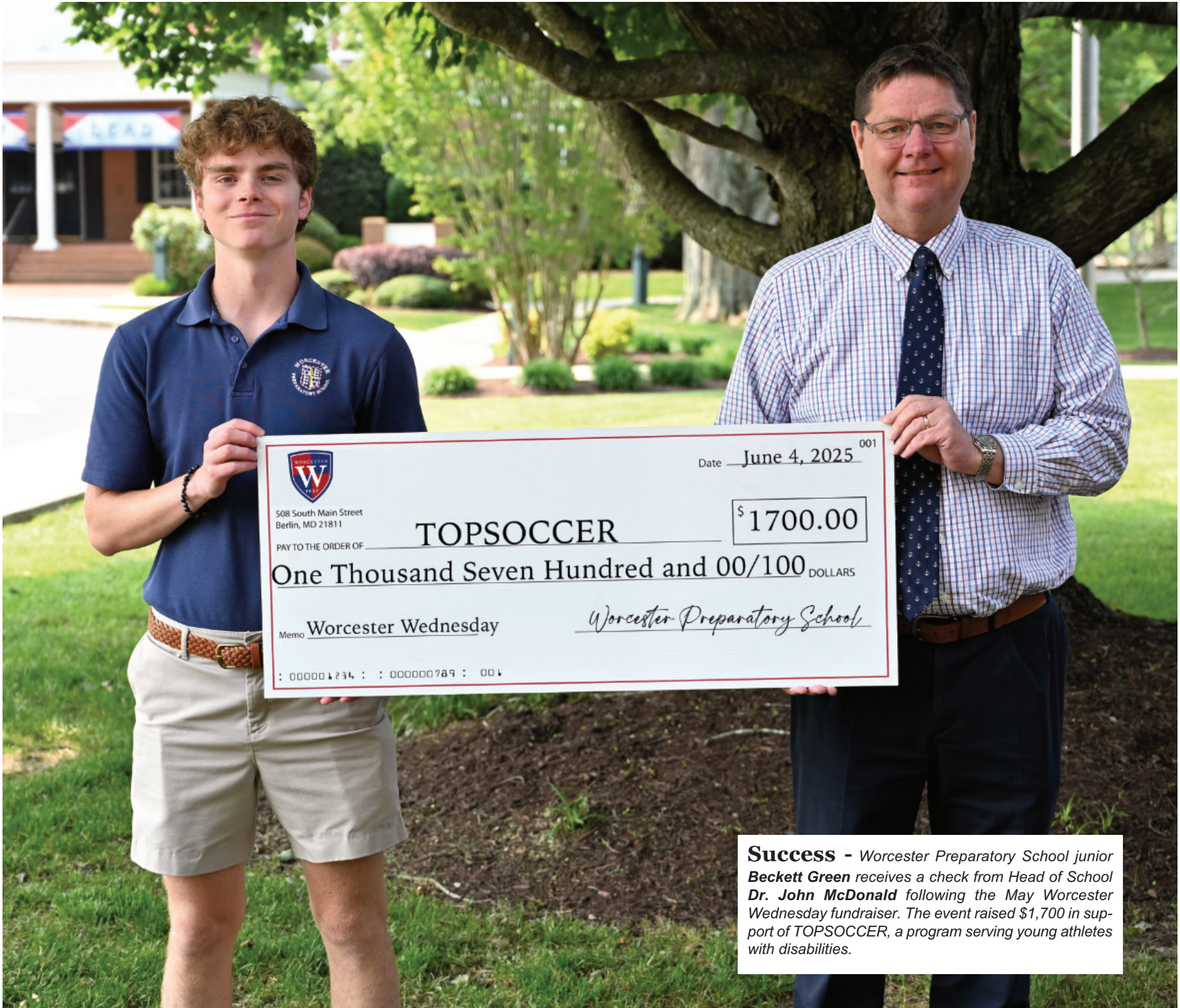


The Courier

June 11, 2025 Volume 25 Number 34



Success - Worcester Preparatory School junior **Beckett Green** receives a check from Head of School **Dr. John McDonald** following the May Worcester Wednesday fundraiser. The event raised \$1,700 in support of TOPSOCCER, a program serving young athletes with disabilities.

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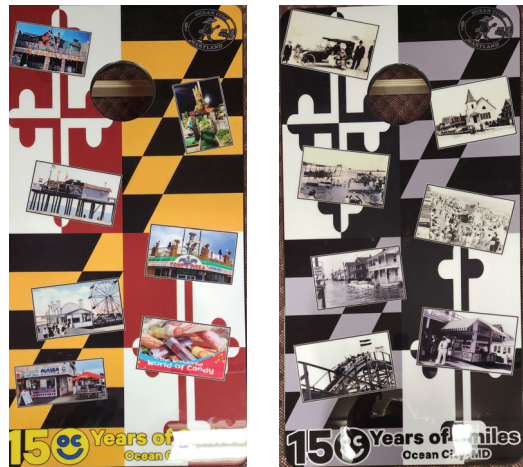
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Family Farm is for flower lovers

By **Elaine Bean**

Tucked away on the corner of Route 611 and Old Assateague Road outside Berlin is a farm unlike any other in the area. The Assateague Flower Farm is a family-owned business that specializes in homegrown flowers and firewood and sells directly to the public.

Lindsey Buckman and her parents, Kelly and Steve, run the farm, with Lindsey growing the flowers, Kelly helping with the floral arrangements, and Steve handling the firewood. Originally from Catonsville, MD, the family purchased the 12-acre farm in 2011, taking over land previously cultivated with corn and soybeans.

"We instantly started planting everything," Buckman said, "probably too many trees and every single kind of plant you could possibly think of. The first eight years, we started off doing produce and plants, trying to find what we wanted to do and see how people responded."

Buckman's parents had been landscapers and owned their own business for many years, inspiring their daughter in the love of growing things. The family moved away from Baltimore County because "our parents wanted us to have a country feel to life," she said. After a short stint in Hershey, PA, the family decided they wanted to be near the beach where they had spent many summers. They decided on the Ocean City area with its many memories, and found the farmette near Assateague Island.

"I wanted to live near the beach and do something ocean related and outside related with my career," Buckman said. "I didn't know what I wanted to do, but I knew I wanted to be outside."

The property on Route 611 "screamed a huge fixer upper," Buckman said. "My dad was so into that. He has a huge vision for things. In a month, we were literally on the farm."

Buckman is health conscious and, once on the farm, started growing her own produce to feed her family and friends. But the attraction and challenge of growing flowers soon became her passion. "I always loved colors and creativity and the artistic vibe that

flowers give. But I was really intimidated by it, because flowers are hard to grow."

Four years ago, in the middle of the summer, Buckman made the switch to growing only flowers and has not looked back. She sells her flower



Lindsey Buckman

arrangements at the self-service stand on the farm, and also at the Berlin Farmers Market on Sundays. "Loyal regular customers and locals make it worthwhile, but it's definitely not a money thing with me. It's all for the passion of it."

Buckman grows over 50 kinds of flowers on her farm, annuals and perennials, plus varieties within those varieties. Everything is grown outside in the one-acre field she cultivates. Besides bouquets of fresh flowers, the farm stand offers peace sign wreaths made from the farm's grapevines and air plant/succulent crafts. "It's all based on the things we grow and the shells I find," Buckman said.

The farm does not currently have a greenhouse, but there may be one in the future. "I'm all self-taught and wanted to earn my greenhouse," she said.

Buckman's father handles gathering and selling seasoned firewood and

*please see **flowers** on page 6*

What it means to me to be a father

Because this Sunday is Fathers' Day, I'd like to share some thoughts about my relationships with the only three people in the world who call me Dad.



It's All About. . .

By **Chip Bertino**

chipbertino@delmarvacourier.com

For regular readers of this column, you know I have three children: a daughter and two sons. My relationships with the three are strong, a reality for which I am grateful – and hopefully so are they. I count each of them among my best friends. Whether they think likewise, I do not know. There's a belief in my family that I consider my daughter to be, and to always have been, perfect. My wife and two boys, and even at times my daughter, tell me that is not the case.

I've been a father for nearly 37 years and although it is now part of my identity, early on I was ever fearful that I would not make the grade as a dad. Growing up I didn't have a very good example so when my wife told me for the first time that I was going to be a father, I broke out in a cold sweat.

My daughter arrived first. She made it easy for me to learn the ropes. She was always pleasant, casting large smiles and flashing bright eyes. So, when the boys came, I thought I knew everything. I learned quickly that when it comes to fathering, there is no cookie cutter approach. Each child has a unique personality, even as an infant.

Fatherhood is an unscripted, unrehearsed pursuit that can be dramatic, at times comedic and hair-raising, and definitely a life-long responsibility. If you're a parent, you know what I mean.

My most difficult times as a father have been when I've had to

stand in the wings watching one of my kids experience setback and disappointment. I've done my best to catch them when they fell but I've tried not to interfere in the process

– too much. My feeling has always been, how will they learn if I intercede? Let me be clear. If one of my kids was about to put his/her hand into a pot of boiling water, I'd certainly intercede. It's only when children become

parents that they realize (hopefully) the anguish endured by fathers watching from the sideline as a child learns a painful life lesson. My children have experienced suc-



cess. And when they've experienced setbacks, I've been most proud of them for picking themselves up, dusting themselves off and getting back in the game, literally and figuratively.

Just after them becoming a teenager, the father/child relationship endures a bumpy, windy path as they navigate becoming an adult. I recall no difficulties with my daughter when she traversed this period of her life. As I wrote above, she was perfect. I know when my wife reads what I just wrote, she will roll her eyes in disbelief. My sons, and even my daughter, will do the same. But that's my story and I'm sticking to it.

Looking back at my own teenage years which are now many decades in the past, my mind at that time was congested with confusing thoughts and unfamiliar emotions that ebbed and flowed haphazardly.

I recognized this upheaval in my own children when they began to view and listen to me skeptically. The teenage years are akin to them learning to ride a two-wheel bike. As a father I held on to the back of the seat, running alongside as they pedaled ever faster. Eventually I had to release my hold. I watched their erratic attempts to balance on their own. I watched them fall once or twice. They eventually managed to find their equilibrium.

It takes time to strike the right balance between a childhood father/child relationship and the evolving adult relationships that continue through life. Sometimes it's not easy. As children experience life on their own terms, they discover their father (and mother too) is a mere mortal not the superhero they may have once thought. For me, well, it took some time to adjust to the new normal that my children were no longer around to enthusiastically race to the door when I arrived home from work.

During those instances when the rhythm of a house full of kids, especially teenagers, was almost too syncopated to endure, I would say through gritted teeth, "These are the happiest years of my life." And now that those years are in the rearview mirror, I say wistfully that they were indeed

the happiest years of my life.

There were many times when my young children, my wife and I shared experiences that at least for me, are indelible. Interestingly those life moments have become more memorable the older I get. Many of those good times occurred while we were on our boat anchored behind Assateague. Other times were sitting around the dinner table as a family. The jokes, cut-ups and impersonations were endless and at times irreverent. Our food often turned cold because we were laughing so hard.

As a father, I experienced dark moments worrying about my children. It's what I did. Even now I worry about my kids even though they are living their lives with their own families and careers.

I am not an expert father, not by a longshot. I did, and do, the best I can. I've learned that honest conversation is crucial and that sometimes the most productive conversations I've had with my kids is when I just listened. Admittedly, at times I've stepped in it deep by communicating too honestly or pontificated when I should have kept my mouth shut. Through the years, I've improved and my kids have always given me another chance.

Being a father has been a great gift in my life. I am thankful for my children and the experiences we've shared. I look forward to many more.

Happy Fathers' Day.

flowers
from page 4

kindling, geared towards the campers on Assateague Island. "It's all local wood, and we have a huge, scary wood splitter, too" she said. While the flower stand is self-serve, Buckman said her father and mother are on the farm ready to help customers with their firewood purchases. "My parents always come out and wait on people at any hour," she said.

Two five-year old goats named Jasmine and Cosmo are companions to the family on the farm. "They are our spoiled pets," Buckman said. "We don't milk them or anything, because once you start, you have to do it their whole lives every day. I couldn't be committed to that schedule. They are our mascots and our outdoor dogs."

The flower stand is open seven days a week from spring through fall, but Buckman expects to extend their open time through December to bring in holiday wreaths and garland.

The hours for the flower stand are 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. The firewood stand is open 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. More information is available at www.assateague-farm.com.



Commentary

By Joe Reynolds
OceanPinesForum.com

HOA act violation?

And the beat goes on

Responding to recent commentary on *OceanPinesForum.com* regarding the Elections Committee and chairman Steve Ransdell, on 5/25/2025 OPA Secretary and liaison to the Elections Committee John Latham wrote, "The Board and I will disagree with your opinion of Steve. He is doing a good job." (Ransdell - Yet Again!)

There is no record of the OPA Board of Directors voting as an entity on anything such as Latham suggests.

So, fast-forward two days later to an Elections Committee Meeting on May 27, 2025.

The meeting was held in an OPA administration meeting room, and is available on video. Chairman Ransdell participated remotely. Also signing in

remotely were association member Doug Parks and OPA director Jeff Heavner.

Ransdell decided to have a committee meeting that also included the "candidate draw" to determine the position of each candidate on the ballot. Candidates Monica Rakowski, Steve Jacobs, and Amy Peck were in the room. Candidate Stuart Lakernick was not present and did not attend remotely. Candidate Steve Jacobs mentioned he did not believe he had proper notice of the meeting.

Association member Doug Parks, a past OPA president, made public comments. He even said he was there to address two issues, the most important being his blessing that the committee could go into closed session to

discuss what questions the committee should ask candidates at an upcoming Candidate Forum. Two different sources suggest someone asked Parks to be there to make that comment. The idea of "secret" questions is childish.

There is some credibility in the suggestion, based on what seems at times to be an obsession by a few Facebook Get Involved supported board members with candidate Amy Peck. Not long ago the board considered having OPA's attorney send Peck and several others a cease and desist letter about some ROC Facebook posts accusing board members of fraud. A couple of folks actually did so. Peck did not. The letters were never sent.

There was also the flap a year or so ago when Peck, as a candidate, attended an Elections Committee meeting and the committee publicly discussed Candidate Forum Questions. Some board members accused her of cheating by being there when the questions were discussed. Pure nonsense as the meeting was available later on YouTube for any candidate.

On the other hand, there was the issue of Peck refusing to support the appointment of now OPA president Stuart Lakernick, husband of Get Involved owner Esther Diller, to a committee when she was on the board and Colette Horn was president.

It is an ongoing OPA version of the Hatfields and McCoys.

Parks' background with Peck is interesting. After she served as an appointed member of the Board of Directors to fill an empty seat, Peck was appointed to the Recreation & Parks Committee by a new board with Parks as president and a board majority controlled by board members supported by Get Involved.

Peck said not long after her appointment to the Recreations & Parks Committee, Parks had her removed by a board vote at a public meeting.

So, that is some background as to why Parks may have wanted to provide public comments supporting the committee going into closed session to discuss the candidate questions.

Chairman Ransdell thanked Parks for his comments and noted the com-

mittee would go into closed session to discuss the questions, as Parks suggested was appropriate. The now online minutes of the May 27, 2025 meeting contains the following: "Committee adjourned into closed session for the purpose of discussing Candidate Forum Questions."

Here's the rub, as is too often the case lately with the Elections Committee: A committee motion and vote is required to go into closed session to comply with the Maryland Home Owners Association Act. Ransdell never asked for or considered a motion to go into closed session. It is not in the video and individuals in the room confirm no vote was taken.

Even if he had asked for a motion and a vote, the HOA Act allows closed sessions only for specific purposes. Once again, Ransdell's Elections Committee appears to have violated the Maryland HOA Act.

Will the Board of Directors do anything? No.

Well, they probably will continue to praise Ransdell and the committee. Count on it.

A somewhat interesting aside was the process used for the candidate draw. The process is spelled out in Board Resolution M-06. "Candidates shall draw numbered slips. Number 1 (one) shall be the first position on the ballot, number 2 the next position, and so on through the full list of candidates."

What actually happened is a committee member at the table had four playing cards he shuffled under the table and then laid out in a row in front of his position.

What are the odds that the cards would end up in numerical order with lowest on the committee member's right and highest on his left? The probability is 1/24, but that was how it happened. A committee member directly to the right of the cards, asked to select for the absent candidate, made a long reach over to her left and selected number one.

One other somewhat interesting sidebar - during the meeting, chairman Steve Ransdell never appears in the video.

Courier Almanac

On June 11, 1979, John Wayne, an iconic American film actor famous for starring in countless westerns, dies at age 72 after battling cancer for more than a decade.

Choosing a location to get married requires careful consideration. Some couples prefer to get married in their hometowns while others want to jet off to far-flung destinations. According to The Knot 2025 Real Weddings Study, 60 percent of couples choose to get married where they currently live, 23 percent opt for a hometown venue, and 18 percent select a destination wedding. The truth is there are many domestic and international spots that are prime locations for weddings. The Knot says the French Riviera; Punta Mita, Mexico; Spain; Costa Rica; Portugal; and Greece are popular picks for destination weddings. People who want to stay closer to home often opt for the Hudson Valley and the Catskills, New York, for a farm or ranch wedding, and the Rockies in Colorado for a mountain venue. According to Google data and the travel and lifestyle firm Holidu, Chicago is the most searched urban area for wedding venues over the past year, followed by Long Island, New York and Dallas, Texas. Other popular cities for getting hitched include San Diego, Las Vegas, Atlanta, and New Orleans. Ultimately, wedding city location will depend on the couple's budget and guests' convenience.



The
Courier

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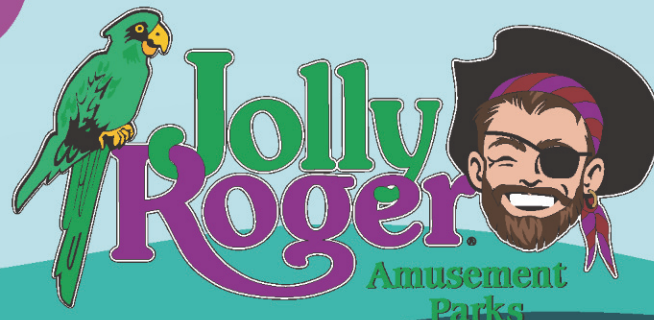
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Reader Letter

Additional members should be added to education council

Editor:

I recently learned that there is an Educational Advisory Council for Worcester County Public Schools (WCPS). The committee consists of three members appointed by the Worcester County Teachers Association and three teachers named by the Superintendent. Apparently it was established to allow teachers a voice and offer recommendations to WCPS. It is always good to establish a mechanism to improve communication. However, this committee seems to be somewhat limited in its scope. Teachers are not the only group that should be giving recommendations and communicating with (WCPS). Shouldn't there be a mechanism for parents and taxpayers to also have discussions with the WCPS's superintendent and board of education as well as the teachers, and be given the opportunity to make recommendations? Do not say they can do that at the school board meetings because when you speak at a board meeting you are limited in time and no discussion or responses are given at that venue. Also, teachers have that same mechanism and obviously that is not enough for them and by the same token is not a

satisfactory way for parents or tax payers to communicate either. I am suggesting an opportunity to have conversations among all the stakeholders and make recommendations to WCPS.

It seems to me that the teachers have a voice through their union, while the other constituents have little or no voice. This more inclusive council would also open up discussions and better communication among all stakeholders in the county and help each stakeholder to better understand other points of view. This could not be anything but good for everyone concerned and certainly good for WCPS. The school system has been criticized for their lack of communication. The additional members on this council would be a strong response to that criticism and improve communication immensely among all stakeholders.

I ask WCPS, the Board of Education, and the WCPS's Superintendent to consider adding the additional members suggested above to this Educational Advisory Council for the purpose of improving communication among all stakeholders in Worcester County.

Dorothy S. Leslie
Ocean Pines



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Arts Council seeks entries for exhibition

The Worcester County Arts Council (WCAC) announced a Call for Entries for its upcoming juried art competition and exhibition, “Travels,” inviting artists to creatively explore the concept of travel, whether through physical journeys, emotional growth, cultural exploration, or imaginative adventure.

This exhibition offers a platform for artists to interpret the idea of “travel” broadly, reflecting the diverse paths we take: across lands, through life experiences, and within our imaginations.

Entries for the competition will be accepted June 24 to 26 between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., at the Worcester County Arts Council Gallery located at 6 Jefferson Street in Berlin. Local artist Doris Glover will judge the entries. Awards will be presented during an open to the public reception on Friday, July 11, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Exhibit will be on display from July 1 through August 31.

The exhibition is open to all artists ages 18 and older. All visual art mediums are welcome, including but not limited to painting, photography, sculpture, mixed media, and digital art.

Detailed competition guidelines and entry forms are available on the Worcester County Arts Council’s website at www.worcester-countyartsCouncil.org

“We’re excited to see how artists interpret this universal theme,” said Anna Mullis, Executive Director of WCAC. “Travel, whether across the world or within oneself, has the power to inspire, heal, and transform. This exhibition aims to showcase that power through the lens of artistic expression.”

All submissions must be original works and ready for display.

For additional information, contact the Worcester County Arts Council at 410-641-0809 or email anna@worcester-countyartsCouncil.org.



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Carozza blasts MDE's air quality permits

In response to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)'s announcement to approve US Wind's air quality permit-to-construct application, Senator Mary Beth Carozza said, "The approval of US Wind's air quality permit ignores the numerous concerns outlined by the growing opposition from Maryland residents regarding the negative consequences of this project."

Senator Mary Beth Carozza, who represents Maryland's Coast and surrounding areas, joined with local leaders and constituents to testify against US Wind's air quality permit application during a public hearing held by the Maryland Department of the Environment on January 9th at the Ocean City Convention Center. In her testimony, Senator Carozza raised new questions based on information gathered from the installation of wind turbines in other locations outside of Maryland and the United States.

"I raised new questions about the wake effect which reduces wind

speed, making the project inefficient and increasing the ozone levels in the surrounding area," said Senator Carozza. "The MDE response to this concern was unsatisfactory, and it's unacceptable that the State agency focused on the quality of the environment in Maryland would give the go ahead to a project that would have harmful consequences on our Shore way of life."

"The State of Maryland should be focused on lowering energy costs

for the ratepayers, and not pushing costly, subsidized offshore wind energy development, which is the most expensive generating technology," said Senator Carozza. "Offshore wind is intermittent and unreliable, and we are finding more and more negative impacts across the board. As more and more Marylanders learn the true costs and negative impacts of the industrialization of our ocean, the Stop Offshore Wind movement continues to grow each day. We need our voices heard by

the Governor and all his Administration."

Opposition to US Wind's proposed offshore wind energy project continues to mount with a working coalition made up of local residents and visitors, commercial watermen, boaters, environmentalists, hotel, motel, and restaurant operators, small business owners and their employees, elected officials at every level of government, and a growing number of concerned residents from across the State of Maryland.

Local students awarded scholarships

Two graduating seniors from Stephen Decatur High School and one from Delmar High School have been selected to each receive \$3,000 college scholarships from the Ocean City Lodge of the Sons and Daughters of Italy (SDOI). The organization each year awards scholarships to graduating seniors of Italian heritage.

This year's winners were Stephen Decatur students Ava

Marie Snelsire of Berlin and Brooke Christine Berquist of Bishopville. Delmar resident Joseph Michael Anthony Morelli was the third recipient.

Ava Marie Snelsire will attend Hood College in Frederick, MD, to study biology, bio medical science, and sports medicine. She also has committed to play softball and field hockey at the school.

Brook Berquist plans to major

in criminal justice at the University of Maryland, College Park. Joseph Morelli has been accepted to the University of North Alabama as a chemistry major.

The Sons and Daughters of Italy of Ocean City hosts the annual St. Joseph's Day Festival in March, which is the organization's major fundraiser for its charitable giving and scholarship program.

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Worcester budget decreases property tax rate, increases education funding

On June 3, 2025, the Worcester County Commissioners approved the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Operating Budget of \$281,396,017.

"This budget increases funding for priorities like education and public safety and at the same time decreases the property tax rate for our residents," Worcester County Commissioner President Ted Elder said. "Everyone is coming out of this with something."

The FY26 budget decreases the real property tax rate by 3 cents. The new real property tax is 81.5¢ per \$100 of assessed value and the County's local income tax rate is 2.25%. Worcester County residents will continue to benefit from the lowest income tax rate and the second lowest real property tax rate as compared to all other counties in Maryland. The County Commissioners also approved a 0% Homestead Tax Credit cap, which will take effect in fiscal year 2027. This cap will help eligible homeowners by preventing increases in taxable assessments.

The approved budget includes \$11.7 million in increased property

tax revenues. Income tax revenue increased by \$6 million. Revenue from other local taxes increased by \$1.4 million, including a \$725,000 increase in the recordation tax and a \$500,000 increase in transfer tax. It also allows a salary step for eligible employees plus a \$2,500 cost-of-living adjustment for county staff.

The approved budget includes record funding for the Worcester County Board of Education at \$113.8 million, an increase of \$7.5 million over the current fiscal year. The funding is expected to allow for a salary step plus a cost-of-living adjustment and to cover rising health insurance and salary related increases, including pension, FICA, and Other Post Employment Benefits.

The coming year's spending plan also includes a \$2.4 million increase in the Worcester County Sheriff's Office budget. This budget includes a two-grade increase for all sworn officers, funding for continuing education, and capital equipment to replace vehicles.

"We feel that we are moving in a positive direction with our budgetary

needs," Sheriff Matthew Crisafulli said. "We must stay competitive as other law-enforcement agencies continue to increase their salary packages. This will be an ongoing process for my office."

FY26 funding also includes \$2.9 million in grants to county fire companies and \$9.6 million in ambulance grants, which includes supplemental funding for 10 EMS companies to assist with runs and personnel costs.

Grants to towns increased by \$250,000, including unrestricted grant increases of \$50,000 each to the towns and Ocean Pines Association.

The approved budget includes a transfer of \$3.8 million to maintain a 15% Reserve Fund. The State mandated Reserve Fund is a tool that is vital to the County's emergency preparedness plans and plays a key role in the County's fiscal health and stable bond rating of AAA for Fitch, AA+ for Standard and Poor's and Aa2 for Moody's Investor Services. This outstanding bond rating enables Worcester County Government to

borrow money at low interest rates that save taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars for capital projects, like the upcoming Buckingham Elementary School replacement project.

There are also dozens of public, emergency, and education projects currently being funded with assigned reserve funds. These include but are not limited to \$2.8 million to replace the Government Center roof, \$1.7 million to replace the roof at Pocomoke Elementary School, and \$1.8 million to Fire Tower and Training Center upgrades utilized by Worcester County's 10 volunteer fire companies and the Fire Marshal's Office.

The FY26 budget increased by \$19.4 million or 7% more than the FY25 budget. Budget decisions were based upon current and projected trends. In early 2025, County departments' and agencies requests' for FY26 totaled \$286 million. During budget deliberations, the commissioners made cuts of \$5.4 million across all divisions of government to adopt a balanced FY26 budget.

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Tips for running aground

It's a local consensus that running aground in the back bays behind Fenwick and Assateague Islands is inevitable if not a rite of passage. Your boating resume isn't complete until

7 points: So hard aground that professional towing assistance cannot immediately refloat the vessel and the effort must wait until high tide or the professionals must make two or more

proficiency. Assuming you WANT to be a fantasy league player and actually go aground, here's a partial list of some of the mistakes that can lead to sharing your bottom paint with the crabs:

Never trust your depth gauge. The sensor may become corroded with slime and barnacles as the season progresses and often loses calibration at the lower end of the scale where you most need it.

Do not believe the depths published on the NOAA nautical charts. Sandbars and shoals move faster than NOAA can update the charts. The depths on NOAA charts are old. They are the 17-year average of the lower of the two daily low tides but not necessarily the most recent 17 years.

Regardless, the issue is that those numbers on the chart are averages which means that half the time the low tide is lower! Your best chance to amass points is to overload the boat and sail at ebb tide into shallow waters whose chart depths are exactly equal to your boat's published draft. Gravity will do the rest.

Use the red and green lateral markers, the 'Aids-to-Navigation,' to help find the really shallow water. The buoys and daymakers are strategically positioned to show boating enthusiasts where they can cruise without running aground. The corollary is that the buoys also show you where the shallow water is, i.e. outside the channel. Once again, another great chance to rake up points!

Yet another excellent opportunity is to join the pathfinders who have already found the bottom. Take full advantage of a boater standing in knee deep water next to his/her boat and run your trophy hunting baby up alongside.

Also, ask the locals for advice. Unlike fishermen who won't tell you where the fish are biting, fellow boaters are always willing to share with you their knowledge of unnavigable waters.

It's the right thing to do and it makes them feel like Good Samaritans. Little do they realize that they are providing you with a wealth of valuable competitive insight.

Don't forget that the harder you are aground and the more effort it takes to get refloated, the more points you can earn. Therefore, in the spirit of the contest, come in fast and enjoy the thrill of being propelled over the bow and onto something not so deep.

And finally, remember where you have gone aground and go back and do it again just for the points but be careful. If you do it too often at the same spot, the judges may disqualify you for sandbagging rather than sandbarring. The spirit of the 'Tow Boat Customer of the Year Award' contest is to score points without cheating.

Now for those not interested in actively participating in our virtual contest, here's a couple good practices to keep you afloat:

Go Slow – especially in unfamiliar waters.

Watch your depth gauge and navigation charts. Be conservative and always keep a couple feet of water under the keel.

Avoid shallow water. The telltales are water discoloration, patches of ripples or unexpected waves.

If you do run aground, turn off the engine, check the safety of all on board, get everyone into a lifejacket and check the boat for damage especially leakage.

If all is well, move everyone to the furthest point in the boat away from where it's aground. For example, if your bow is on the sandbar, move everyone to the stern. Then go forward and push off with a paddle or boat hook. If that doesn't work, consider getting out and pushing, or getting others off the boat to help push or at least to lighten the load.

You can also walk the anchor out behind the boat and pull the vessel toward it. If that fails, consider waiting for high tide or getting a tow. In any case, do not restart the engine until the boat is back in clear water to avoid bottom gook being sucked in and messing up the cooling system.

See you at the Air Show.

Stay safe. Stay dry.

Dan Collins can be reached for comment at dancollins.oceanpines@gmail.com.



you have experienced that empty feeling of plowing your keel into unsuspecting clams and oysters and watching a plumb of cloudy bottom debris get kicked up by your prop.

Since everyone has his/her favorite grounding story, I wonder if we could organize an annual, informal contest to see who has the best grounding story – not much different than bragging rights for the biggest fish tale of the year.

Picture the 2025 virtual 'Tow Boat Customer of the Year Award.'

Here's how the competitors would score:

1 point: Soft aground where you can push off using a paddle or a boat hook without getting wet. You can be awarded up to 3 additional points if you foul your engine while attempting to power off the bottom.

2 points: Wet aground where you have to get out and push or walk the anchor out to deep water and pull yourself off using the anchor.

3 points: Hard aground requiring assistance of another recreational boater to pull you back into deep water. There are no extra points for causing the assisting boat to run aground on your behalf. Those points are awarded directly to the other boat.

5 points: Hard aground requiring professional towing assistance. You can also be awarded bonus points if you do not have towing insurance – 2 points for credit card payments and 3 points for cash.

trips to bring additional equipment, expertise or other tow boats to bare. Again, extra bonus points are available if you do not have towing insurance.

8 points: Aground with a hole below the water line resulting in the need for temporary repairs, pumping or additional floatation devices before refloating. Bonus points for payment by a home equity loan are negotiable.



10 points: Precariously hard aground with an immediate risk of sinking or the need for urgent medical assistance requiring the search & rescue resources of the US Coast Guard.

Running aground is usually an unplanned and unwanted event but, for purposes of our fantasy league, it can be considered a skill like fishing or docking or sailboat handling that can be learned and honed to some level of

Travel... sponsored by *Bethany Travel*

Why using a travel agency makes all the difference

By **Cindy McCabe**

In today’s fast-paced world of online bookings and instant price comparisons, it’s easy to forget the true value of personalized service – especially when it comes to planning your travel. That’s where a travel agency comes in.

The right travel agency that serves travelers with heart and dedication combines experience with fresh, innovative travel solutions. Whether you’re planning a weekend getaway or a group retreat across the Caribbean, a travel agency ensures every detail is handled with care.

The power of personal touch

Unlike faceless booking engines, a trusted travel agency takes the time to get to know you. What’s your travel style? Are you looking for relaxation, adventure, culture – or a bit of everything? From the moment you reach out, a trusted travel agency listens to your visions and crafts a customized experience tailored to your interests and needs.

The magic doesn’t stop when the itinerary is finalized. A good travel agency offers 24/7 support before, during, and after your trip, making sure everything goes smoothly and helping you navigate any unexpected hiccups. Flight delay? Lost luggage? Need to adjust your plans while away? A real person is just a call or message away.

Group travel made easy

Organizing group travel can be overwhelming, but a travel agency makes it seamless. Whether it’s a multi-generational family reunion, a corporate incentive trip, a bachelorette getaway, or a destination wedding, they handle all logistics –

booking, transfers, excursions, and even custom branding or flyers for your group.

An agency can also specialize in group travel with a twist, offering curated trips around niche interests and hobbies. From pickleball retreats that blend sport and sun to golf trips where every swing is surrounded by stunning Caribbean views. A local travel agency can master the art of combining community with exceptional travel.

Pickleball, golf & beyond

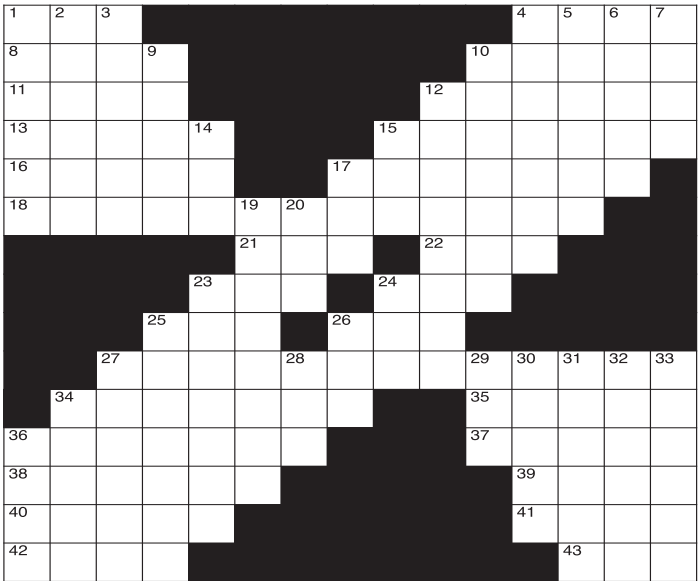
As avid travelers themselves, a travel agency knows what makes a trip unforgettable. Their pickleball trips bring together enthusiasts of all skill levels for friendly competition and camaraderie at world-class resorts. Meanwhile, golf pros and players alike can take advantage of expertly organized golf getaways, complete with complimentary rounds, group receptions, and more.

Support local, travel global

Choosing a local travel agency doesn’t just enhance your vacation – it supports a business that’s deeply rooted in the community. By booking through a small agency, you’re investing in real people who care deeply about your experience, not just numbers on a screen.

At a time when personalization, trust, and reliability are more important than ever, using a small local travel agency isn’t just a luxury – it’s a smart decision. Whether you’re planning your dream honeymoon, a family adventure, or a group escape with your favorite people, let a locally owned travel agency turn your vision into reality.

Cindy McCabe can be reached at Bethany Travel at 302-933-0955.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Racquet sports association

4. Places to sleep

8. Native American tribe

10. Small platforms

11. Egg shape

12. Running out

13. French painter

15. Some are “of the Caribbean”

16. Painful intestinal problem

17. More irritated

18. Prove yourself

21. Catch

22. Supplement with difficulty

23. American automotive giant

24. Form of “to be”
25. Boxing’s GOAT

26. Peyton’s little brother

27. Eli’s big brother

34. Capable of producing

35. Reproductive structures in fungi

36. Allowed to go forward

37. Smiles

38. Arteries

39. VVV

40. Win a series without losing a game

41. This (Spanish)

42. Opposites of beginnings

43. Germanic mythological god

CLUES DOWN

1. Consisting of uncombined atoms

2. Island country

3. Heavenly body

4. Caribbean island

5. Copyread

6. A place to eat

7. Drops down

9. Native group of Alaska

10. Engage in

12. “Desperate Housewives” lane

14. Thyroid-stimulating hormone

15. Foot (Latin)

17. A place to bathe

19. Animositities
20. Partner to cheese

23. Venus __, plant

24. A donation

25. Pokes holes in the ground

26. Midway between northeast and east

27. Looked into

28. Not young

29. Annoy constantly

30. Something one can strike

31. Most glacial

32. Ten less than one hundred

33. Idle talker

34. Has moved through the air

36. Container for shipping

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Answers for June 4

Healthy Worcester Families Program offered

Bring your family closer while adopting a healthier, happier lifestyle with Healthy Worcester Families Strengthening Families Program. The Worcester County Health Department's nine-week program combines fun activities, meaningful learning, and quality family time—all aimed at improving communication, building healthier habits, and strengthening your bond. The program invites families with youth ages seven to 17 to attend together, engaging in hands-on activities and group discussions that promote better connections and healthier living.

Healthy Worcester Families offers a free family dinner at the start of each weekly session. Every week, families will explore topics such as communication skills, healthy behaviors, and fi-

nancial literacy, to help strengthen their family connections. Families have the opportunity to receive prizes and other incentives throughout the program.

As a result of participating in this program, past participants said their families would continue to "Grow and improve communication and respect for each other," and "Not make food a subject of a power struggle. Offer healthy options and encourage good choices."

The summer session begins Wednesday, July 2, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Bayside Community Church located at 206 5th Street in Pocomoke City. To register your family, visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HWFJul25> or call Lynn Suarez at 410-632-1100 ext.1109.

Worcester GOLD announces Runaway Bride Fun Run/Walk

Local nonprofit Worcester County GOLD (Giving Other Lives Dignity) and the Town of Berlin will host the Runaway Bride Fun Run/Walk to be held Saturday, July 26 at 8:30 a.m.

Celebrate the 26th anniversary of the release of "Runaway Bride" by running/walking through the small town where the movie was filmed, Berlin. Participants are encouraged to wear their favorite wedding attire like a wedding dress, bridesmaid dress, suit, tuxedo t-shirt, or all-white. Dressing up in a fun outfit, and reliving the magic of "The Runaway Bride," participants will raise money to support local families living in low-income circumstances. Registration is only \$20 and sponsorship opportunities are available for what promises to be a highly visible and well attended event.

With a planned route only one mile long, participants do not need to be in 5k shape to participate. Participants will meet on the lawn of the Calvin B. Taylor House Museum to check in. The event will begin on Main Street in front of The Sterling Tavern, head down Main Street passing iconic movie locations like The Atlantic Hotel and Raynes Reef, turn right on Washington Street, crossing Broad Street to Harrison Avenue and then turning right before finishing back at the Calvin B. Taylor House Museum. Activities and celebrations will continue after the race with prizes awarded for first,

second, third, best outfit and best group outfit.

This unique event will not only celebrate the Town of Berlin's history as the location for the filming of this iconic movie but also engage locals in an accessible and fun way while raising money for Worcester County residents with a verified emergency need.

Supporters can find more information by visiting GOLD's website at www.WorcesterGOLD.org or by reaching out to contact@worcestergold.org or 443-235-6525.

Shepherd's Crook Food Pantry seeks donations

As the summer season begins, Shepherd's Crook Food Pantry at St. Paul's By-the-Sea Episcopal Church is calling on the community to help meet a dramatic rise in food insecurity across Ocean City.

Each summer, Ocean City sees an influx of seasonal workers and visitors, swelling the town's population and placing additional strain on local resources. With the rising cost of groceries and housing, many seasonal workers and year-round residents alike are struggling to afford basic meals.

Shepherd's Crook Food Pantry, located at 302 N. Baltimore Avenue in the heart of downtown Ocean City, is the primary food pantry serving the area. Operating four days a week, the pantry provides hot meals and grocery items to individuals and families in need. During the summer months, demand more than doubles—and contin-

ues to grow by the day.

Community members can support the pantry in the following ways:

- Make a monetary donation to help provide nutritious meals and keep shelves stocked
- Donate non-perishable food items
- Volunteer time to assist with food distribution

Every contribution, whether financial, food, or time, makes a tangible difference.

Make donations payable to Outreach Ministries and mail them to: St. Paul's By-the-Sea Episcopal Church, 302 N. Baltimore Avenue, Ocean City, MD 21842

Online donations can be made at www.stpaulsbythesea.org.

For more information about donating or volunteering, please contact the church office at 410-289-3453 or office@stpaulsbythesea.org.

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Art fun - The Art League of Ocean City kicked off its free Saturday Kids Crafts program on May 31 at the Ocean City Center for the Arts, 94th St. bayside. The free program runs from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. every summer Saturday through August. Shown are **Parker** and **Elsie Brunning** who crafted funny faces out of paper.

Anglers to meet

The Ocean Pines Anglers Club will meet on Saturday, June 14, 9:30 a.m. in the Ocean Pines library. The speaker is Ashlie Kozlowski from the Assateague Island Alliance (AIA), who will discuss their hands-on program discovering horseshoe crabs. Find out how valuable this living fossil is to the global ecosystem and human medicine, how horseshoe crabs are tagged and why. Learn about AIA volunteer horseshoe crab tagging programs that it sponsors throughout the spring and summer months and how to sign-up to help at the program. Also updated fishing regulations and all things fishing will be discussed. All are welcome.



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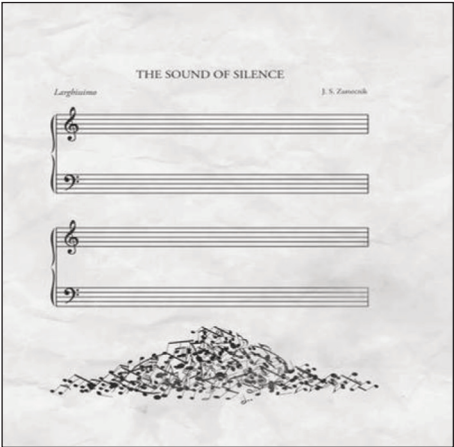


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Some things to think about

Gathered from the internet
by **Jack Barnes**



The oldest computer was owned by Adam and Eve.

It was an Apple with very limited memory.

Just 1 byte and everything crashed!



Fact of Life:

After Monday and Tuesday... even the calendar says.

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