

The Courier

September 17, 2025 Volume 26 Number 3

Eastern Shore heritage is Challenger's challenge

By Elaine Bean

"I feel fortunate that I've had two jobs in my life that I absolutely love."

For 31 years, Lisa Challenger's job was to bring visitors to Worcester County. As Director of Tourism for the county from 1989 to 2020, she marketed the ponies, the charm of the small towns, the artistic cultures, the ocean experience, and the historical attractions of Worcester County. Along that path, she dove deeply into the heritage and culture of the community.

Around pandemic time, when the Beach to Bay Heritage Area called looking for a director, she jumped at the chance. That was five years ago, and the nonprofit organization and Challenger are going strong.

"When this opportunity at Beach to Bay came up, it was so perfect for me," Challenger said. "It's still tourism; it's just more heritage tourism. I got to continue working with the folks I was already working with, but it expanded my relationships with Wicomico and Somerset counties. I've been able to get a much broader whole Lower Shore vision and scope."

This September, a month-long event at the Art League of Ocean City made possible by a grant from the Beach to Bay Heritage Area celebrates Eastern Shore heritage and culture in art and activities. The event is free, and all are welcome to attend.

"Anytime we get to expose people to the heritage of the area, it's a win for us," Challenger said. "And certainly the Art League has an audience we would love to reach. The Ocean City Arts Center gets a lot of people through their doors. We felt like it was a very good fit to marry our two organizations with art and culture and heritage, and do it in an event to give them a little taste of our heritage."

Challenger has been a longtime advocate for the arts and the Art League in particular. "Her involvement over the years has included volunteering for the Sand Castle Home Tour and Artists Paint OC events," Rina Thaler, executive director of the Art League, said. "Of course, her family has all been part of our organization, too. Lisa's mother Emmy served on the board of directors; father Ed has been an exhibiting artist at the Arts Center; and sister Sarah Tilghman has been a participating artisan. Even her brother Greg has shown his artwork in Art League shows."

The Art League and Beach to Bay heritage event includes a

*please see **challenger** on page 6*

Lisa Challenger with
her father **Ed Challenger**



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Arts Council accepting grant applications

The Worcester County Arts Council (WCAC) is pleased to announce that applications are now being accepted for the Community Arts Development (CAD) Grant Program for projects and events taking place in Worcester County between January 1 and July 30, 2026. The deadline to apply is October 15, 2025.

The CAD Grant Program is designed to assist local nonprofit, community-based organizations in producing and presenting arts activities that engage and enrich Worcester County communities. Funded by the Maryland State Arts Council, this program supports efforts that promote the arts as an essential part of community life.

WCAC aims to support projects in all areas of Worcester County, with a particular emphasis on reaching rural, small-town, and geographically underrepresented communities. Applications are encouraged from these areas to help ensure a balanced and equitable distribution of funding across the region.

"This grant program, said Anna Mullis, Executive Director of the Worcester County Arts Council, plays a vital role in bringing the arts into communities by providing accessible opportunities and meaningful art experiences for residents of all ages. We're especially focused on supporting projects that reach underserved areas and reflect the diversity of Worcester County."

The Grant Guidelines have recently been revised to ensure equitable access to arts funding and to support diverse and inclusive artistic programming. To promote the responsible use of public funds and to serve a broad range of residents, the updated guidelines now:

- Include funding limits

- Clearly define eligible and ineligible uses of funds

All applicants must review the new guidelines carefully before submitting their applications.

In the first six-month grant cycle of fiscal year 2026, the Worcester County Arts Council awarded \$17,150 to nine local arts projects and events presented by nonprofit organizations throughout the county.

The Application Form and Grant Guidelines are available on the WCAC website: www.worcestercountyartscouncil.org

For grant technical assistance or questions, please contact: Anna Mullis, Executive Director: anna@worcestercountyartscouncil.org

Students' artwork shines in exhibit

Over 250 students from five elementary schools in Worcester County participated in the Worcester County Arts Council's annual Summer Arts Camp, which this year explored the theme: "Life on the Eastern Shore."

Through hands-on and fun-filled visual and performing arts workshops, students had a unique opportunity to learn about the rich heritage of Eastern Shore farming and agriculture, as well as the ocean and underwater life that are so much a part of our region. Their creativity shines through in a vibrant selection of artwork, now on display at the Worcester County Arts Council Gallery, located at 6 Jefferson Street in Berlin.

The public is invited to an opening reception on Friday, September 12, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. to celebrate the artistic achievements of local students and enjoy complimentary refreshments.

"We are so proud of the talent and imagination our young artists bring to the Summer Arts Camp each year," said Anna Mullis, Executive Director of the Worcester County Arts Council. "This year's theme, Life on the Eastern Shore, allowed students to reflect on the beauty, traditions, and community spirit of the place they call home - from farms and fields to the ocean and bay. Their artwork truly tells the story of Worcester County through their eyes."

The Arts Council is grateful to Worcester County Public Schools and the talented art teachers whose support made it possible to reach a diverse population of students through this enrichment program. The Summer Arts Camp program is made possible through the generous support of the Ocean City/Berlin Optimist Club. The exhibit will remain on view through the end of September.

To see images of the students' work and a video of the performing arts workshop, visit: www.worcestercountyartscouncil.org.



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New members - The Ocean City - Berlin Rotary Club installed two new members recently. Pictured from left to right are **Cliff Berg**, co-president, and new members **Lou Ann Danner** and **Jim Loveless**. The Club meeets the first and third Wednesdays of the month at Don's Seafood at the South Gate of Ocean Pines. For more information email ocberlinrotary@gmail.com

Juried art exhibition offered

The Worcester County Arts Council is proud to present its latest juried exhibition, “Tell Me Your Story,” now on view at the WCAC Gallery in Berlin through November 2.

This inspiring exhibition celebrates the power of visual storytelling, featuring original works by local and regional artists who explore the theme through a variety of media and styles. From personal journeys and cultural traditions to emotional moments and imaginative visions, each piece reflects the artist’s unique voice and creative interpretation of what it means to tell

a story through art. “Art has a unique power to express what words often cannot,” said Anna Mullis, Executive Director of the Worcester County Arts Council. “This exhibit invites visitors to experience deeply personal and thought-provoking narratives that resonate on many levels.” Works in the exhibition were juried by Tamara Mills, Coordinator of Fine Arts Instruction for Worcester County Public Schools. Awards and juror commentary will be presented on Friday, September 12 at 5 p.m. during an opening reception from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

Visitors are invited to meet the exhibiting artists, enjoy complimentary refreshments, and explore the Gallery’s vibrant selection of artwork.

In addition to the featured “Tell Me Your Story” exhibit, the WCAC Gallery is currently showcasing and offering for sale original artworks created by over 30 local artists and Gallery members - making it a wonderful opportunity to support and celebrate the rich artistic talent of Worcester County.

For more information about the exhibition, artists, or upcoming events, please visit: www.worcester-countyartscouncil.org.



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In the know

On a morning some time ago, my daughter called me. It's always a pleasure to talk with her. She and I usually chit chat about various and sundry topics. On this particular morning though she called with a

jured up my discussion on the three-camera filming technique inspired by Desi Arnaz. She reminded me that I encouraged them to learn comedy timing and construction by watching legends such as Flip Wilson, Buddy Hackett, Jonathon Winters and Don Rickles.

Through the years my daughter and I have dissected programs such as "The Dick Van Dyke Show," delving into the writing as well as the

everlasting quality of the material. Funny is funny regardless of whether it was from yesterday or sixty years ago. A well-constructed comedy routine endures. "Who's on first?"

On a lark a few years ago, I emailed my children asking them to create the curriculum for Bertino University, a center of learning for the benefit of future family generations, that would "coalesce the vapors of human experience into a viable and meaningful comprehension."

Some of the course offerings suggested included: "Don Rickles 101: The Art of the Insult;" A Milton Berle instructional on finding jokes before anyone knows they are lost; "Calling it in, The Comedy of Bob Newhart;" "Monology Masters: Jack Benny, Jack Paar, Johnny Carson and Flip Wilson;" "Pushing the Boundaries, a guide to Lenny Bruce, Redd Foxx and Richard Pryor;" "Dynamic Duos: Burns and Allen, Brooks and Reiner, Conway and Korman and Nichols and May;" "A Female Perspective: Fanny Brice, Sophie Tucker, Joan Rivers and Totie Fields;" and, finally "Making it Look Easy: Bob Hope."

Just as an aside, how many of the performers mentioned above do you recognize? During a conversation with a couple of Millennials not long ago a reference I made about George Burns was met with blank stares. All I could think was, Oh, God!

My daughter ended our conversation singing a version of Carol Burnett's theme song, "I'm so glad we had this time together." Putting the phone down, I chuckled. My little girl "can turn the world on with her smile" and make her father very happy simply by saying hello.



It's All About. . .

By **Chip Bertino**

chipbertino@delmarvacourier.com

purpose: to thank me. Thank me? For what I thought. For being a spectacular father? For teaching her how to drive? For being a spectacular father? (Yes, I know I wrote that question twice.)

Although I'm sure she's grateful to me for all that and so much more, she had a different purpose in mind. She was calling to thank me for something that many people may find a little unusual. She thanked me for educating her on television and entertainment trivia. She had recently been watching a show that referenced Johnny Carson. She understood the reference but those around her had no clue who he was. She had to explain it to them. She was grateful that when she was younger, I exposed her to entertainment "greats" and "bored" her with all sorts of relatively obscure information.

I've always been intrigued by and interested in television history and performers. When I was a child I maintained an index card catalog of primetime television shows, actors and even the networks on which they appeared. At that time there were only three television networks.

The start of a new television season was always of interest to me. Before the new television season started, there was the Emmy Awards. Then there were the returning shows, the new shows; and, the ratings. I took more than a passing interest in this information which I guess explains why I was considered a dweeb back in school and maybe even now.

Getting back to the conversation with my daughter. She recalled when she and her brothers were little that I would expound on little known TV facts of interest. She con-



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Are you age 60-plus and concerned about falling?

MAC is seeking participants for a falls home-based study. You may qualify for the study if you: Live in Wicomico, Worcester or Somerset County and use a walker or wheelchair, or lack reliable transportation.

MAC was recently awarded grant funds from the National Council on Aging (NCOA) through a project called the 2025 ACL Innovation Lab to create our own unique Falls Prevention Program. This new in-home program will combine home safety, balance and strengthening exercise,

and education around preventing falls. This program is FREE to all participants who qualify.

First, you will be checked to see if you qualify for the program and if MAC can offer you any helpful services. Then, a pharmacist will visit your home to review your medications, since some medicines can increase the risk of falling.

Next, a physical therapist will come to your home to check how safe it is and test your balance. These tests will help track your progress. The

therapist will then create a personalized exercise plan to help you get stronger and improve your balance to prevent falls.

After that, an exercise specialist will visit your home to help you follow the exercise plan.

The physical therapist will check your progress again at 60 days and 120 days by repeating the same balance tests from her first visit.

This grant is a part of a research study, to determine which elements of various existing evidence-based fall

prevention programs are the most effective. MAC is one of 17 other organizations testing out various falls prevention programs in this study.

In total, the program will include one pharmacist visit, four physical therapist visits, and eight exercise specialist visits over a period of four months. Most visits will occur in the first two months.

Those interested in participating in the study should contact Nancy Hedges at nhedges@macinc.org or 410-742-0505 ext. 131.

Courier Almanac

On September 17, 1967, up-and-coming British Invasion rock band the Who-known for their high-energy, instrument-destroying antics-ended an already explosive, nationally televised performance of their hit "My Generation" with a literal bang. The blast, caused by fireworks drummer Keith Moon had packed into his bass drum, badly singed guitarist Pete Townshend's hair, left shrapnel in Moon's arm and momentarily knocked "The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour" off the air.

There are two moments each year when the Sun is located directly above the Equator and the Earth's axis is neither tilted toward or away from the sun, making the hours of day and night relatively equal in length.



These days are the spring and fall equinoxes. The fall equinox occurs on September 22, 2025 at 2:19 pm and marks the official beginning of fall in the northern hemisphere. The equinox is celebrated as a daylong event, but it's really just a moment in time when the sun crosses the celestial equator. The equinox often brings on the northern lights, which also is known as the aurora borealis. Auroras are caused by the interaction of solar winds with the Earth's magnetic field. Disturbances in the Earth's magnetic field are strongest and more likely in spring and fall. Folklore says that only on an equinox can an egg be balanced on its ends. However, it actually can be done on other days as well.

challenger
from page 1

major art exhibit entitled "Roots & Remembrance" in the Thaler Gallery of the Ocean City Center for the Arts on 94th St. featuring local and regional artists working in all media and presenting their unique views. In addition to the Art League's monthly awards, special awards of nearly \$1,000 include Best Waterways, Best Heritage, Best Livelihood, and Best in Show. The exhibit runs through September 27 with free admission. "Hopefully it will enlighten people and educate those who aren't from here or don't live here," Challenger said.

Part of the Beach to Bay Heritage Area grant is support for the Eastern Shore Heritage Day at the OC Arts Center on Sept. 14 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The nonprofit will be on hand that day to inform the public of their ongoing mission and upcoming activities.

Special programs scheduled for Heritage Day at the Arts Center include a decoy exhibit, a vintage crochet exhibit with a collective piece at which guests can try their hand, a story writing/telling workshop with acclaimed former SDHS teacher Gwen Lehman, and a book signing with noted local author Joanne Guilfoil sharing her books related to Eastern Shore heritage. Saltwater Mini Farm is bringing a mini petting zoo for the kids, and the OC Foodie Tour is providing locally-inspired food samples.

The grant to the Art League fulfills part of Beach to Bay's five-year action plan intended to elevate, celebrate, and sustain the stories, traditions, and natural heritage of Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore.

"I have had the honor to work with super people on some terrific projects, like in Crisfield and Salisbury," Challenger said. "We're working on a mural project right now in Ocean City for the Henry Hotel. The people that I get to meet — like when we did the Tindley mural in Berlin, to meet members of the Tindley family and hear the Tindley choir perform — I've had so many rewarding experiences. I feel really lucky. This is such a terrific area with so much heritage and deep roots."

When she's not encouraging folks to visit and explore the Lower Shore, Challenger spends time with her children and grandchildren at her home in Glen Riddle and also visits often with her father Ed Challenger in Bishopville, a fixture in the local arts community.

"He was such a big influence on me, because art is what he did his entire lifetime, and we were exposed to that throughout our entire childhood and beyond," she said. "I think so much of my perspective on tourism was grounded in the arts. Being a visual person, I wanted publications that always looked good, and good photography and design were important. I've always been an advocate for artists and the arts."

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Visit - At their September meeting the Ocean Pines Anglers Club hosted Nancy Gaither of the Assateague Island Alliance. She spoke on the history of Assateague Island Refuge and State Park. Anglers Club meetings are held the second Saturday of each month 9:30 a.m. in the Ocean Pines library.

Above Anglers Club Administrator **Frank Tortella** is shown with **Nancy Gaither**.

Watkowski named to Circuit Court

Governor Wes Moore announced the appointment of Kristina L. Watkowski to the Worcester County Circuit Court.

Watkowski has worked as an attorney with Booth, Cropper & Marriner since 2022, with a practice primarily focused on civil litigation with a concentration in land use and zoning. Watkowski began her legal career clerking for Judges Theodore R. Eschenburg Sr. and Thomas C. Groton III in the Worcester County Circuit Court. She went on to work with the Maryland Office of the Public Defender where she ultimately became the supervising attorney for the Worcester County office. During her time with the public defender's office, Watkowski developed long-lasting relationships with partner agencies while representing clients charged with both minor and serious criminal offenses.

Watkowski earned her associate's degree from Howard Community College, her bachelor's degree from Salisbury University, and her law degree from Delaware Law School.

County to host scrap tire drop-off day

The Worcester County Commissioners and the Public Works Recycling Division will host Citizens Scrap Tire Drop-Off Day on Saturday, October 4, from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. This event will take place at the Central Landfill in Newark.

"Recycling old and unwanted tires plays an important role in diverting waste from the landfill and increases recycling rates countywide," Recycling Manager Bob Keenan said.

Worcester County residents are invited to recycle their old, scrap, passenger, and light truck tires free of charge, with a limit of 10 tires per household (photo ID required).

Only non-commercial truck and car tires will be accepted. No agricultural tires will be accepted, and no businesses, commercial haulers of tires, or generators of scrap tires will be permitted to participate in the Citizen Scrap Tire Drop-Off.

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Leathernecks further mission

On June 27 the club formally known as the Post 166 Leathernecks graduated from a local American Legion Club to the Delmarva Leathernecks Foundation, Inc., a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt foundation. The Delmarva Leathernecks are a diverse group of veterans and patriots who believe that service does not end when coming off active duty.

President Don Coffin captured the sentiment and collaborative effort of all the Leathernecks members when he said, we're not starting over, we're just carrying on."

The Leathernecks, a philanthropic organization, have been a consistent source for fundraising here on the

shore supporting local and national charities that have benefited from the monies raised by this patriotic body of members and volunteers. Operating as an independent foundation will ensure that funds raised by the foundation will continue to benefit and support our fellow veterans and neighbors here on the eastern shore of Maryland, Delaware and Virginia. The Delmarva Leathernecks will meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at the Residence Inn located at 300 Seabay Lane in Ocean City. Any local patriots interested in joining are welcome to come out and participate in the comradery and social hour following the meeting.

Clubhouse Grill enhances guest experience

Guests at the Ocean Pines Clubhouse Grille can now enjoy two newly installed 55-inch LG TVs on the outdoor patio.

Installed on September 5 by Touch of Italy, the TVs are intended to enhance the guest experience, especially during football season.

The Clubhouse will be open for all NFL games throughout the season and will feature food and drink specials.

In addition, every Saturday, weather permitting, the Clubhouse will host a Tailgate on the Patio from noon to 4 p.m. The weekly event will include college football on the patio screens, Bob's signature



grilled sausage and peppers, corn-hole, drink specials, and more.

The Clubhouse Bar and Grille is located at 100 Clubhouse Drive. For the latest specials and events, find them on Facebook at "The Clubhouse Bar and Grille."

Craft fair to return

Kick off your holiday shopping at the Pine'er Craft Club's 14th annual Winter Wonderland Holiday Craft Fair on Saturday, November 1, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Ocean Pines Community Center.

Parking and admission are free and open to the public. Local artisans, crafts, and members of the Pine'er Craft Club will be in attendance with their handmade creations. The Pine'ers will also host their famous bake sale during

the fair.

Proceeds from the fair will be donated back to the Ocean Pines community.

Founded in 1974, the Pine'er Craft Club supports local artisans and the Ocean Pines community through craft shows, sales, and donations. The club has been active for 50 years and remains dedicated to fostering creativity while giving back to the community.

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Back to School - Ocean City Elementary held its annual Welcome Back to School Open House on August 28. Students in PreK-4 to 4th grade, along with their families, were invited to school to meet their teachers and classmates, see their classrooms and drop off their school supplies.

Above are **Tommy Peters** and **Ella Sparta**.

Wor-Wic collaborates with university in India

Wor-Wic Community College and Symbiosis Skills and Professional University in Pune, India, recently signed a memorandum of understanding allowing student study abroad and internships; faculty exchanges and participation in international programs; visiting scholars for lectures, talks and sharing of expertise; joint research; course development and more. It is the first such agreement with an international institution for the Salisbury-based college.

“Wor-Wic is committed to expanding global opportunities for our local students,” said Deborah Casey, Ph.D., president of Wor-Wic. “In an increasingly international economy, we want to ensure our community is as strategically positioned and cutting-edge as possible. Our partnership with Symbiosis Skills and Professional University will strengthen our mission to provide students with workforce skills and pathways to high-demand careers.”

Some programs may be offered virtually at both institutions, with students in India and on Delmarva log-

ging on to participate together. The initial academic focus will be on employment-building expertise areas such as cybersecurity and financial technology, or fintech.

“This collaboration marks an important step towards our shared mission of workforce development,” said Dr. Swati Mujumdar, pro chancellor of Symbiosis Skills and Professional University. “We want to create a world-class environment of learning where students and working professionals can obtain the knowledge and skills they need to pursue gainful employment or entrepreneurship, filling the needs of industry and society.”

Wor-Wic administrators will travel to India to observe the educational system in Pune this fall. Faculty and administrators from the two colleges are collaborating now on programs such as the first planned offering in fintech, which will start with free webinars on the financial technology ecosystem, leadership, global capability and how to future-proof careers in the

*please see **wor-wic** on page 11*

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Northwest Passage

ow! Did I ever have a great time! An old college classmate took Nancy and me for a fantastic one-week cruise from Seattle through the San Juan Islands. Dennis and Pat berth their 43-foot trawler in La Connor, Washington, only about 300 yards from where it popped out of a mold in 2005. They sail their trawler, the *Peter D*, up and down the great Northwest from Tacoma to Alaska for weeks at a time.

Maryland has chicken farms. And the boating public are forever viewing the stars through the lumen pollution of distant Vancouver to the north much like we look to Delaware for tax free purchases. In fact, we were so close to Canada that the undocumented Canadian geese were just considered day tourists.

The vastness of the Pacific and the ruggedness of the San Juan Islands is reflected in the choice of boats and

only average size and more of the facility is allocated to on-board living – staterooms, water tanks, batteries, electric generators, galley freezers, microwaves, HVAC and satellite T.V. – as opposed to OC's off shore fleet with their fishing chairs, outriggers and beer chests.

Helming a well-appointed trawler is also a bit different. Like most good autopilots, the *Peter D*'s system can go full auto and track the programmed course from waypoint to waypoint or it can be semi-automatic and accept midcourse corrections or fully manual and be steered by the traditional wheel. The helmsman is further supported by both radar and AIS (Automated Identification System).

I found it surprising how concerned Dennis was about distant maritime traffic that was miles away. Again, in our back bays and even near the O.C. Inlet, we show little concern for other boats until they are within a couple hundred yards and AIS is rarely used to negotiate a close crossing or passing situation. However, ship traffic in Puget Sound includes big time bulk carriers from Asia, oil tankers from Alaska, 'ships-of-the-line' heading into Bremerton Naval Shipyard, and more ferries than there are in New York harbor.

At first blush, I kind of thought that the electronics were a bit of an overkill until one morning we sailed into fog. Visibility dropped to .3 miles – not enough time to get out of the way of an 18 MPH ferry trying to hold a schedule. Every blip on the radar got our attention and the AIS gave us the contact's course and speed and alarmed collision potentials. When we emerged from the fog in about an hour, I had a far greater appreciation for all the pilothouse's bells and whistles.

I had to get used to the depths of the water. On the *Peter D*, the depth gauge maxed out at about 700 feet. No readout means really deep water. In Sinepuxent Bay, no readout means you probably broke your depth gauge when you ran over the last sandbar.

Another significant difference was the ground tackle. In Ocean City waters we typically use Danforth anchors with six to eight feet of chain and a nylon rode. In the San Juans where skippers begin to sweat when the depth gauge reads 10 feet, you see a lot of plow anchors and all chain rodes. It's not uncommon to drop the hook in 30-40 feet of water and pay out hundreds of feet of anchor chain. These

long lines require added vigilance to assure your boat does not swing into another boat in the anchorage. It's a far cry from tying up to a mooring buoy in three feet of water at Seacrets.

The tides are quite a bit different as well. Where our Maryland tides swing two to four feet yearly, the San Juan Islands see 10-15 feet daily. That requires docks to be designed to float and the ramps between the docks and land to be hinged and go up and down with the tide levels.

We pulled into one marina where the depth in the slip was 75 feet and the current swirling through the floating dock was a good two to four knots. It took three attempts and maximum bow and stern thrusters to get alongside the finger pier.

The *Peter D* was also equipped with a good size dingy that was stowed topside and lowered into the water by a massive crane. Dennis and I took it for a ride to check out the sights in the shallow water (less than 10 feet!). It was a thrill getting close to the seals and eagles but the thrill was tempered when an inconsiderate fast cruiser sped by us on plane and served up a drenching bow wave. Fifty-two-degree water is not fun. Rather, it's cold and wet. We toasted the fine lad several times at dinner that night. Fortunately, he was not in ear shot.

Crabbing in the northwest is also different. The crabs are bigger and the crab traps are bigger but the biggest difference is the crab trap buoys. They are all the same – red and white – per Department of Natural Resources' regulations. They are easier to see than some of the personalized colored buoys that we use in Maryland but finding your trap in a popular crabbing location can be problematic. The owner has to write his/her name on the buoy for identification and record the pot's location with GPS so that we can get back to it.

We dropped one trap to try our luck. When we returned the following day, we still had to maneuver around several buoys to read the names before we found ours. We only caught two females so we threw them back, dumped our bait and broke out the peanut butter and jelly.

At least my Ocean Pines pontoon boat and the *Peter D* have one thing in common: peanut butter and jelly.

Stay safe. Stay dry.

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



Our gracious hosts, **Dennis** and **Pat**, and the *Peter D*.

The *Peter D* is perfect. The pilothouse has more electronics than a Mercury space capsule. Its log books and reference books and apps are more comprehensive than a law library. The galley has every domestic amenity and the engine room is carpeted and vacuumed!

The trip was both eye opening and humbling after put-putting around Isle of Wight Bay in our 20 foot pontoon boat. The thoroughness of the voyage planning and detail of the ship's log and the discipline to follow procedural checklists reflected the skipper's experience as a Vietnam era naval aviator, a professional engineer, US Power Squadron's head potentate and his great respect for the forces of nature.

The San Juan Islands are very different than what we experience in Ocean Pines. They have more indigenous names, Indian Nation treaties, reservations, teepees and casinos than

boat maneuvering practices.

Puget Sound is a lot colder, a lot deeper, and a lot clearer than we see along the Mid Atlantic Coast. Since much of their weather comes across the Pacific, the wind fetch can be hundreds of miles causing big waves and surge from storms that are roiling the sea on the other side of the world.

This makes it necessary to plan voyages around sea conditions and tides and currents. In theory, we do this locally but the relentless forces of the Northwest waters and the distance between safe harbors and gas stations is critical to not only having a pleasant day but to surviving.

These realities also influence boat designs to meet the conditions. Here in Ocean City, most sport fishermen would consider a 4-foot fast cruiser that can get out to the fishing canyons in two hours and be home in time for dinner to be the top of the line. In the San Juan Islands, 40 foot is close to

Starzhevskiy appointed county deputy finance officer



**Ondrea
Starzhevskiy**

The Worcester County Commissioners named Ondrea Starzhevskiy as the new deputy finance officer. Starzhevskiy brings 14 years of accounting expertise, including seven years as a director, to this position. Her extensive experience in municipal finance, strategic budgeting, and intergovernmental coordination align well with the County's financial leadership goals.

"Ondrea has a strong background working with government funds including working with enterprise funds and updating enterprise resource planning systems, and she possesses strong leadership skills, all of which make her ideally qualified to manage the team in the Treasurer's Office and work with our key stakeholders," Commissioner President Ted Elder said.

Prior to joining Worcester County, Starzhevskiy was the direc-

tor of finance for Easton Public Schools in North Easton, MA from 2022 to present and director of finance for the City of Arcata in California from 2018 to 2022. Throughout her career, she has led efforts in long-term financial planning, budget development, grant compliance, and financial reporting, ensuring full compliance with local, state, and federal regulations.

"My experience managing large, public-sector budgets and navigating complex funding structures has equipped me with the insight and skills to contribute effectively to Worcester County's financial operations," Starzhevskiy said. "My connection to the Lower Eastern Shore, particularly the Public Landing area where my mom grew up, dates back four generations. I'm thankful for the opportunity to put these skills to work in the place I call home. I appreciate the confidence the County Commissioners have placed in me, and I'm looking forward to contributing in a meaningful way to the County and its residents."

Starzhevskiy earned a Bachelor of Science in Management, with a concentration in accounting from the University of Massachusetts at Boston in 2010 and Master of Science in Accounting from Babson

College in 2011.

The deputy finance officer assists the finance officer in planning, organizing, coordinating, and directing the functions and activities of the Treasurer's Office.

wor-wic
from page 9

sector. A certification program in fintech is also in the works.

During their visit to Salisbury, administrators from Symbiosis, as well as other colleges and American and Indian chamber of commerce and economic organizations, visited Wor-Wic to see its new teaching technology and to learn about its programs. They also stopped by Chesapeake Shipbuilding in Salisbury to see how Wor-Wic's welding program is helping fulfill its workforce needs, and at Choptank Electric to see Wor-Wic's powerline pre-apprenticeship program in action.

Wor-Wic and Symbiosis were

brought together via the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) India-US Partnership Lab, a program designed to establish partnerships between U.S. and Indian higher education institutions to better serve workforce needs.

"In an increasingly interconnected world, community colleges play a critical role in educating students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in and contribute to a global workforce," said ACCT president and CEO Jee Hang Lee. "ACCT is proud to provide a pathway for colleges to develop sustained and substantive workforce-focused partnerships that contribute to our shared goal of student success."

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Determine which flu vaccine is best for you

By **Erin Dudley**, PharmD
*Ambulatory Pharmacy Manager
TidalHealth Home Scripts*

Flu season typically runs from October through May, with a peak between December and February. Most health insurance plans cover the annual flu vaccination as preventive care.

For the 2025-2026 flu season, all flu vaccines used in the United States are trivalent (three component) vaccines. Trivalent flu vaccines are formulated to protect against three main groups of the seasonal influenza Type A and B viruses: H1N1, H3N2, and B/Victoria lineage.

When should I get vaccinated?

Timing is important. It takes about two weeks for your body to build an immune response after vaccination. If you are vaccinated too early, your protection may wear off before the end of flu season. The best time to get your flu vaccine is early fall, ideally between late September and the end of October.

Which type is best for me?

FluMist is a live attenuated (weak-

ened) influenza vaccine administered as a nasal spray. It is needle-free, convenient and now available for home use for ages 2-49. Studies show FluMist tends to be more effective in children than in adults, and it is not approved for adults over age 49. FluMist is not recommended for pregnant women, immunocompromised individuals, or patients with certain health conditions.

Flu shots are inactivated vaccines given by injection and are considered the gold standard for seniors. These vaccines contain killed (inactive) virus particles and have a long-standing safety record.

The standard-dose flu vaccine is the traditional flu shot. It is generally safe and effective for most people, but it may not be the best option for seniors, whose immune responses tend to be weaker.

High-dose flu vaccines contain four times the amount of antigen compared to the standard-dose flu shot and are approved for patients ages 65 and older.

The antigen is the part of the vaccine that triggers the immune response. Studies show the high-dose vaccine can reduce flu-related hospitalizations and illness by about 24% more than the standard shot in patients 65+.

The adjuvanted flu vaccine (Fluad) contains an adjuvant, an ingredient that helps enhance the body's immune response to the vaccine. Fluad is also approved for people aged 65 and older.

If you are unsure which vaccine is best for you or a loved one, discuss your options with your healthcare provider. TidalHealth Home Scripts at the TidalHealth Ocean Pines Campus, and AGHRx RediScripts Pharmacies, located in Berlin and Ocean Pines, offer standard and high-dose flu shots.

TidalHealth Home Scripts can be reached at 410-543-4769. AGHRx RediScripts Pharmacies can be reached at 410-641-9240 (Berlin) or 410-629-6240 (Ocean Pines).

Upcoming flu clinics

Atlantic General Hospital's flu clinics are free of charge and open to anyone age 12 and up (individuals under age 18 must bring a parent or legal

guardian to sign consent). Trivalent flu shots and high-dose "senior" flu shots will be available at all events unless otherwise noted. The following clinics are planned for the Ocean Pines area:

-Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2025, from 5:30 to 8 pm at the John H. 'Jack' Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center (9707 Healthway Drive, Berlin, MD 21811). *This event is a drive-thru flu clinic.*

-Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025, from 10:30 am to 1 pm at St. Peter's Lutheran Church (10301 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, MD 21842).

-Friday, Oct. 3, 2025, from 8 am to noon at the Ocean Pines Community Center's Assateague Room (235 Ocean Parkway, Berlin, MD 21811).

-Wednesday, Oct. 8, 2025, from 11 am to 1 pm at Stevenson United Methodist Church Spirit Kitchen (123 N. Main St., Berlin, MD 21811).

-Thursday, Oct. 9, 2025, from 10 am to 1 pm at Holy Savior Catholic Church (1705 Philadelphia Ave., Ocean City, MD 21842).

-Friday, Oct. 10, 2025, from 8 am to noon at the Ocean Pines Community Center (235 Ocean Parkway, Berlin, MD 21811). *This event is a drive-thru flu clinic.*

-Saturday, Oct. 11, 2025, from 8 am to noon at the Gudelsky Family Medical Center (10614 Racetrack Road, Berlin, MD 21811). *This event is a drive-thru flu clinic.*

-Thursday, Oct. 16, 2025, from 11:30 am to 3:30 pm at the Atlantic Club (11827 Ocean Gateway, Ocean City, MD 21842). *High-dose "senior" flu shots are not available at this event.*

To learn more about other TidalHealth flu clinics, visit tidalhealth.org/flu.



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Travel

Planning your winter getaway

By **Cindy McCabe**

As the crisp air of fall begins to settle in, many people shift their focus to cozy nights, football games, and pumpkin spice everything. But if you're already dreading the cold, now is the perfect time to start planning your winter getaway. Don't wait until the frost is on the ground to think about beaches and sunshine because by then, the best resorts will be booked, flights will be limited, and prices will skyrocket. Planning ahead now means more choices, better deals, and less stress when winter rolls around. Think of it like buying your winter coat: if you wait until the first snowstorm, you're left with whatever's on the clearance rack. Your vacation deserves better than leftovers, and early planning gives you the power of choice.

Just because summer is ending doesn't mean the fun in the sun has to. Imag-

ine swapping icy roads for ocean waves, or trading your snow shovel for a beach umbrella. Whether it's a Caribbean escape or a luxurious cruise, your fall planning ensures you'll be able to keep the heat going even in the coldest months. Vacations aren't just about travel; they're about well-being. Studies consistently show that having something to look forward to boosts happiness and lowers stress. Booking your trip now gives you that spark of excitement every time you flip the calendar closer to departure.

Of course, when it comes to booking, there's no better partner than a trusted local travel agent. In an age of online booking sites, it may seem tempting to click a few buttons and call it a day but should you? Think about it this way: would you cut your own hair without professional training? Change your car's oil if you didn't know how? Attempt a plumbing repair without an expert? Most people wouldn't risk it, because they understand the value of experience. Travel is no different. An expert travel agent knows the best destinations, the hidden gems, and the smartest ways to

stretch your budget. They anticipate the details, handle the "what ifs" like weather delays or missed connections, and go to bat for you when online sites leave you stranded. A good travel agent doesn't just book a trip they craft an experience, ensuring your vacation is seamless from start to finish.

The bottom line is simple: fall is here, and winter is coming. Don't wait until everyone else is scrambling for a slice of sunshine. Book now to secure your perfect winter escape, and put your trust in a professional who has your best interests at heart. After all, you wouldn't trust

your haircut, your car maintenance, or your home repairs to an amateur—so why leave your hard-earned vacation to chance? By booking early and working with an expert travel agent, you'll not only keep the spirit of summer alive through the colder months but also guarantee yourself peace of mind, better value, and a trip that will leave you with memories to last a lifetime.

Cindy McCabe is owner of Bethany Travel and can be reached at 302-933-0955. Bethany Travel is one of the top 10 travel agencies in the world selling Sandals & Beaches.



Cindy McCabe

Democrat Women's Club to meet

On Monday, September 22 at 10 a.m., members and prospective members of the Democratic Women's Club (DWC) of Worcester County will meet at the Berlin library located at 13 Harrison Avenue in Berlin to hear guest speaker Leila Weah, senior reporter with WMDT (47abc).

Her topic will be Broadcast Media: What's going on in the world, and how are journalists handling it.

After the meeting, new members are invited to stay for a BYO brown bag lunch "meet and greet" with members.

Prospective members are welcome at the meeting where membership applications will be available. Visit the website at <https://dwcmd.org/> for additional information.

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Too many deer are harming Maryland's forests

By **Francis Smith**

Maryland is home to a diversity of native wildlife and plant species, and the balance between the two can sometimes be difficult to manage. Like rabbits overrunning a garden, an overpopulation of deer will have detrimental effects on the undergrowth and vegetation in a forest.

For the Maryland Forest Service, successful stewardship requires finding equilibrium between supporting sustainable woodlands and affording space for the white-tailed deer that reside there. Deer browse on fresh tree buds and leaves that spring up from the forest floor. This is a natural part of their diet, but in the face of shrinking landscapes and fewer hunters, overpopulation of deer is leading to over-browsing.

Since 2005, Maryland's white-tailed deer population has stabilized around 235,000 deer. This was a stark decrease from the state high of 300,000 in 2002 after growing from an average population of around 150,000 deer in the 1980s until 1993. Meanwhile, the number of licensed hunters in the state has dropped by more than 40% since the 1970s. Since 2010, the white-tailed deer harvest has declined by more than 20%. The combination of less hunters and more deer since the 1980s and 1990s is damaging overall forest health.

In forests with dense deer numbers, the impact of deer can be plainly visible in the "browse line" - the area of vegetation extending from the ground to about six feet above the forest floor. If you see plants nibbled within the browse line, limited plant regrowth, or an abundance of invasive plants, then there are likely too many deer and not enough native trees and shrubs. This type of activity means young forest growth is being suppressed, which removes habitat from other wildlife such as turkeys, quail, and pollinating insects. Some of these species are already dwindling in numbers and facing an uphill climb.

As the native vegetation is reduced and eliminated, there is less competition for the many species of non-native, invasive plants that quickly attempt to occupy every last nook and cranny of our forests. Deer-browsed spaces suddenly become filled with invasives such as Japanese stiltgrass,

wisteria, and kudzu that use the sunlight, water, and nutrients needed for native plant growth. And since native wildlife eats native vegetation, there is less habitat and food for all, including deer.

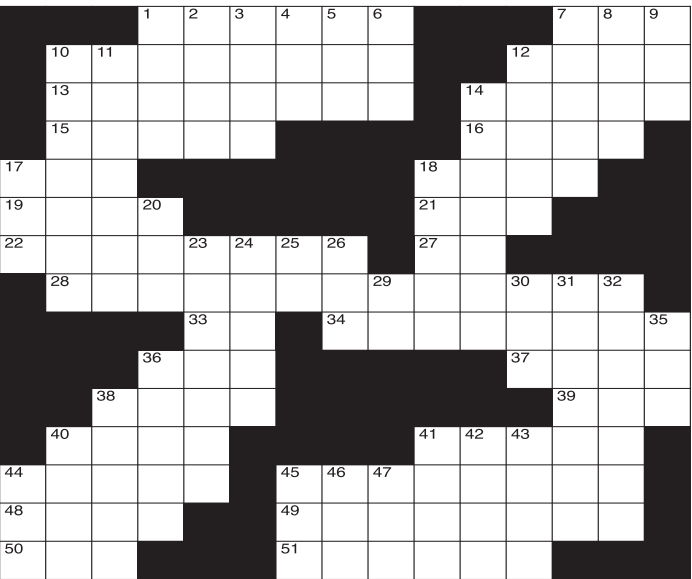
Browsing isn't the only form of damage deer inflict. Each fall, bucks rub their antlers on trees as part of their mating behavior. These "buck rubs" can shred bark and cause tissue damage to still developing trees, stunting growth and creating opportunities for pathogens or insects to inflict additional damage.

To help prevent deer browsing damage, the Maryland Forest Service uses tree shelters to allow our seedlings to get close to or above the browse height. Shelters include the noticeable plastic tubes you may have seen around the state at tree planting sites, which are the most cost-effective mechanism to prevent browsing damage. Shrub cages and fencing are also other alternatives that can be employed to protect and preserve vegetation, depending on cost. There are scent, audio, and visual repellents too, but those products are not as effective as tree tubes or fencing.

Other solutions to the issue include recruiting new and reactivating lapsed hunters through hunter education programs and hunting programs, which DNR offers throughout the year. Another option could be to make hunting on Sundays more accessible in the state. Maryland is one of 10 states in the U.S. that still has colonial-era laws that restrict Sunday hunting in several counties, despite a strong track record of hunting safety. Liberalizing Sunday hunting regulations could enable hunters to more easily find time to harvest a deer, teach others how to hunt, and provide increased economic opportunities for guides, outfitters, and outdoor businesses. Earlier this year, the Pennsylvania legislature repealed its longtime ban on Sunday hunting for similar reasons.

Francis Smith is a natural resources planner with the Maryland Forest Service.

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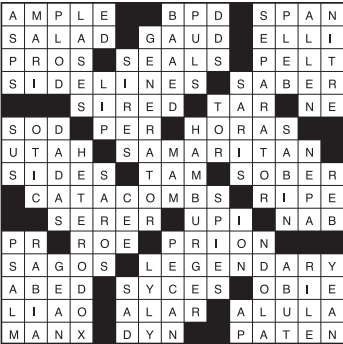


CLUES ACROSS

1. Carved into
7. ___ Rogers, cowboy
10. Unruly locale
12. Edible mushroom
13. Influential noblemen
14. Rattling breaths
15. David ___ George, Brit. P.M.
16. Musician Clapton
17. Small Eurasian deer
18. Invests in little enterprises
19. Perimeter
21. Chicago ballplayer
22. Animal body part
27. It's everywhere these days
28. Fictional ad exec
33. Mr. T character Baracus
34. Against the current
36. Subway rodent
37. Armor plate
38. Hair on the head
39. Strong insect
40. Swollen lymph node
41. A way to lessen
44. Walter White poison
45. Sleeveless garment
48. Long accompanied song
49. Without features
50. Yankee great Mattingly
51. Removes from record

CLUES DOWN

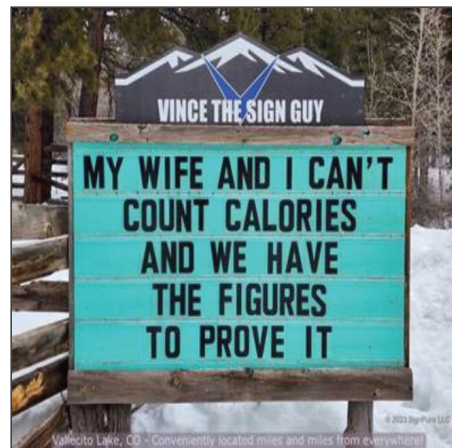
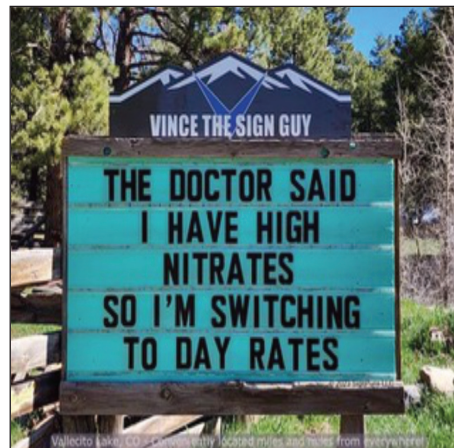
1. Root of taro plant
2. Those ones
3. Appliances have one
4. A way to sing
5. Midway between east and southeast
6. Animal dwelling
7. An object that as survived from the past
8. Oil cartel
9. Affirmative
10. Foul smell
11. Brisk tempo
12. S. American indigenous person
14. Restored
17. Official
18. Skin lesions
20. Electroencephalograph
23. Middle Eastern country
24. Extremely angry
25. Title used before a woman's name
26. British thermal unit
29. By the way (abbr.)
30. Anger
31. Nullifies
32. Ones who acquire
35. Time zone
36. Arabic name
38. Protein in mucus
40. Ballpoint pen
41. Mimics
42. Humans have a lot of it
43. Expressions of good wishes
44. Cool!
45. One point east of due south
46. City of Angels football team (abbr.)
47. A way to save for retirement



Answers for September 3

Some things to think about

Gathered from the internet
by **Jack Barnes**



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