty-fifth president and then again in 2024.

Some presidents are more soft spoken than others, but perhaps none have been more reserved than the thirtieth president Calvin Coolidge. When a female visitor bet Coolidge that she could get three words out of him, Coolidge simply replied, "You lose."

Thirty-third president Harry S. Truman's name is somewhat misleading. The middle initial "S" is not an abbreviation for any particular name, but rather an homage to his grandfathers Anderson Shipp Truman and Solomon Young.

Richard Nixon, the nation's thirty-seventh president, was a highly skilled poker player. In fact, during his time serving in the United States Navy during World War II, Nixon won substantial sums of money playing poker, funds he ultimately used to finance his first political campaign.

## Notable presidential firsts

The third Monday in February is set aside for Presidents' Day in the United States, which is actually referred to as Washington's Birthday on the federal calendar. Washington's Birthday had always been celebrated on February 22, but with the passage of the Uniform Monday Holiday Act in 1968, the holiday was moved. In fact, Washington's birthday has not been celebrated on the actual day of his birth since the law first took effect in 1971.

This is only one of the many "firsts" and presidential superlatives that have taken place throughout history.

Oldest president. President Joseph Biden was 82 when his presidency ended on January 20. He is the oldest president in U.S. history. His successor, President Donald Trump, was 78 at the time of his inauguration in 2025, making him the second-oldest US president. By the end of his second term, President Trump will become the oldest-ever U.S. president at 82 years and seven months.

First president. It is well known that George Washington was the nation's first president. Washington also was the first president to be a military veteran. Among

*please see firsts on page 8*

## Courier Almanac

On February 12, 1973 the release of U.S. POWs begins in Hanoi as part of the Paris peace settlement. The return of U.S. POWs began when North Vietnam released 142 of 591 U.S. prisoners at Hanoi's Gia Lam Airport. Part of what was called Operation Homecoming, the first 20 POWs arrived to a hero's welcome at Travis Air Force Base in California on February 14. Operation Homecoming was completed on March 29, 1973, when the last of 591 U.S. prisoners were released and returned to the United States.

Trivia fans may know that American president Benjamin Harrison, who served from 1889 to 1893, was both preceded and succeeded in office by Grover Cleveland. But Harrison has another notable distinction on his presidential resume. Harrison was the country's twenty-third president but the first to hire a woman White House staffer upon his selection of Alice Sanger as his presidential secretary on January 2, 1890. History.com suggests Harrison's appointment of Sanger might have been an effort to extend an olive branch to the women's suffrage movement, which was gaining momentum during the time Harrison spent in the White House. Though Sanger was named to the White House staff 135 years ago, the United States has still not seen a woman elected to the office of the president.



The  
**Courier**

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The Courier is published Wednesday morning by CMN Communications, Inc. Contents copyright 2025. News release items and calendar entries should reach us Friday noon prior to publication date. The advertising deadline is Friday at 5 p.m. Read The Courier online at delmarvacourier.com,

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**firsts**  
from page 6

President Washington's other firsts - he was the first Episcopalian president and the first to appear on a postage stamp.

**Youngest president.** President Theodore Roosevelt succeeded to the office of US President after the assassination of William McKinley at age 42, making him the youngest U.S. president. Article Two of the United States Constitution provides that U.S. presidents must be at least 35 years of age at the time they take office, so it remains to be seen if President Roosevelt's status of youngest president will endure into the future.

**Shortest lifespan.** When President John F. Kennedy was assassinated at age 46, he became the president with the shortest lifespan. President James Garfield, who died at age 49 two months after being shot, has the second shortest lifespan of any U.S. president.

**First president to have served as a governor.** President Thomas Jefferson was the first US president to have previously been a governor. He served as the second governor of Virginia after the US won its independence from England. President Jefferson also was the first US president to be inaugurated in

Washington, D.C.

**Longest-serving president.** President Franklin Delano Roosevelt served as the 32nd president of the US from 1933 to 1945, becoming the longest-serving U.S. president. FDR is the only president to have served more than two terms, which is now no longer possible.

**Interesting presidential pets.** While dogs and horses are some of the most common pets to be found in and around the White House, President William Howard Taft had a Holstein cow named Pauline Wayne, "Queen of the Capital Cows." President Jefferson kept a magpie, and First Lady Grace Coolidge kept Rebecca, a pet raccoon.

**White House wedding.** President James Monroe was the first U.S. president to have a child get married at the White House. His daughter, Maria Hester Monroe, married Samuel Lawrence Gouverneur on March 9, 1820. The first presidential son to exchange vows in the White House was John Adams II, former President John Quincy Adams' son.

**First Black president.** When President Barack Obama was elected president in 2008, he became the first Black person to hold the office of the president.



**Decoration** - The After-School Art Club at Berlin Intermediate School decorated edible hearts with candy and sprinkles and also made pop-up Valentine's Day cards. The club is led by artist Joanne Guilfoil and is an outreach program of the Art League of Ocean City with a grant from the Worcester Co. Arts Council.

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*Trails & Waterways*

# Maryland Forest Service transforms former golf course into public land

By **Laura Scharle**

There is some big news coming from Libertytown Road, just west of Berlin. A new tract of land has been acquired by the Maryland Forest Service and is being transformed into a trail system, pollinator habitat, and public hunting grounds. With the help of the Lower Shore Land Trust, DNR acquired this 675-acre tract of land in



2023 and it has been quietly open for visitation since last year. Recently though, after two public informational meetings, this property has garnered a lot of attention.

The piece of land is a former golf course known as Bay Club. Nature has been taking over for several years now, and although there is still evidence of the former golfing activities, it is quickly becoming a popular place for hunters, hikers, dog-walkers, and even cyclists. The forest service has been working to remove the asphalt pathways, construct



a parking area, and rehab and mark the 12 miles of trails. It is a work in progress. In addition, there are efforts to restore the natural hydrology of the land back into a damp forest and turn what's left of the golf course ponds into thriving, native wetland habitat.

The Bay Club property falls under the jurisdiction of the Chesapeake Forest Lands. Almost all trails and lands managed by the Maryland Forest Service are "multi-use," meaning the lands are open for hikers, hunters, cyclists, and equestrians. The Bay Club lands are already being hunted, so when vis-

iting, it's important to take some safety precautions such as wearing blaze orange and avoiding deer firearms seasons (deer firearms seasons are over until the fall).

If you intend to visit in the near future, be prepared for a little bush-whacking! The trails, which are former golf cart pathways, are overgrown and have not been mowed yet, and it can be easy to get lost. Luckily, the forest service is working to have the trails marked soon.

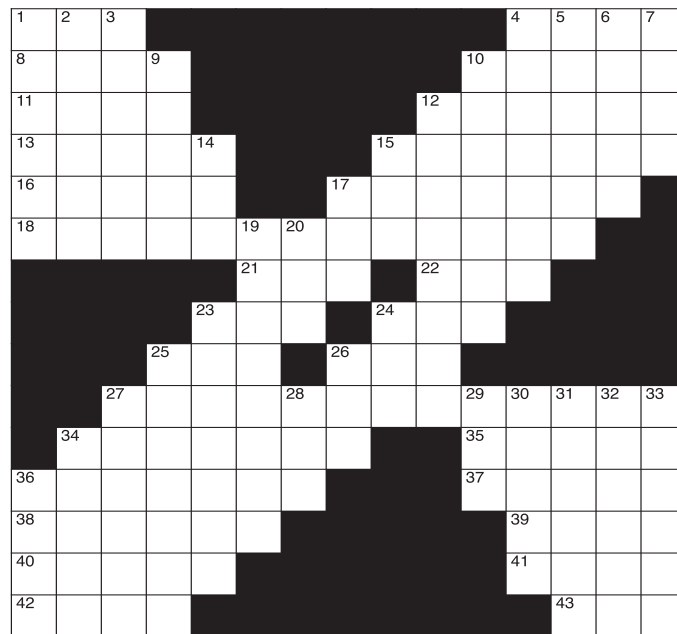
In addition to the need for bush-whacking, exploring the Bay Club Property can be quite the adventure. Hikers and hunters have reported seeing evidence of turkeys, foxes, coyotes, and even river otters. The former golf course ponds are starting to dry out, exposing

shells of freshwater clams and mussels, and thousands of golf balls! You may occasionally stumble across an old drainage pipe, the remnants of the old parking lot and building, and old bulkheading around some of the ponds. The land has a ghostly feeling to it as former use of the land is in the past and Mother Nature is doing her thing to slowly take it back.

After visiting, if you feel inspired to get involved, there will be some opportunities to volunteer later this year. The Lower Shore Land Trust will be organizing some volunteer events for tree planting and pollinator habitat restoration.

They are also looking to form a Friends Group to provide input from the community on restoration and management efforts. Please reach out to the Lower Shore Land Trust for more information on how to get involved.

*Laura Scharle enjoys all things outdoors and is an avid kayaker. She resides in Ocean Pines with her husband and son. Laura developed [www.DelmarvaTrailsandWaterways.com](http://www.DelmarvaTrailsandWaterways.com) to connect people with trails, beaches, piers, and public lands across the peninsula.*

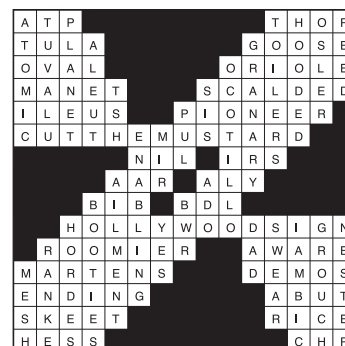


**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Racquet sport group (abbr.)
- 4. Norse god of thunder
- 8. Russian industrial city
- 10. What's good for the \_\_\_
- 11. Round-ish shape
- 12. Baltimore MLBer
- 13. French modernist painter
- 15. Burned with water
- 16. Intestinal issue
- 17. Take the lead
- 18. Prove oneself worthy
- 21. None
- 22. Tax collector
- 23. Swiss river
- 24. Gymnast Raisman
- 25. Baby's dining accessory
- 26. Canadian beer distributor
- 27. Iconic American tourist destination
- 34. More expansive
- 35. Alert
- 36. Popular boots Doc \_\_\_
- 37. Showings
- 38. Conclusion
- 39. Share a common boundary
- 40. Shooting sport
- 41. Popular side dish
- 42. Global energy firm
- 43. Chronicles (abbr.)

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Type of bomb
- 2. Polynesian island country
- 3. Heavenly body
- 4. Hard workers
- 5. Covered
- 6. Johns Hopkins Hospital founder
- 7. Plant of the grass family
- 9. Island person of the Bering Sea
- 10. Storehouse
- 12. Scarlet-flowered desert shrub
- 14. A pituitary hormone
- 15. Female sibling
- 17. Monetary unit of Afghanistan
- 19. Empowering
- 20. Space station
- 23. Disorder
- 24. State of fuss
- 25. Footwear for babies
- 26. Nuclear reactor (abbr.)
- 27. Doves
- 28. Affirmative
- 29. Male parent
- 30. Utter obscenities
- 31. Type of verse
- 32. Unpleasant person
- 33. One who settles down
- 34. Founder of source-based history
- 36. A way to snarl



Answers for February 5

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# Understand cost of ownership before boat purchase

If you've spent time on a family or friend's boat, or enjoyed a few weekends with a boat rental, you may have decided that you want a boat of your own. But what type of boat should you buy? What would you use it for? What is a best fit for you and your family? Where would you store it when you are not using it? And of course, what may be the toughest question: how much boat can you afford? Getting organized and proactively answering these kinds questions before you buy is the best way to limit uncertainty and successfully move forward in the boat buying process.

Here are some costs to consider when buying, besides the cost of the boat.

**Trailer.** If you need a trailer to transport and store, this could add to the purchase price; sometimes it can be included as part of the package deal (it pays to bargain.). This is common practice at dealerships, boat shows and especially seasonal dealer sales events; when the trailer may mean making the sale for the dealer, it is often included.

In terms of maintenance, a trailer will need basic upkeep as well; tires, brakes, and general maintenance, plus monthly storage fees if you cannot keep it on your property when your boat is in the water.

**Boat Insurance.** You will need at least liability coverage, and likely damage coverage, especially if it is a newer vessel. Often lenders will require comprehensive coverage on a financed purchase. It's smart money in the long run, in case of accident or theft that your boat is covered.

**Storage options and costs.** You may want a cover, a top, or maybe even consider renting inside storage if you cannot keep the boat at your home or on your property. Summer and winter storage are two very different necessities in parts of the country where the climate is colder. Winter storage in colder climates typically involves winterization prep for engine and boat, as well as durable coverage where snow, rain and winter winds have potential for damage.

Regarding cost, for outside storage, boats are typically shrink wrapped at a cost of roughly \$10 to \$15 per foot, so a 21-foot boat might cost \$200 to \$300 to cover and make ready for winter. Inside rack storage costs more, as the boat is inside and better protected from the elements. Figure on roughly \$50 per foot for inside storage, so that same 21-footer would cost about \$1,000 for the winter season.

Costs for in-season storage range by region and waterway, but as a general guideline, in-water dock space can range from \$1,000 to more than \$5,000 per season. Indoor rack dry storage costs more, typically 1-1/2 times as much as in-water dock space, but many say it is well worth it to have the boat stored safely inside a building, ready at the dock when it is needed, then washed and stored again when finished.

**Marina Fees.** If you keep the boat at a marina, you will incur monthly costs for those months of storage; fees will vary depending on inside or outside storage, how often you use the boat, and whether or not the marina includes cleaning and maintenance charges.

**Maintenance costs.** Like a car, a boat purchase also carries yearly maintenance costs, and these can vary based on the type of boat, how often it is used, whether it is used in fresh or saltwater, and whether it begins its life with you as new or used.

A new boat will cost less to maintain than a used one, at least for the first few years. With cars, you have cleaning, oil changes, tire and brake service, cleaning, perhaps a battery replacement, and maybe an alignment. With a boat, you have all the same engine maintenance costs, and cleaning, but add hull maintenance, storage, winterizing (when you don't use the boat year-round), haul-out (if

not keeping in the water year-round), and spring make-ready and launch.

Costs for these services can vary widely; some of the determining factors will be the boat and engine size, the local area, fresh or salt water, and the type of storage (inside a building or outside, covered, rack storage, etc.). Likewise, costs increase with boat and engine size. For example, cost to service and winterize a four-stroke outboard engine of 150 horsepower might be \$250, plus cleaning and winterizing the boat may be another \$250.

Also keep in mind that using the boat in freshwater will keep maintenance and cleaning costs down considerably. Saltwater, on the other hand, is definitely harsher on a boat and engine than freshwater.

**Equipment and accessories.** Safety gear (such as life jackets, paddles, horn, signal flares, etc.) should always be considered during any boat purchase. For additional accessories, no need to buy everything you can think of all at once; a good plan is to "treat your boat" every spring and fall to a new accessory or upgrade with accessories like stereos, lighting, watersports towing equipment and more. Spend wisely and you'll enjoy your boat and all the summer fun it brings.

**Education and boating licenses.** Most states require some type of boaters' safety course and operator's license.

## boats

from page 1

You can enjoy climbing all over the magnificent displays and talking to boaters. Ocean City's resident fishing celebrity, Big Bird (Craig Cropper), is usually wandering around wearing his outlandish hat and wide suspenders. Likewise, everyone can get a free saltwater taffy from the colorful pirate (Ernie Walter) and the kids can talk to "Coastie," the USCG Auxiliary's tug boat that roams the halls ready to squirt a little water on anyone who stands in front of the bow.

For those who just can't bring themselves to buy a whole boat, there dozens of opportunities to satisfy the urge to buy something: boat accessories, fishing gear, insurance, docks, boat lifts, tee shirts, books, sunglasses, kittens, and Girl Scout cookies. There is also a door prize drawing for a new pontoon boat that is annually donated by North Bay Marina.

Many other groups are also present such as the Natural Resource Police who can answer questions about Maryland regulations, the US Power Squadron and the USCG Auxiliary who offer demonstrations and tide charts and information on signing up for the state required 'Safe Boating Class.' This class is mandated for all recreational boat operators that have been born after July 1, 1972.

One of the subjects that is covered in the class is hypothermia. Do you know how long you will survive if you fall overboard? The glib answer: Longer than if you fell through January's ice but not forever. Take the safe boating class and get the details.

See you at the boat show. I'll be demonstrating marlinspike techniques (tying knots) and exaggerating my nautical exploits at the USCG Auxiliary booth, #903.

Stay safe. Stay dry.

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

42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Seaside ocboatshow.com

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Boat values and prices

## Negotiating your purchase

Understanding boat values and boat pricing is a critical part of buying a new or used boat. Buying a boat is a substantial purchase, so naturally, you want to be sure you're not overpaying. But pricing for the very same model can vary quite a bit depending on options, engine, and rigging. So, how can you be sure the price is right?

Start by following these simple steps:

Find and work with a boat dealer you can trust.

Visit the manufacturer's website.

Google is your friend. Spend some time searching out listed pricing.

Check NADA guides and BUC values.

Find a boat dealer you can trust. You will run across some dealers who are in the business of selling boats because they have a passion for boating, and others whose main interest is making a profit. Fortunately, there are a lot of boat nuts out there and accordingly, there are a lot of dealers and salespeople who truly enjoy matching a person up with the boat they are going to love. Yes, they still need to make a living and they will want to make a profit. But when you find a

dealer you can trust, look them in the eye, and ask them to give you the bottom-line best price, you are likely to get an honest answer.

A good place to start is making sure you are buying from a Marine Industry Certified Dealership.

Visit the boat manufacturer's website. Some boat manufacturers offer a "builder tool" on their website, and many include pricing. Some will offer to email you a quote after you complete a "virtual build." These often allow you to price different features and options and can be very helpful in determining the value of the package you're looking at.

Trust, but verify. Naturally, you do want to verify that you are being quoted a realistic value for any boat you are looking at. Google can be quite helpful in this regard. While the marine industry has not yet quite come around to the same level of MSRP disclosure as the automotive industry, it is getting better and better all the time. Just remember that, as with everything on the internet, you should look for multiple sources and take everything you see with a grain of salt.

Check NADA boat guides

and BUC values. These guides can only show history and do not include current pricing, so they are most helpful for determining the value of used boats. However, even when you're shopping new they can help put the value of a boat into context—pay particularly close attention to the outlined NADA boat values.

Boat pricing is variable. As you check on pricing, it is important to remember that boat value is subject to a lot of variables. Along with power choices and features, geography will play a role because dealerships have different levels of expenses depending on where they are located. And when it comes to used boats there is obviously a huge range of factors to take into account, ranging from the boat's condition, to how much use it's had, to where and how it's been used, to what (if any) warranties it may still carry.

Negotiating your boat purchase. Before you even begin to negotiate a final deal, make sure you have already gone through all the above research and come to the table armed with solid background knowledge. Boat dealers know that today's buyers are savvy, can research boat prices, and have probably already

talked with their competition. They know just what their overhead costs are and what level of profit they need to make to stay in business. Ask an honest dealer what the bottom-line price is, and you are likely to get a straight answer.

That does not mean, however, that you cannot make some special requests. Dealers can sometimes add an extended warranty or an option or two to sweeten the deal, without taking too much of a hit. And remember, you'll often be able to get a better deal if you:

-Buy a boat during the off-season or at the very end of the boating season, when dealers really want to move their inventory.

-Buy a leftover model year boat, which the dealer wants to move to make way for the next model year.

-Buy at a boat show, where the dealer may offer special incentives or reductions.

-Order a boat as opposed to buying off the lot, so the dealer does not have to pay floor plan (remember, though, you may be in for a wait while the boat's being built).



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## Safe boating tips every boater must follow

No matter how much experience you have, it is always a good idea for everyone to review boating safety rules and practices before leaving the dock. Below are a few safety tips to help you boat responsibly and enjoy your time on the water.

Take a boating safety course. New boaters and experienced experts alike need to be familiar with the boating rules of the road. Boating safety courses are offered locally, inexpensive, and often completed in a day, in-person or online.

Get a free vessel safety check. The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and U.S. Power Squadrons offer complimentary boat examinations to verify the presence and condition of specific safety equipment required by state and federal regulations. Free of charge, they also offer virtual vessel exams.

Follow a pre-departure checklist. Utilizing a pre-departure checklist is a helpful way to check the boat and ensure the proper gear is onboard.

Be weather-wise. Always check local, route, and destination weather and water conditions before departure and

ensure it is safe to go out.

Use common sense. Operate at a safe speed at all times (especially in crowded areas), stay alert, and steer clear of large vessels and watercraft that can be restricted in their ability to stop or turn.

Know the nautical rules of the road. Maintain a proper lookout and be respectful of buoys and other navigational aids, all of which have been placed there to ensure your safety and the safety of the boats around you. To learn more, check out the USCG's Navigation Rules information page.

Designate an assistant skipper. Make sure more than one person on board is familiar with all aspects of the boat's handling, operations, and general boating safety, in case the primary operator is incapacitated, and someone else needs to get the boat back to shore.

Develop a float plan. Whether you inform a family member or staff at your local marina, let someone else know where you're going and how long you'll be gone. A float plan can include the fol-

*please see tips on page 15*



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# Boat buyer's guide: How to buy a boat

The first step in the boat-buying process is also the most important: determining exactly what type of craft will best fit the needs and wants of both yourself and those you plan to bring along for the ride. Those needs and wants are typically determined by what type of activities you want to pursue on the water.

Think about the reasons you want to be on the water and then narrow your choices accordingly.

Before diving into the details, here is a step-by-step boat purchase overview.

Choose the right boat type for your needs.

Decide if you would like to buy a new or used boat.

Ensure the boat you are buying is a certified boat.

Determine how much boat you can afford.

Research information about boat financing and how to get a boat loan.

Shop for your boat—figure out where and when to buy.

Learn more about boat values and pricing, including how to negotiate your purchase.

Conduct a sea trial and a marine survey.

Close the deal and find out more

## **tips**

from page 14

lowing information:

- Name, address, and phone number of the trip leader and passengers

- Boat type and registration information

- Trip itinerary

- Types of communication and signal equipment onboard, such as an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) or Personal Locator Beacon (PLB)

Read More: Create a Float Plan

Wear a life jacket. Assign and fit each member of your onboard team with a life jacket before departure (visit these USCG resources for more information). Regulations vary by state, but children under 16 and all watersports riders should wear a life jacket on the water.

Never drink and drive a boat. Operating a boat while intoxicated is illegal. Nearly half of all boating accidents involve alcohol—designate a sober skipper before leaving the dock.

Be aware of carbon monoxide. Maintain fresh air circulation through-

about boat registration, insurance and taxes.

## **Determine what type of boat to buy**

Now that you have decided to embrace the boating lifestyle, you'll want to establish a budget so you can start building and prioritizing your wish list. That budget will likely be a key factor in the decision to buy a new or pre-owned boat. Either way, the considerations for size and type of boat will be the same.

When it comes to determining the right size for your boat, there are many factors to consider:

**People:** How many people will you regularly have on board? Will you host just your immediate family or will you bring extended family and friends?

**Towing:** If you are trailering your boat, keep in mind that the size of boat will directly impact the size of the vehicle needed to tow it.

**Location:** Think about where you will be using the boat. If you are planning to boat on larger waterways, then a slightly larger boat with a deeper hull might make more sense. Smaller waterways or shallow water might require a smaller vessel.

**Storage:** If you are storing your boat at the marina, boat size will likely impact monthly storage costs. If you are

out the boat. Educate all passengers about the symptoms of CO poisoning and where CO may accumulate.

Don't Swim in a marina. Never swim in a marina or other areas where boats are connected to shore power. Stray power in the water can create an electric shock hazard.

Stay clear of the engine. Drivers should wear the boat's engine cut-off switch lanyard at all times. Keep watch around the propeller area when people are in the water. Never allow passengers to board or exit your boat from the water when engines are on—or idling. Take extra precautions near boats towing skiers or tubers.

Never jump from a moving boat. Passengers should never participate in boat jumping. Instead, wait to exit the boat once the captain has announced that the boat's engine is off, and the boat is at a standstill. Jumping from a moving boat is extremely dangerous and can result in severe injury or death.

Always exercise caution and adhere to proper procedures to ensure a safe and enjoyable boating experience.

storing it at your personal dock, what space constraints already exist? You will also want to talk to your dealer or marina manager about the potential need for winter storage.

## **Set your budget**

Boating is more affordable than you think. With an idea of the type of boat you want to purchase, narrow things further with several practical considerations that can help you set your budget.

A new boat has both factory freshness and a warranty; a pre-owned craft may need to be checked out more thoroughly, but allow you to stretch your budget. If you consider all the weekend activities and vacation expenses a small family can incur throughout the year, boat ownership is quite comparable—especially when you realize that a brand-new entry-level boat can easily be had for \$250 to \$300 per month. To get a little more boat for the budget, you might also consider buying a pre-owned boat.

## **Start shopping**

With a boat and budget in mind, it is time to start the shopping process. Start with a general online search of boat types, then hone in on individual models through manufacturers websites, dealerships, online reviews, and forums. Do not just rely on the keyboard. You may also have friends or acquaintances with similar types of boats or who enjoy similar activities. Ask them their experiences, and use their firsthand knowledge to your advantage.

## **Dealership experience**

For many boat buyers, it is important to be able to feel, touch, and see the boat that they are purchasing. Working with a dealer can help make the buying process easy and simple. While you're comparing boats, don't forget to compare boat dealers. The quality and location of the dealership is an important part of your boat-buying and ownership experience.

## **Inspect the boats**

Once you narrow down your search and are seriously considering one particular boat, it's important to have a thorough inspection of other major components such as the engine, propeller, bilge (inside a boat's hull), steering system, electrical systems and fuel

tank.

## **Sea trials**

Take a test drive or sea trial. Think long term—the boat you test with just two people may handle much differently with a full complement of family and friends. Likewise, that horsepower that seems adequate in a simple trial may not fit the bill down the road.

## **Marine surveys**

If you are not confident in your technical knowledge, you can enlist the help of an independent marine surveyor. Very similar to a home inspector, a surveyor will inspect the boat from top to bottom and inside out so you know exactly what condition the boat is in.

## **Close the deal**

When it comes to the purchase process, there is more to know than the list price and features of a boat.

Not unlike car buying, there are often a few additional costs not listed on the sticker price. Dealer fees, insurance, registration, accessories, storage and upkeep should all be discussed with the dealer early in your shopping to determine the full cost of boat ownership and to avoid surprises later.

## **Bells and whistles**

Ask about accessories. Some gear, such as a safety kit, is often included with the purchase of the boat, while other activity-specific accessories might need to be added on to your purchase.

## **Delivery and ownership**

Find out what to expect after you sign on the dotted line. What is the delivery process? You'll want a thorough review of the boat's systems before taking the keys so you have the confidence to operate your boat from day one. You should also ask about the procedure for scheduling maintenance or repairs with the dealer's shop when the time comes. Get a head start by learning more about the first year of maintenance.

And before you depart on your first outing, find out where you can take a boater-education course. Learning basic seamanship skills and absorbing some local knowledge will give you a greater confidence level once you hit the water. Completion of boater-education courses might also get you a discount on your insurance.

## Avery Hall Insurance celebrates centennial

Avery Hall Insurance announced the celebration of its 100th anniversary. Since 1925, Avery Hall has been a trusted name in insurance. Beginning as a small business out of founder Avery W. Hall's farmhouse, the company now has five thriving locations and over a hundred employees. The company is excited to celebrate a century of success and looks forward to the next century of growth.

In 1981, Mr. Avery Hall retired at eighty-two, leaving the company in the hands of six trusted producers. The business has continued to grow, expanding to provide services for personal and business insurance and individual health and employee benefits. This trend of growth continues today; Avery Hall is moving into the next century with renewed energy, expansive resources, and the guidance of local leadership.

The year 2025 marks not only one hundred years of business for Avery Hall but a century as an inte-

gral part of the community. Quality service was of the utmost importance to Mr. Avery W. Hall, not only through providing reliable insurance guidance but also through hands-on community involvement. Avery Hall Insurance is proud to continue his legacy today through charitable giving and cultivating a team of professionals passionate about volunteerism.

"Over the past century, we've grown and adapted, always putting our clients first. This anniversary isn't just about looking back – it's about looking ahead," states Mary Mengason, Senior Vice President of Avery Hall, "We are excited to continue evolving and building on this legacy, continuing to be a trusted partner for our client's insurance and benefits needs."

Avery Hall Insurance looks forward to formally celebrating this milestone at its headquarters in Salisbury in June 2025.

## Student art exhibit, competition underway

The Worcester County Arts Council announced a special exhibit throughout February, showcasing remarkable artwork created by local high school students as part of the annual art competition sponsored by the Berlin/Ocean City Optimist

Club.

This competition aims to inspire and celebrate the creative talents of Worcester County students while highlighting the importance of quality art education programs.

The competition offers \$2,000 in cash prizes for the participating student artists. Esteemed artist and art educator Lisa Marie Penn will serve as the judge for this year's entries.

A reception and awards ceremony will be held on Friday, February 14 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., with ribbons and monetary prizes presentation at 6 p.m. The event, open to the public, will take place at the Worcester County Arts Council Gallery located at 6 Jefferson Street in Berlin.

Visitors to the exhibit will also have a chance to participate by voting for the People's Choice award. Voting will run from February 4 through February 13.

The exhibit will be on display at the Worcester County Arts Council Gallery from through February 28. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.



**Valentines** - Students in Ms. Thompson's kindergarten class at Ocean City Elementary have been preparing for Valentines Day. The students wrote about and drew pictures of what love means to them. Some examples include love is making cards and being a good friend. Pictured from left to right are **Chloe McCallum, Adeline Kominos, Grady Miller and Rasul Bedir.**

## MCBP offers funding opportunities

The Maryland Coastal Bays Program (MCBP) is now accepting community stewardship mini-grant proposals and scientific research funding proposals for environmental projects benefiting the Coastal Bays watershed.

The MCBP Mini Grant Program seeks to support watershed-based community, science, and educational initiatives that align with CCMP action items. Through this funding opportunity, MCBP is seeking to engage new applicants and organizations from diverse communities in small-scale projects. This grant opportunity is available to any individual, group, school, organization, service youth and civic groups for projects that will raise awareness about the challenges and solutions to restore our Coastal Bays, engage citizens in community-based restoration and protection projects, or educate students about the Coastal Bays.

The Research Grant Program is available to MCBP's partners to assist in responding to research needs identified in the Maryland Coastal Bays Program. Opportunities include reachable scientific goals and the most effective means for implementing them. Existing and on-going projects that seek to augment or add an additional element to an existing scope of work may also be considered for funding.

Both funding opportunities must

align with the Maryland Coastal Bays Management Plan, the CCMP. This plan can be found on the MCBP website at [www.mdcoastalbays.org](http://www.mdcoastalbays.org).

These funding opportunities are provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding. With BIL funding, the EPA will be making significant investments in the health, equity, and resilience of American communities and taking significant strides to tackle the climate crisis.

Applicants for the community stewardship mini-grants may request up to \$5,000 for their project. Applicants for the scientific research grants may request up to \$25,000.

Funding details and contact information can be found on the Maryland Coastal Bays website at <https://mdcoastalbays.org/funding-opportunities/>. The proposal deadline for both funding opportunities is March 7.

## County office to close

Worcester County Government offices, including all five Branch Libraries and Recreation & Parks, will be closed Monday, February 17 in observance of Presidents Day. Normal business hours will resume Tuesday, February 18. The Central Landfill and Homeowner Convenience Centers will be open during standard hours of operation.

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## Accounts vary on Valentine's Day origins

Valentine's Day is a bright light in the middle of the winter. Come February 14, sweethearts celebrate their love and affection for one another on this day devoted to happy couples.

The origin of Valentine's Day has generated much speculation over the years. Most early accounts do not point to heart-shaped boxes filled with chocolates. Rather, a few distinctive tales may paint the picture of early Valentine's Day, and they have nothing to do with stuffed animals or romantic dinners.

Roman festival. One of the earliest records of the term Valentine's Day is traced to the Roman festival of Lupercalia, which was a fertility festival. This annual event held on February 15 included animal sacrifices and priests called the Luperci who would take pieces of animal hide and touch it to the foreheads of women in the hopes it would make them more fertile. Fortunately for the squeamish (and the sacrificial animals), Pope Gelasius I ended Lupercalia and replaced it with St. Valentine's Day by the end of the fifth century.

Two or three St. Valentines? Most

people attribute the origins of Valentine's Day to the holiday's namesake, St. Valentine. But it seems that Valentine was the surname of a few different individuals.

According to History.com, the Catholic Church recognizes at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus. One Valentine was a priest during the reign of Emperor Claudius II, who decided that single men made better soldiers than those with families or wives. Claudius outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine disagreed with the decree and would perform marriages in secret. Others believe it was St. Valentine of Terni, a bishop beheaded by Claudius II outside of Rome, who was the true namesake.

Yet another Valentine may have been jailed and fell in love with a jailer's daughter while in prison. He purportedly wrote to her, beginning the first Valentine card or letter tradition. Other stories say the imprisoned Valentine actually was writing to a blind woman he purportedly healed, and signed the note "from your Valen-

*please see valentine page 18*



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# Navigating Medicare

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## Hutmaker is new VP at Wor-Wic

Dr. Michael Hutmaker, dean of student affairs at the Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC), part of the City University of New York (CUNY) system, was recently selected to fill the position of vice president of student affairs at Wor-Wic Community College.



Dr. Michael Hutmaker

perience in higher education. At BMCC, he worked to create partnerships with New York University, Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs, State Farm and various foundations to provide unique opportunities for students normally afforded to four-year schools.

“He has an outstanding record of significant accomplishments throughout his career,” said Deborah Casey, Ph.D., president of Wor-Wic. “His background and experience will be an asset to Wor-Wic, and his ethos of putting students first makes him a natural fit to support Wor-Wic’s mission. I’m excited to welcome Dr. Hutmaker to the dolphin family.”

At Wor-Wic, Hutmaker will oversee a range of departments dedicated to student access and success.

Hutmaker received his bachelor’s degree from Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N.J., a master’s degree from Clemson University in South Carolina and a doctorate of education from St. John’s University in Queens, N.Y. Hutmaker has more than 30 years of ex-

*valentine*  
from 17

tine.”

It is hard to know who is who in regard to the name Valentine, as the stories and the people behind them are used interchangeably. Some historians

believe they actually are the same person rather than several Valentines, while others insist there were multiple martyred individuals.

However you slice it, the defiant actions of one or more people named Valentine set the course for centuries of romance to follow

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# Some puns and more

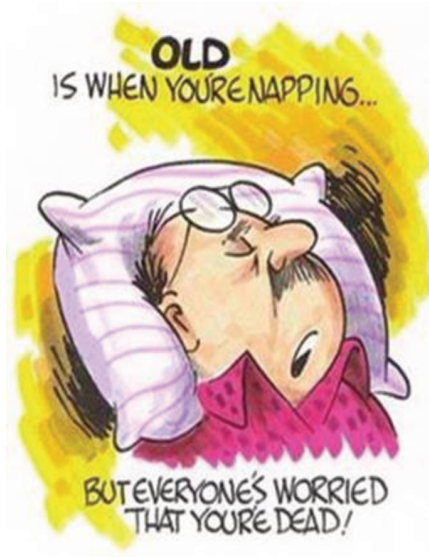
## Some things to think about

Gathered from the internet by **Jack Barnes**



I've started telling everyone about the benefits of eating dried grapes. It's all about raisin awareness.

What word starts with E and ends with E but only has one letter in it? Envelope.



What days are the strongest? Saturday and Sunday. The rest are week days.

How does Moses make his tea? Hebrews it. I'm serious. That Israeli how he does it.

My boss told me to have a good day. So I went home.

A teacher asked me to name two structures that hold water. I was like, well dam.

What word becomes shorter if you add two letters? Short.

Where do rainbows go when they're bad? Prism. It's a light sentence.

When does a joke become a Dad joke? When it becomes apparent.

My boss asked me why I was only sick on work days. I said it must be my

weekend immune system.

Boss: How good are you at PowerPoint?

Me: I Excel at it.

Boss: Was that a Microsoft Office pun?

Me: Word.

My wife accused me of stealing her Thesaurus. Not only was I shocked, but I was appalled, aghast, and dismayed.

The reason that aliens have never visited us is because our solar system has received terrible reviews. We have only one star.

I can't remember how to write 1, 1000, 51, 6 and 500 as Roman numerals. IM LIVID

I'm reading a horror book in Braille. Something bad is going to happen! I can feel it.

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