

The Courier

December 6, 2017 Volume 18 Number 14

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Pine Tones to perform

On Friday, December 15 at 7:30 p.m. the Pine Tones Chorus will present a Christmas Concert at Atlantic United Methodist Church in Ocean City, Baltimore Ave. and 4th Street.

The concert is titled "A Christmas Wish" and offers a variety of festive holiday music. Fans of TV and show tunes may recognize the songs "We Need a Little Christmas" from "Mame" and "God Bless Us, Every One" from the musical version of Dickens' "Christmas Carol." Fred Waring has set to music the famous poem "Twas The Night Before Christmas" to be sung as a ballad.



Traditional melodies will include "For Unto Us a Child is Born" from Handel's Messiah and "I Heard the Bells On Christmas Day" based on the poem from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

The Pine Tones Chorus includes more than 55 singers from Ocean Pines, Ocean City, and nearby areas. June Todd is the chorus director and Dick Smith is the group's pianist. As an added attraction, guest musicians will include Julie Barton playing oboe, Tom Baione playing string bass, and Curtis Krams on drums.

Admission is free and an offering will be received. After the concert, guests may enjoy refreshments in the church social hall.

The Pine Tones Chorus has entertained local audiences in the Ocean Pines and Ocean City areas since 1984. For additional information, call the Chorus President Pat Beisler at 410-208-2682 or June Todd at 410-289-7373.

Funding for Pine Tones Chorus activities has been from individual donations and patrons as well as the Worcester County Arts Council, Maryland State Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts. These organizations are dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive.



Making a statement - Riley Nagler and Ella Gaddis dressed up as twins to celebrate Red Ribbon Week at Berlin Intermediate School. The students were encouraged to dress as twins to "pair up against drugs." Red Ribbon Week is a nationwide campaign to educate students about the harmful effects of tobacco/alcohol and drug abuse.

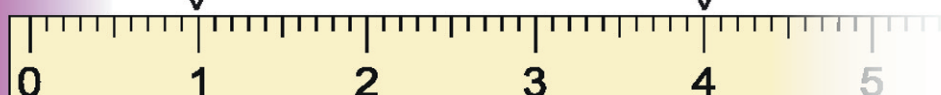
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Community Calendar

December

Anglers to meet

The Ocean Pines Anglers Club will meet on Saturday, December 9 at 9:30 a.m. in the Ocean Pines library. Highlights of the Kids Fishing Contest and Believe in Tomorrow programs will be presented by Jack Barnes and Buddy Seigel. Updates will also be provided on any new or proposed fishing regulations and awards will be presented to the top Anglers for 2017. Members are encouraged to bring dry/canned goods or monetary contributions which will be donated to the Diakonia homeless shelter. All are welcome.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	Christmas	Boxing Day				

Parade will change traffic routes

The Town of Berlin is asking parade participants, parents and residents to be mindful of the following traffic changes for this year's Christmas parade which takes place on Thursday, December 7 at 7 p.m.

The parade route will be reversed this year to begin at the Berlin Welcome Center and Main Street and will travel north through town. Main Street will be closed from the railroad at North Main Street to Worcester Preparatory School beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Line-up of entries will be along South Main Street beginning at the Welcome Center down to Buckingham Lane. Bands are required to drop off students at Stephen Decatur Park where buses will then travel back and park at Berlin Intermediate School for pick up after the parade. Bands will be located for line-up at Stephen Decatur Park.

South Main Street is for parade entries only. Parents may drop off students to access their line-up numbers at Buckingham Elementary School via Buckingham Lane or West Street or Stephen Decatur Park via Route 113 and Tripoli Street or at the corner of Bay and Church Street where town staff will assist them to their line up position. Each group of participants will be given a staggered line-up time to help alleviate bottlenecks beginning at 5:15 pm.

The parade will end at the Berlin Fire Company where participants will be directed to be picked up at Berlin Intermediate School.

Overflow parking can be found at Berlin Intermediate School where a shuttle is available to take you to downtown Berlin beginning at 5:45 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. and pick up for return to your vehicle from 8:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

All streets along the parade route will be closed to traffic beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Monday

Ocean Pines Poker Club
Poker players wanted in Ocean Pines area for Monday evenings. Call 410-208-1928.

Sweet Adelines
The Delmarva Sweet Adeline Chorus meets from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Ocean Pines Community Center. Call 410-641-6876.

Monday/Tuesday
Sanctioned Duplicate Bridge
Open bridge games Monday at 12 p.m., Tuesday at 10 a.m. at OP Community Center. Call Mary Stover 410-726-1795.

Tuesday
Families Anonymous
From 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at room 37 in the the Community Church at Ocean Pines on Rte. 589. For more information call Carol at 410-208-4515.

Tuesday/Thursday
Poker Players wanted for Gentlemen's Poker in North Gate area Ocean Pines.Game played every Tuesday & Thursday evening 5:45 p.m. to 10:45 p.m.on Pinehurst Rd.Ocean Pines. Call 410-208-0063 for more information.

Wednesday
Kiwanis Club Meeting
Weekly meetings at 8 a.m. on Wednesdays in the Ocean Pines Community Center. Doors open 7 a.m.

Elks Bingo
Ocean City Elks in Ocean City (behind Fenwick Inn) open at 5:30 p.m. Early birds at 6:30 and bingo at 7 p.m. Call 410-250-2645.

Rotary Club
Ocean City/Berlin Rotary Club meetings are held at 5:45 p.m. at the Captains Table in Ocean City. Contact Stan.Kahn@carouselhotel.com.

Square Dancing
The Pinesteppers have introduction to square dancing at the OP Community Center at 7 p.m. Call Bruce Barrett at 410-208-6777.

AL-Anon/OP-West OC-Berlin
Wednesday Night Bayside Beginnings Al-Anon family meetings are held at the Ocean Pines Community Center at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday
Story Time
Stories, music and crafts at 10:30 a.m. for children ages 3-5 at Ocean Pines library. Call 410-208-4014.

Beach Singles
Beach Singles 45 for Happy Hour at Harpoon Hanna's at 4 p.m. Call Arlene at 302-436-9577 or Kate at 410-524-0649 for more activities. BeachSingles.org.

Legion Bingo
American Legion in Ocean City opens doors at 5:30 p.m., games begin at 7. For information call 410-289-3166.

Gamblers Anonymous
Group meets at 8 p.m. at the Atlantic Club, 11827 Ocean Gateway, West Ocean City. Call 888-424-3577 for help.

Friday
Knights of Columbus Bingo
Bingo will be held behind St. Luke's Church, 100th St. in Ocean City. Doors open at 5 p.m. and games begin at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments available. Call 410-524-7994.

First Saturday
Creative Writing Forum
Every first Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. at the Berlin Library. Novice and established writers gather to share their fiction, non-fiction, and creative writing projects. Program includes critiques and appreciation, market leads, and writing exercises.

Rec Center track hours modified

Worcester County Recreation and Parks announces that indoor track hours will be modified during high school track meets at the Worcester County Recreation Center (WCRC) in Snow Hill this December and January.

The WCRC track will be closed to walkers beginning at 11 a.m. on the following dates: Wednesdays, December 6, 13, and 20; Wednesdays, January 3, 10, 17, and 24; and Thursday, January 25.

The public is welcome to attend the meets. There is no entrance fee,

and the concession stand will be open. For more information, contact Myro Small at 410-632-2144, ext. 2512 or msmall@co.worcester.md.us.

Insurance help event set

The Lower Shore Health Insurance Assistance Program will host Last Chance Health Connect event on Saturday, December 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at two locations, Ocean Pines library in Berlin and Wicomico library in downtown Salisbury.

The free health insurance sign up event is open to the public and will

feature health and/or dental insurance enrollment and information. Certified Navigators will be on site to answer questions and guide consumers through the Maryland Health Connection application process. Maryland Health Connection is the state-based health insurance marketplace for individuals, families, and small businesses.

Consumers can call 855-445-5540 for more information.

Maryland Health Connection Open Enrollment is November 1 through December 15 for coverage effective January 1, 2018.

Pickleball challenge offered

Worcester County Recreation and Parks (WCRP) has teamed up with Eastern Shore Pickleball to host a Pickleball Holiday Fun Challenge to those ages 16 and older.

The event will take place on Saturday, December 16, at the Worcester County Recreation Center in Snow Hill from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., with check in at 9:30 a.m. The entrance fee is \$10 and includes a meal ticket good for lunch from the concession stand.

please see **challenge** on page 15



Celebration - On November 20, students in Hillary Haines' afternoon Pre-kindergarten class at Ocean City Elementary School celebrated the First Thanksgiving with a traditional and delicious feast.

New grief support group to meet

Atlantic General Hospital has created a new support group for those who have lost a loved one to addiction or overdose.

"Losing someone you love is one of the most painful trials life can throw your way," said Gail Mansell, director of supportive care services at Atlantic General Hospital and founder of the support group. "Each person who goes through the grieving process does it in his or her unique way. Grief can take a serious toll, even on the most resilient individuals."

The support group was created with the intention of being a support-

ive and safe place to allow people to share their stories confidentially with those who have experienced similar loss.

The first grief support group meeting will be held on Saturday, December 16 in conference room #1 at Atlantic General Hospital from 10 a.m. through 11:30 a.m. There are no special or advanced requirements to attend, as well as no sign-ins at the door. Refreshments will be available for all who attend. Any questions can be directed to Gail Mansell at gmansell@atlanticgeneral.org.

County Rec Center is a Toys for Tots drop-off

Worcester County Recreation and Parks (WCRC) has again partnered with Toys for Tots and will serve as a public donation drop-off location. All in the local community are invited to drop off new, unwrapped toys now through Monday, December 18, in the Worcester County Recreation Center (WCRC) lobby in Snow Hill.

WCRC hours of operation are Monday through Thursday 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Friday 6 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. The WCRC is closed on Saturday and Sunday.

In 2016, this region's campaign distributed 7,241 toys to 4,074 children. By joining together, the community can spread hope to even more families this holiday season.

Learn more at www.toysfortots.org, or contact Program Manager Trudy Porch at 410-632-2144, ext. 2520 or tporch@co.worcester.md.us.



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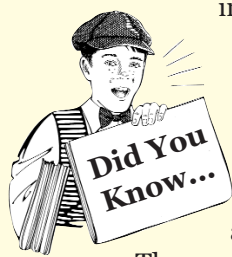
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2012 Business of the Year

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Preparing meals at home remains the least expensive way to eat. The budgeting resource Cheapism.com compared the costs of a classic chicken dinner, accounting for variables such as tip, food waste and family size, made at home and at a restaurant.



The comparison determined that a home-cooked meal costs as much as 60 percent less than a dinner out. A simple chicken dinner for one costs between \$6 and \$8 at home, take-out costs more than \$13 and dining out costs more than \$15. The rates of savings are similar when accounting for paying for a family of four.



Read more books for better health

The availability of digital content has made it easy to forget how pleasurable it can be to pick up a good book and get lost in a story. In fact, a 2015 Huffington Post/YouGov poll of 1,000 adults in the United States found that 28 percent had not read a single book in the previous 12 months.

Researchers at the Yale School of Public Health analyzed 12 years of

while providing a host of additional benefits to young children. However, the perks do not end with the passing of adolescence. Data published in the journal "Neurology" found reading regularly improves memory function by working out the brain. This can help slow a decline in memory and other brain functions. Frequent brain exercise can lower mental decline by 32 percent, according to research published in *The Huffington Post*.

Studies even suggest that reading can help a person be more empathetic to others' feelings. Research published in the journal "Science" showed that reading literary works (not popular fiction) cultivates a skill known as "theory of mind, which is the ability to 'read' the thoughts and feelings of others."

Reading also can be calming, helping to reduce stress as a result. By losing oneself in a book, worries and stress can melt away, says research conducted in 2009 at the University of Sussex. Measuring heart rate and muscle tension, researchers discovered that study participants needed just six minutes to relax once they began reading.

There are many other reasons why reading is good for the mind and body. The following tips can help men and women find more time to read.

Find small minutes to read. Busy people may think they do not have the time to devote to reading, but if they read in small intervals, the amount of time will add up. Read during commutes (if you are not driving), while in physicians' waiting rooms or during a lunch hour.

It is okay to quit. If you are a few chapters into a book and it is not striking your fancy, it is okay to trade up for a more interesting tale. Do not feel obligated to finish a book if you are not engaged.

Read paper books. Reading printed books can be a welcome, relaxing change from looking at screens all day. This may inspire you to read more and for longer periods of time.

Join a book club. A book club in which you engage with fellow readers can motivate you to read more often.

Steps to sustain mental acuity

Aging is associated with or linked to a host of mental and physical side effects. For example, many adults expect their vision to deteriorate as they grow older. Such a side effect can be combatted with routine eye examinations that may indicate a need for a stronger eyeglass prescription, a relatively simple solution that will not impact adults' daily lives much at all.

While physical side effects like di-

please see **acuity** on page 15



data from the University of Michigan's Health and Retirement Study concerning reading habits. Among the 3,600 participants over the age of 50, those who read books for as little as 30 minutes per day over several years were living an average of two years longer than those who did not read.

Studies have shown that reading improves fluency and story retention

Hospice appreciates recognition

Editor:

On November 16 at the Ocean Pines Yacht Club, Coastal Hospice was proud to receive the Nonprofit of the Year Award from the Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce. Thank you to the members of the Chamber for bestowing this prestigious honor on us. Thank you, as well, to the Worcester County Commissioners, State Senator Jim Mathias, and Delegate Mary Beth Carozza for their official citations and commendations that night.

This honor really belongs to the staff from Coastal Hospice who do the

work. Without their outstanding efforts, Coastal Hospice would not have made the impact on the communities, patients, and families who the Chamber recognized. On a daily basis, our staff cares for more than 200 patients.

Our mission is simple, yet challenging: "Coastal Hospice promotes dignity and quality of life for patients and families who face life-limiting conditions." We celebrate life and do all we can to make our patients comfortable and at peace. Our staff likes to say, "We meet our patients where they are." That could be physically, medically, socially, or spiritually. We try to help patients stay at in their own homes, because that is where most people want to be.

Soon, there will be another option located in Ocean Pines. The Macky and Pam Stansell House at Coastal

Hospice at the Ocean will be a 12-bed hospice residence for those without an able caregiver at home. With the help and vision of many people — including our fundraiser leaders Macky Stansell and Dirk Widdowson — we acquired an abandoned clubhouse at The Point at the end of Ocean Parkway. It is a spectacular location overlooking the bay and the Ocean City skyline and will be a calming place for our patients to live out their lives.

We look forward to our expanded presence in the Ocean Pines community. The work of Coastal Hospice goes on and will leave only a bigger footprint on Ocean Pines and the entire Lower Shore in the years ahead.

David Hanlin

Vice-President of Operation
Coastal Hospice & Palliative Care



Drawing a blank

Help! Please!

I'm trying to come up with what to get my wife for Christmas. We've spent 34 Christmases together and frankly I'm running out of ideas. Yes, yes, I know, you probably believe that her just having me would be gift

jewelry, clothes, books and small appliances. There have been hits and there have been misses. One of the biggest misses occurred on a Christmas shortly after we got married. In a nicely wrapped box I gave her a flannel robe. Her reaction was clear the moment she lifted the box lid. She made a face known universally by all husbands who have hit a sour note. "What's this? Did you give me a gift meant for your grandmother?" she asked. I was confused at first.

"No, why?"

"A flannel robe?"

"Yes," I said, unaware something was amiss.

"A flannel robe!"

Uh oh. It was beginning to dawn on me that there was something wrong with flannel.

Never again have I made that mistake.

Several years ago, I put together a photo album devoted to an especially eventful year in our lives that included a marriage, the birth of a grandchild, a college graduation, a christening, bridal and baby showers, our son's commissioning

into the Army, a cross-country trip and a number of smaller, but no less important family events. She really loved that. Although eventful in its own way, this past year really doesn't lend itself to a special commemorative album. So, that's out as an idea.

So desperate am I that I've been thinking about getting something for myself and telling her that I knew she would be happy seeing me happy. There are many flaws with this idea, not the least of which is that I really don't know what I want for Christmas.

So, you see my dilemma? If you have any ideas, I'm all ears.

It's All About. . .

By **Chip Bertino**

chipbertino@delmarvacourier.com



enough. As much as I agree with you, and you are certainly right, I really should get her something else to unwrap.

Back in the early days, when love was new and there were no kids in the equation, ideas on what to give were plentiful. I still enjoy buying her gifts but find it harder to come up with an idea that isn't "been there, done that." We've gotten to the point that if there's something we want, we buy it. Too, I'm finding that the older we get the less we want. How many earrings or sweaters does a person need. The things we really want are beyond our control to give — spending more time with our children and grandchildren (mostly the grandchildren); having everyone at home at the same time for dinner. That's what I'd really love to give her, but that's not in the cards.

We started dating on the very first day of October nineteen eighty something. That first Christmas a couple months later I was awash in ideas of what to get my new girlfriend. I spared no expense (on a college student budget) in getting her what I thought she'd love. And she did. She loved everything I gave her, or at least that's what she said. I believed her so much that I officially proposed to her on a subsequent Christmas Eve. She seemed to like that as well because she accepted. How can I top that all these many years later? I have but just one marriage proposal to offer.

Through the years I've given her





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Happy Holidays from the Democratic Party of Worcester County

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PRMC adopts lab system to target antibiotic use

Antibiotics are critical in fighting bacterial infections, but their widespread use has made many bacterial strains adapt and become resistant to treatment. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says at least 23,000 people die every year from antibiotic-resistant infections.

Peninsula Regional Medical Center (PRMC) has taken steps to help patients get more effective treatment and reduce the risk of antibiotic resistance by implementing the new Accelerate Pheno system, which identifies the cause of bloodstream infections and allows clinicians to pinpoint the exact antibiotic that will best treat the infection in hours rather than days. When

bacteria grow in the bloodstream, the body releases chemicals to fight the infection. These chemicals can trigger inflammatory responses throughout the body that can damage organs if the infection is not treated promptly. It is important to treat bloodstream infections quickly with the appropriate antibiotic to prevent tissue damage and ensure the best outcome for the patient.

PRMC is the first hospital in Maryland to adopt this system, which the Food and Drug Administration approved earlier this year. The standard laboratory method of identifying bloodstream infections meant growing the bacteria from a sample of the patient's blood, identifying it with biochemicals, then testing it to see which antibiotic stopped its growth. This process could take 48 hours. The system by Accelerate Diagnostics is able to reduce dramatically this time by measuring the similarity of the infection-causing organism's genetic material to DNA known to be unique to specific bacteria. Once the bacterium is identified, the system measures its susceptibility to different antibiotics.

"It is a process that used to take days, and now, in about 7½ hours, we can talk to clinicians about which antibiotic would be most effective for their patient, and tailor their antibiotic therapy. The sooner we get the patient on the right antibiotic, the shorter their illness," said Beth Prouse, clinical microbiologist at Peninsula Regional.

The system launched December 4. Prouse said before adopting the system, Accelerate Diagnostics allowed

please see **system** on page 15



Achievement - The Worcester County Commissioners applauded the county finance team for being awarded the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the ninth consecutive year. Finance team members pictured include Enterprise Fund Controller **Jessica Wilson** (front row, from left), Budget Officer **Kathy Whited**, Budget Accountant **Kim Reynolds**, and Assistant Finance Officer **Jennifer Swanton**; and Finance Officer **Phil Thompson** (back row, center).

Faw Casson makes donation

Chad Vent, partner at Faw Casson, CPA and Business Consultants, recently presented the Worcester County Education Foundation (WCEF) with a \$1,000 donation. Vent and his partners are especially pleased to support local teachers who give so much of their talent, time and compassion every day in the classroom. The annual \$500 WCEF Teacher Grants that are available mean that fewer teachers have to reach into their own pockets to afford innovative learning tools that make teaching more effective. Faw Casson partners also agreed that every child deserves an equal chance to succeed and putting the appropriate learning tool in every child's hands is a great start.

Todd Ferrante, chairman of the



Chad Vent

WCEF board explains, "Business partners like Faw Casson know that education is a solid investment and that their donation makes it possible for the WCEF to respond to the immediate needs of our teachers and students, when budgetary restrictions create gaps. Studies show that for every dollar a community invests in education, a \$7 to \$8 return in benefits is enjoyed by that community." Some of these benefits include lower crime, more qualified employees, motivated professionals, entrepreneurs and future business leaders who can contribute to and sustain a community.

To learn more about the Worcester County Education Foundation 501(c)3 non-profit or to make a donation online, visit: www.wced.foundation or contact HRPalmer@mail.worcester.k12.md.us.



Monday

Chicken Parmesan over Pasta \$9.95
Lg. Cheese Pizza \$8.50 (carry-out only)

Tuesday

Burger and French Fries \$6
Lg. Cheese Pizza \$8.50 (carry-out only)

Wednesday - Pasta Night

Thursday - Steak Night!

Friday- Fried Shrimp with French fries & cole slaw \$14.75

Saturday - Crabcake Platter with 2 sides and a choice of a soup or salad \$17

Drink Specials

Drinks of the Month \$7.50

The Poinsettia

Cranberry Whiskey Cocktail
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Martini of the Month \$7.50

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18th Annual Ocean Pines Community

Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

8:00 PM - December 24th
Ocean Pines Community Hall

Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve Worship Services at
Showell Elementary School at 9 a.m.



Come as you are...
casual dress welcomed.



Items collected for serviceman

The Kiwanis Aktion Club at Worcester County Developmental Center Aktion Club collected items for Operation We Care on November 6 and 14. Members of the Aktion Club were in front of Walmart in Berlin on these days handing out lists so shoppers could buy specific items for the active duty soldiers. Ten shopping carts of items for the troops were collected.



The Aktion Club is one of the Kiwanis' service leadership programs designed to provide adults with disabilities an opportunity to develop initiative, leadership skills and to serve their communities.

Operation We Care is a volunteer

non-profit organization dedicated to supporting our military and first responders. Operation We Care has been sending care packages and supporting the military, law enforcement and Fire/EMS departments since 9/11.

Teachers experience NASA training

Worcester Prep (WPS) students and teachers take advantage of one-of-a-kind opportunities at neighboring NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration). NASA is responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. WPS senior

robots and navigating them using GPS coordinates, as well as behind the scenes access to NASA's aerospace industry. A Virginia native, Austin is very invested in his community and hopes to remain there in future years. In addition to his rigorous studies, he has managed to accumulate more than

190 volunteer hours at the Firefighter Academy, earning certificates in Firefighter I and II and Hazmat. Following graduation, Austin plans to earn an Electrical Engineering degree and work at NASA.

WPS teachers have partnered with NASA over the years in countless capacities, from field trips to video conferencing. Recently, four WPS teachers, McCormick, Shimko, Timmons, and Taylor, who represent the Lower,

Middle and Upper Schools, attended the NASA teacher's workshop. "NASA is truly a hidden treasure," said WPS librarian Mrs. Taylor, "It is a link to so many unique resources that assist teachers by incorporating the principles of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) into tangible projects." Upper School Math teacher Mrs. McCormick added, "Working with NASA lets students become part of a work team where they can see

please see **training** on page 15



Shari McCormick, Dr. Sara Timmons, Erin Shimko and Sandy Taylor

Austin Taylor completed a NASA summer internship while four teachers, Shari McCormick, Erin Shimko, Dr. Sara Timmons, and Sandy Taylor, attended an Educator Professional Development Workshop at NASA's Flight Facility in Wallops Island, Virginia.

With an end goal of landing an engineering job at NASA, Austin Taylor, was one of 30 students chosen for an internship out of thousands of applicants. He was given hands-on learning experiences such as building



Students assemble hygiene kits for hurricane relief

On November 16, Worcester Prep senior, Maddie Simons, hosted a Hygiene Assembly Kit Event along with the Upper School Volunteer Club as part of a Clean the World community outreach program. Marcus Thomas, National Sales Manager of Clean the World, made a special appearance at WPS to educate students about the mission of his organization of improving health with proper hygiene and to save millions of lives. Clean the World is a not-for-profit that partners with hotels around the globe to recycle discarded soap and hygiene products to donate to impoverished people. WPS students assembled 160 care packages filled with soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, washcloths and razors along with hand written notes to be distributed to hurricane victims. Simons and her mother, Jackie Berger of the Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel, are also credited for forming a partnership with Clean the World and the Ocean City Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association. Together they are working to reach a goal of city-wide hotel participation in Ocean City, for Clean the World's soap recycling program.

Above: More than 40 WPS Upper School volunteers gathered to assemble Hygiene Kits for hurricane victims.



Breakfast - The Ocean Pines Department of Recreation & Parks held its annual Breakfast with Santa and Mrs. Claus on December 2 in the Ocean Pines Community Center. As has been customary, the Kiwanis Club of Greater Ocean Pines - Ocean City cooked the breakfast. Pictured are **Mr. and Mrs. Claus** with the Kiwanis Kitchen Crew. (L-R) Standing **Roy and Candy Foreman**, volunteer **Judy Zhu** and Kiwanis President **Ralph Chinn and Dave Landis**.

Pines platform tennis courts open

To commemorate the completion of what is now the largest racquet sports complex in Worcester County, Ocean Pines Association celebrated with a ribbon cutting ceremony on Tuesday, November 28 at the Manklin Meadows Racquet Sports Complex.

"This addition enhances the claim that Ocean Pines is leading the way in community-based racquet sports on the Eastern Shore and so doing we continue to build a reputation for being a great place to visit, to live and to absolutely to play," said

Ocean Pines General Manager John Bailey.

More than 100 people were on site to view the state-of-the-art facility at the ribbon cutting event.

The Maryland General Assembly issued an official citation offering congratulations to Manklin Meadows Racquet Sports Complex in recognition of its two new platform tennis courts in Ocean Pines. The citation was signed by Maryland State Senator Jim Mathias, of Legislative District 38. Local dignitaries State Delegate Mary Beth Carozza and Worcester County Commissioner Chip Bertino were also in attendance.

"Ocean Pines is responding to the demand for high-quality racquet sports facilities by providing an unprecedented number of platform tennis, pickleball and tennis courts to its residents and guests," said Denise Sawyer, marketing and public relations director for the Ocean Pines Association. "We would like for local dignitaries, residents and visitors to become ambassadors for our racquet sports complex and share all that we have to offer."

The expanded sports complex now includes ten tennis courts, six platform

tennis courts, eight dedicated pickleball courts, a full-service pro shop, a basketball court, a newly installed playground, community gardens and ball fields with bleachers.



Above: Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks Manager **Debbie Donahue**, Ocean Pines Marketing and PR Director **Denise Sawyer**, Worcester County Commissioner **Chip Bertino**, Ocean Pines Board Director **Tom Herrick**, Maryland State Delegate **Mary Beth Carozza**, Ocean Pines Board Vice President **Cheryl Jacobs**, **Dave Smith**, **Jim Freeman**, General Manager **John Bailey**, former Ocean Pines Board Director **Dave Stevens**, Ocean Pines Recreation & Aquatics Director **Colby Phillips**, Maryland State Senator **Jim Mathias**, Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce Executive Director **Ginger Fleming** and Ocean Pines Platform Tennis Members.

The Ocean Pines Public Works Department, with direction from Facilities Manager Kevin Layfield, worked closely with Total Platform Tennis, an Ohio-based platform tennis court construction company, to complete the \$93,800 platform tennis expansion project.

"It's a team effort," said Layfield. "Public Works, Terra Firma of Delmarva and Total Platform Tennis all worked efficiently to construct the two new courts that will serve as a sports

hub for the Ocean Pines community."

The ribbon cutting ceremony was broadcasted live on local radio, The Vault 103.5 FM. Door prizes, food and platform tennis lessons were made available to attendees.

Remarks were given by several community leaders, including Ocean Pines Association General Manager John Bailey, Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Ginger

please see courts page 11

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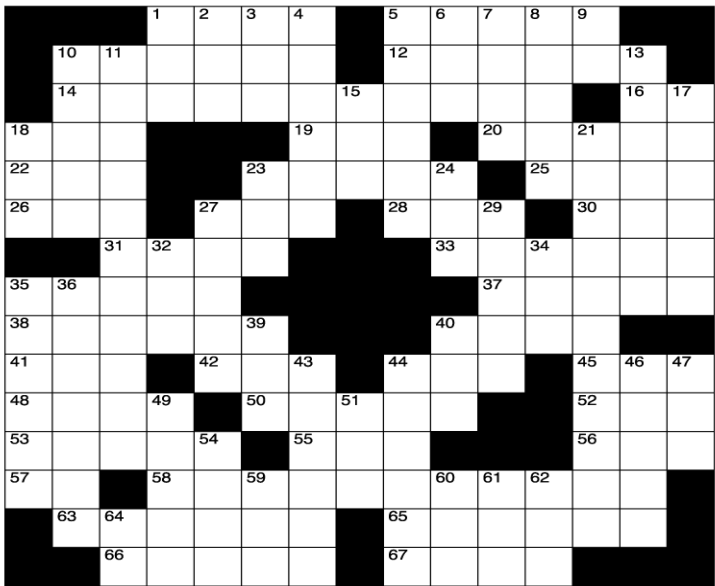
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Large jug

5. Anwar __, Egyptian statesman

10. Punjab province capital

12. Evoke

14. Data

16. Exists

18. Supervises flying

19. Having eight

20. Right-handed page

22. NHL great Bobby

23. German municipality

25. Negotiate

26. Keyboard key

27. Youngster

28. Medical decision (abbr.)

30. Ribonucleic acid

31. One-time Levi's chairman Walter

33. Cold region

35. Type of plywood
37. A way to unfreeze

38. Winter melon

40. Dispute

41. An expression of imagination

42. Human gene

44. Touch lightly

45. Computer giant

48. Garlands

50. Franz van __, German diplomat

52. Vineyard

53. Elk or moose

55. Moved quickly

56. Swiss river

57. Rhode Island

58. Fall into disrepair

63. Ancient Roman virtue

65. Removes

66. Slovenly women

67. Comedian Rogen

CLUES DOWN

1. Extremely high frequency

2. Court

3. Make a mistake

4. Change the appearance of

5. Long-haired dog

6. The Greatest of All Time

7. Designer Christian

8. Blemished

9. Atlanta-based rapper

10. Deceivers

11. One who supports disorder

13. Colossal

15. A team's best pitcher

17. Comfort in a time of sadness

18. Opponent

21. Professionals might need one

23. Captures geographical data (abbr.)

24. Senior officer

27. Sacred Islamic site
29. Egyptian unit of capacity

32. Comedienne Gasteyer

34. Performer __ Lo Green

35. Having only magnitude, not direction

36. Cleft lip

39. Payroll company

40. Prohibit

43. Stroke

44. Does not acknowledge

46. Hillsides

47. Austrian river

49. Passover feast and ceremony

51. Golf score

54. Hair-like structure

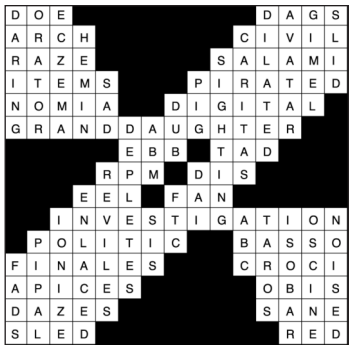
59. Check

60. Extract metal from this

61. Tell on

62. Powdery residue

64. A part of the mind



Answers for Nov. 29

Eyes on the Skies

Milky Way's central black hole

By Douglas Hemmick, Ph.D.

The month of December might not offer comfortable temperatures, but bundling up for a stargazing session is always rewarding. This month Taurus the Bull and Orion the Hunter, both winter favorites, make their first appearances of the year.

December's discussion focuses on the Milky Way's central supermassive black hole. Astronomy buffs know that a black hole is formed when a large star experiences gravitational collapse, compressing down to a small point, a singularity. Its gravitational field is so intense that even light cannot escape. The term "black hole" was coined in 1967 by American astronomer John Wheeler, and Cygnus X-1, was first to be discovered in 1971. In this category, the name "stellar black hole" is used, and they can be thought of as the ordinary- sized versions.

With their extreme gravitational forces, black holes are continually swallowing nearby dust and gasses. Materials swirling down inwards become heated to millions of degrees, thus generating large amounts of X-rays. As matter is drawn close, ionized particles may ricochet and be jetted outwards, without entering the black hole. Although the black hole itself remains unseen, these jets and swirling thermal patterns can be discovered by X-ray and radio observations.

In the 1930s the first astronomers to turn their radio telescopes to the skies witnessed a strong source in the center of the Milky Way, however they were unaware of its identity. The official discovery of the Milky Way's central "monster" black hole is credited to the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in 1974. Sagittarius A* is the name given the Milky Way's supermassive black hole by Robert Brown and Bruce Balick, co-partners in the discovery.

Modern observations with Earth-orbiting telescopes have further defined the details of the Milky Way's behemoth supermassive black hole. For example 2008 studies concluded that the colossus is 4.1 million times more massive than the Sun. Distance from the solar system to the central

black hole is calculated as 26,000 light years.

Even though astronomers agree regarding how the stellar (ordinary size) black holes came to be formed, there is no consensus regarding the formation of supermassive versions. A central issue is whether "supermassive stars" were present during ancient times,



leading to the formation of supermassive black holes.

The traditional view of astrophysicists is that formation of supermassive stars is deemed impossible. When protostars are first formed, the intense heat and internal radiation tends to blow away the star's outer layers. This leads to an upper limit on stellar size. Those favoring this traditional hypothesis suggest that supermassive black holes have grown to their tremendous sizes by several factors. First is the idea that the early cosmos was more dense, rich with thick regions of hydrogen which produced more numerous stars. In this way a larger number of black holes might have formed. These then combined together, while continually collecting surrounding materials. The final product would be a giant central black hole.

According to a second idea ordinary limits for supermassive stars did not apply in the early universe. These studies, beginning in 2012, contemplate processes involving dark matter and interstellar winds which might aid



Winter is upon us BRRRR!! Now is a good time to get out the soup pot and cook some comfort food for these chilly nights.

Recently my daughter-in-law, Mary Wisch, made a delicious soup and as soon as I tasted it, I thought I must put this in my column to share with my readers. Mary is an excellent cook so you will love this recipe.

Roasted Cauliflower and Garlic Soup

- 1 large head cauliflower (about 2-1/2 lbs.)
- 4-1/2 t. olive oil
- 1-1/2 t. kosher salt (divided)
- 3 garlic cloves (unpeeled)
- 3 cups reduced sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup 2% reduced fat milk
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/3 cup cream sherry
- Freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Cut cauliflower into 2" florets; toss with olive oil and 1/2 t. salt. Arrange in a single layer on a jelly roll pan. Wrap garlic cloves in aluminum foil and place on pan with florets. Bake at 425 degrees for 30 to 40 minutes until cauliflower is golden brown. Toss cauliflower every 15 minutes.

Transfer cauliflower to a dutch oven. Unwrap garlic and cool 5 minutes. Peel garlic and add to cauliflower. Add stock and bring to a simmer for 5 minutes. Let mixture cool for 10 minutes. Process mixture in blender until smooth. Return to dutch oven. Stir in milk, cheese and re-

maining salt. Cook mixture 2 or 3 minutes until heated. Add cream sherry and black pepper. This recipe will definitely be added to my favorites.

Chili is one of our winter favorites. You may use ground beef or ground turkey and is always tasty and freezes well.

Chili

- 1 lb. ground chuck or lean ground turkey
- 2 chopped onions chopped green pepper
- 1 chopped hot pepper (optional)
- 3 whole cloves
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 T chopped garlic
- Fresh parsley or dried parsley flakes
- 1 T. Chili powder
- Salt and pepper
- 2 cups water
- 1 large can tomato sauce
- can chopped tomatoes
- 3 shakes hot sauce
- 1/2 t. instant coffee
- 1 can dark red kidney beans (drained)

In the dutch oven, brown beef, onions and peppers in 1 T. oil. Add rest of seasonings, water, tomato sauce and tomatoes. Cook for 45 minutes on medium heat. Taste for chili seasoning and add more as needed by teaspoons. Add beans and cook 5 minutes more. When serving garnish with chopped green onions and grated cheddar cheese.

Serve with garlic bread.

bevvisch@aol.com



Dinner gathering - Members of the Republican Women of Worcester County during their recent dinner at the Dunes Manor. Above are (seated) **Jean Delcher** and **Pat Addy**; (standing) **Sandy Zitzer**, **Vera Beck** and **Sharon Byerly**. Photo by Anna Foultz.



Jammie donation
Eliza Mason-Burt's third graders, **Milagros Mil-Castro** and **Chappy Stokes** were proud to donate pajamas to the Pajama Drive at Ocean City Elementary School recently. The school goal is to collect 100 sets of brand new pajamas to donate to local children for the holidays.

courts
from page 9

Fleming, Ocean Pines Director of Aquatics and Recreation Colby Phillips, Ocean Pines Director of Marketing and Public Relations Denise Sawyer, former Ocean Pines Board Director Dave Stevens and members of the Ocean Pines Platform Tennis Association.

The expansion project, which Board Director Tom Herrick rallied behind for years, was approved by the Ocean Pines Board of Directors at a July 28 Regular Board meeting. Board Director Doug Parks moved to accept the recommendation of Total Platform Tennis.

"Ocean Pines is a community on the rise, sculpting a national reputation as Maryland's ultimate racquet sports destination," said Sawyer. "So, get out there and take a swing at platform tennis."

Platform tennis is an American racquet sport enjoyed by thousands of people of all ages. It is a racquet sport that players can enjoy outdoors in cold weather. The game, which combines elements of tennis and racquetball, is played on a court about one-third the size of a tennis court surrounded by 12-foot fencing that allows play off the screens.

Another benefit of a platform tennis membership in Ocean Pines is the option of playing timeless tennis. Those who are no longer comfortable playing on a regular-size tennis court are invited to try the sport, which is new to Ocean Pines and has already attracted a number of players. The game is played on the racquet complex's platform tennis courts using tennis racquets and low-compression balls. The screens surrounding each of the courts help keep the balls within reach.

Tide and Sun Chart				
* tide is for Ocean City Fishing Pier. Add two hours for Isle of Wight tide				
DATE	HIGH TIDE	LOW TIDE	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Thur., Dec. 7	10:11 a.m. 10:37 p.m.	3:47 a.m. 4:43 p.m.	7:04 a.m.	4:40 p.m.
Fri., Dec. 8	11:06 a.m. 11:35 p.m.	4:46 a.m. 5:41 p.m.	7:05 a.m.	4:40 p.m.
Sat., Dec. 9	12:03 p.m.	5:48 p.m. 6:39 a.m.	7:06 a.m.	4:40 p.m.
Sun., Dec. 10	12:39 a.m. 1:04 p.m.	6:52 a.m. 7:36 p.m.	7:07 a.m.	4:40 p.m.
Mon., Dec. 11	1:46 a.m. 2:06 p.m.	7:58 a.m. 8:31 p.m.	7:07 a.m.	4:40 p.m.
Tues., Dec. 12	2:51 a.m. 3:06 p.m.	9:08 a.m. 9:23 p.m.	7:08a.m.	4:40 p.m.
Wed., Dec. 13	3:48 a.m. 3:59 p.m.	10:09 a.m. 10:12 p.m.	7:09 a.m.	4:41 p.m.

MCBP to release report card

The Maryland Coastal Bays Program will unveil the 2016 Bay Report Card, a snapshot assessment on the health of the coastal bays behind Ocean City and Assateague Island, on Tuesday, December 12, 2 p.m., at the Ocean City Marlin Club located at 9659 Golf Course Road, in West Ocean City. The public is welcomed and encouraged to attend.

The goal of the Report Card is to provide a transparent, timely, and geographically detailed assessment of the 2016 Coastal Bay's health. Coastal bays health is defined as the progress of four water quality indicators and two biotic indicators toward scientifically derived ecological thresholds or goals. The six indicators are combined into one coastal bays health index, presented as a report card score.

The Report Card is a scientific collaborative effort among the Maryland Coastal Bays Program, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science - Integration and Application Network, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Virginia Institute of Marine Science and the National Park Service. Funding for the publication is provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

This year's report card release program will include Gold Star award presentations to recognize the contributions of partners and their ef-

forts to protect our coastal bays.

Hundreds of volunteers work with MCBP, including residents and visitors, to support environmental initiatives to protect, promote, and preserve our coastal bays, by volunteering to count horseshoe crabs, terrapin turtles, and birds; collect water samples, work on restoration projects, clean neighborhoods, wetlands, & dunes of trash, and assist in many other activities.

Part of the National Estuary Program, the Maryland Coastal Bays Program is a non-profit partnership among the towns of Ocean City and Berlin, the National Park Service, Worcester County, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Maryland Departments of Natural Resources, Agriculture, Environment, & Planning. One of only 28 such programs nationwide, the goal of the Maryland Coastal Bays Program is to protect and enhance the 175-square mile watershed, which includes Ocean City, Ocean Pines and Berlin, and Assateague Island National Seashore.

Report cards will be available after this event at the Maryland Coastal Bays office and area visitor information locations. Should you like to obtain copies for school projects and citizen groups please contact Sandi Smith at sandis@mdcoastalbays.org or by calling 410-213-2297 ext. 106.



On parade - Members of the Republican Women of Worcester County participated in the Ocean City Parade on Saturday. Above are **Cheryl Jacobs, Barbara Weitzel, Beverly Bigler, Venessa Alban, daughter Ruthie, Ann Lutz, Rosemary McAleer and Susan Hogan.**

Simple ways to quickly boost credit scores

The road to great credit begins with consumers. Consumers who demonstrate an ability to pay bills on time and stay out of debt can make themselves more attractive to prospective creditors, which can ultimately save them thousands of dollars when they purchase homes and/or vehicles.

While strong credit scores take years to build, men and women looking to improve their scores can begin doing so rather quickly. Scores will not

cent of his or her FICO score, making it the most influential of the five factors for people who have been using credit for a long time. (Note: People with a nonexistent or greatly limited credit history may have their FICO scores more influenced by other factors.) If necessary, set up automatic payments so all bills, but especially bills owed to creditors, such as credit card companies and student loan lenders, are paid on time.

Pay down balances and keep them low. Paying bills on time might not be enough to dramatically improve credit scores if consumers are still only paying the minimum amount each



skyrocket overnight, but they will begin to improve if consumers begin taking the following steps.

Pay bills on time. Paying bills on time is one of the most effective and simplest ways for consumers to improve their credit scores. One of the credit scores lenders use to determine if they will extend credit to a given applicant is the FICO® score, which is generated by the Fair Isaac Corporation. According to the Fair Isaac Corp., a FICO score is broken down into five categories, some of which factor more heavily than others. An individual's payment history accounts for 35 per-

month while maintaining high balances. After payment history, amounts owed is the second biggest influence of most consumers' FICO scores, accounting for 30 percent of an individual's score. So, in addition to paying on time, consumers should try to pay more than the minimum amount due each month, ideally paying balances in full each month.

Study your credit report. Credit scores can sometimes fall victim to errors on a person's credit report. A 2012 Federal Trade Commission Study found that roughly 25 percent of all

Exploring health savings accounts

Health savings accounts are specialized savings accounts that allow people with specific health insurance plans to set aside money to pay for qualified medical expenses. These funds are deducted before taxes are withdrawn.

Health savings accounts are a popular option among American workers and also provide another option for Canadians who need to pay medical bills that provincial programs do not cover.

How do HSAs work? Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) enable people to put money aside for use throughout the year on allowable healthcare needs. Some HSAs are offered in addition to health insurance through company plans, or health insurance providers may market them separately to individuals. Some financial institutions also support their own HSA.

People decide how much to contribute to an HSA account each year, although there may be government-mandated minimums. In the United States in 2017, the limit was \$3,400 for an individual and \$6,750 for a family, according to the financial resource NerdWallet.

Health Equity says that those who have an HSA account own the account, even if they change health plans, retire or change employers.

Who is eligible? Unlike flexible spending accounts (FSAs), HSAs are restricted to people who participate in high-deductible health plans only, states Canada Insurance Plans. High-deductible plans often have lower monthly premiums, but come at the cost of these higher amounts that must be paid before insurance kicks in, states HealthCare.gov. The U.S. Internal Revenue

please see **accounts** on page 13

please see **credit** on page 13

The origins of some beloved holiday traditions

Christmastime is here. The presents are being purchased and wrapped. The stockings will soon be hung on the fireplace mantle. Mistletoe is pinned above the front entryway, and poinsettias add rich color to home decor.

Tradition is integral come the holiday season. Throughout the month of December, traditions fill people's days and comprise the many reasons why individuals decorate, celebrate and dine the way they do this time of year. But few may know the origins of some of the most beloved holiday traditions.

Christmas stockings. The Christmas stockings of today may be a byproduct of various traditions. One such tradition dates back to a Dutch custom in which children would leave shoes full of food to feed St. Nicholas' donkeys, and then St. Nicholas would leave small gifts in return.

Another origin story of Christmas stockings can be traced to the 12th century, when nuns would

leave socks full of nuts, fruit and tangerines for the poor. This is why some people still put tangerines in



Christmas stockings.

Christmas tree. Christmas Trees are everywhere this time of year. The use of evergreen trees predates Christmas and is associated with the pagan festival of Saturnalia, which celebrated the agricultural god Sat-

urn with partying and gift-giving. During the winter solstice, green branches served as a reminder that spring would arrive anew. Germans are credited with first bringing evergreens into their homes and decorating them.

Santa Claus. Santa Claus' origin story can be traced to St. Nicholas, a Christian bishop who lived during the fourth century. St. Nicholas was very generous and gave away his fortune to help the needy. He also did various other good deeds. St. Nicholas became infamous and began to be known by various names around the world. The Dutch called him Sinter Klaas, which was eventually transformed to Santa Claus. The jolly persona came later when 20th century advertisers, especially the artists responsible for Coca-Cola ads, portrayed Santa in a red suit with a big smile.

Mistletoe. Mistletoe is hung in doorways, and couples who stand beneath are encouraged to share a kiss. The tradition of hanging it in the house goes back to the times of the ancient Druids. Mistletoe was thought to bring good luck to a household and ward off evil spirits. The custom of kissing under mistle-

toe can be traced to England. Originally, a berry was picked from the sprig of mistletoe before the person could be kissed. When all the berries had gone, there could be no more kissing.

Christmas bells. Church bells ring for many special services, including Christmas mass. During Christmas midnight mass in the Catholic Church, the altar bells may be rung while the priest says the "Gloria." Bells are part of caroling, and jingling bells are associated with sleighs and Santa's reindeer.

credit

from page 12

consumers had errors on their credit reports that adversely affected their credit scores. Consumers who suspect their credit score does not reflect their credit worthiness should examine their reports, which are available to all consumers once a year for free, for mistakes. Report any mistakes to Equifax, Experian and/or TransUnion.

Wait to apply for new lines of credit or mortgages. Consumers' credit scores take a small hit each time they apply for new lines of credit, whether it is a credit card or mortgage. Consumers who want to quickly improve their scores should refrain from applying for new lines of credit until they have increased their scores to a point where they will not mind seeing those scores take a small dip.

Consumers' credit scores can affect their lives in various ways. While it takes time to build strong credit histories, consumers can take small steps to begin improving their credit scores right away.

accounts

from page 12

Service defines a high deductible health plan as any plan with a deductible of at least \$1,300 for an individual or \$2,600 for a family.

When HSAs are combined with high-deductible health plans, people may be able to lower their monthly health insurance premiums, all the while having a cache of savings to use toward eligible expenses.

HSA benefits. HSAs can lower monthly health insurance premiums or offset some of the costs people pay for out-of-pocket health-related services, such as insurance copayments or services not covered by other insurance.

HSAs are used primarily for tax benefits. Contributions to HSAs are made pre-tax and are tax-deductible. Because a person is taxed after making

an HSA contribution, individuals are taxed as if they make less money, thereby lowering their income tax.

Another possible benefit for some people is that HSAs can be invested in mutual funds, stocks and other investment tools to generate even more money. Health Savings Administrators, which helps clients invest their HSA funds, says some people find that investing in HSAs enable them to see greater savings that can be put toward retirement than in more traditional 401(k) or IRA contributions.

High-deductible plans and HSAs are not for everyone, particularly people who require a lot of medical coverage throughout the year, necessitating high medical costs. People are urged to talk with a tax advisor to see if an HSA might be the right option for them.



Trivia ...

The first known candy cane was made in 1670 by a German choirmaster to help children endure lengthy nativity services. They were white and modeled after shepherds' canes. The candy cane made its way to America in 1847, when a German immigrant decorated the tree in his Ohio home with the iconic candy.



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training

from page 8

themselves in the bigger picture as a future career.” All the teachers walked away from the workshop with many great project ideas. Fifth grade teacher Dr. Timmons plans to have her students model the same project they did at the workshop. They will plan, build, test and revise a model satellite to orbit the moon. Timmons explained, “We will then map and follow the space station through the NASA International

Space Station homepage and incorporate NASA lesson plans with our fifth grade Science Rocketry unit.” She will be off to a great start thanks to NASA giving each teacher a Beginning Engineering, Science and Technology Kit valued at \$400 to share with their students. “In addition to the NASA kit, I walked away with the important lesson to give children more time to plan and brainstorm ideas before giving them the parameters of a project,” said fourth grade teacher Mrs. Shimko.

eyes

from page 10

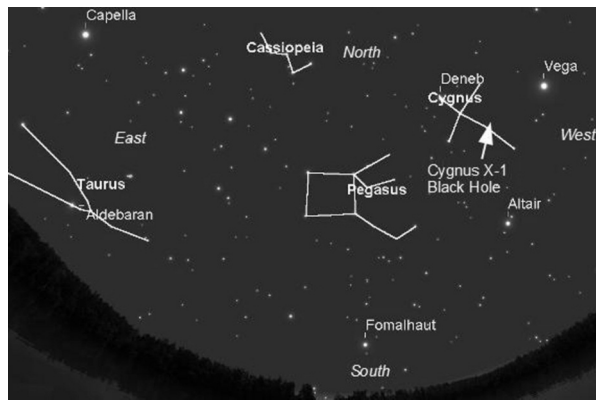
in star formation. Such giant supermassive stars might then have eventually created the supermassive black holes at galactic centers.

Early research in the field began in the 1960s when the extraordinary and powerful “quasars” were observed at the cores of remote galaxies. These are the largest and most energetic of all galactic black holes.

For stargazers who step outside this December, the early evening will feature the Great Square of Pegasus. As the sky first becomes dark enough, at about 5:30 p.m., the Great Square can be seen high overhead and slightly to the east. After 7 p.m., Taurus the Bull, with its characteristic “V” shape, will come into view over the eastern horizon. After 9 p.m., Orion the Hunter will appear in the east, followed by Gemini the Twins, to his northeast.

A good meteor shower, appearing in the constellation Gemini, helps to finish 2017 with a flourish. The Geminid meteor shower should be very prolific, showing as many as 60 meteors (shooting stars) per hour. The shower occurs between December 10 and 16 and reaches peak activity on the night of the 13th. The shower should be visible any time after about 10:30 p.m.

On December 30, the moon appears in very close conjunction with the star Aldebaran in Taurus.

**system**

from page 6

the PRMC lab to try it out and compare. “We liked that it was fast, but we also wanted to make sure it was accurate,” she said.

The technology supports prescribing targeted antibiotics sooner to give patients personalized treatment, helping

acuity

from page 4

minished vision might not strike much fear in the hearts of aging men and women, those same people may be concerned and/or frightened by the notion of age-related cognitive decline. Some immediately associate such decline with Alzheimer’s disease, an irreversible, progressive brain disorder that gradually destroys memory and cognitive skills, ultimately compromising a person’s ability to perform even the simplest of tasks. But age-related cognitive decline is not always symptomatic of Alzheimer’s disease. Learning about Alzheimer’s and how to maintain mental acuity can help aging men and women better understand the changes their brains might be undergoing as they near or pass retirement age.

Is Alzheimer’s disease hereditary? The National Institute on Aging notes that only a very rare form of Alzheimer’s disease is inherited. Early-onset familial Alzheimer’s disease, or FAD, is caused by mutations in certain genes. If these genes are passed down from parent to child, then the child is likely, but not certain, to get FAD. So, while many adults may be concerned about Alzheimer’s because one of their parents had the disease, the NIA notes that the majority of Alzheimer’s cases are late-onset, which has no obvious family pattern.

Can Alzheimer’s disease be prevented? Studies of Alzheimer’s disease are ongoing, but to date there is no definitive way to prevent the onset of the disease.

How can I maintain mental acuity as I age? Researchers have not yet determined a way to prevent Alzheimer’s disease, but adults can take certain steps to maintain their mental acuity into retirement.

Exercise regularly. Routine exercise may be most associated with physical benefits, but the NIA notes that such activity has been linked to benefits for the brain as well. For example, a 2011 study

ing them recover more quickly and reducing the time spent in the hospital. To measure the system’s effectiveness, the Peninsula Regional laboratory and pharmacy will collaborate with the Richard A. Henson Research Institute beginning in January to gather data from before and after implementation, to see how the system has affected patient care.

published in the journal “Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences” of the United States of America found that aerobic exercise training increases the size of the hippocampus, leading to improvements in spatial memory. The NIA also notes that one study indicated exercise stimulated the brain’s ability to maintain old network connections and make new



ones vital to cognitive health.

Read more. Avid readers may be happy to learn that one of their favorite pastimes can improve the efficiency of their cognitive systems while delaying such systems’ decline. A 2013 study published in the journal “Neurology” by researchers at Chicago’s Rush University Medical Center found that mentally active lifestyles may not prevent the formations of plaques and tangles associated with Alzheimer’s disease, but such lifestyles decreases the likelihood that the presence of plaques or tangles will impair cognitive function.

Stay socially connected. Maintaining social connections with family, friends and community members also can help women prevent cognitive decline. Epidemiologist Bryan James of the Rush Alzheimer’s Disease Center studied how social activity affected cognitive decline, ultimately noting that the rate of cognitive decline was considerably lower among men and women who maintained social contact than it was among those with low levels of social activity.

The idea of age-related cognitive decline strikes fear in the hearts of many men and women, but there are ways for adults to maintain their mental acuity well into their golden years.

challenge

from page 2

Checks can be made payable to Eastern Shore Pickleball. Pre-registration is open until December 11 at www.WorcesterRecandParks.org.

All games will take place on six indoor courts. Participants will be divided into two different play levels and will play in a round robin format. This event is in support of the WCRP’s Toys for Tots drive. Each participant who brings a new, unwrapped toy will receive two wins added to the total games for the day. Each participant who comes dressed for the holidays will receive one win added to the total games for the day. There will be no more than three wins added per person.

For more information on the Pickleball Holiday Fun Challenge, please contact USAPA Ambassador Vicky Sieber-Keefer at 757-824-4345 or vkeefer94@gmail.com, or contact Program Manager Trudy Porch at 410-632-2144, ext. 2520 or tporch@co.worcester.md.us.

Visit www.WorcesterRecandParks.org for a complete list of WCRP Pickleball programs.



Holiday Events

IN OCEAN PINES, MD

SANTA IN THE PARK

Saturdays: Dec. 9 & 23

4:00-7:00 pm FREE

White Horse Park

235 Ocean Parkway

KIDS HOLIDAY CRAFT TIME

Saturday, Dec. 9

12:00 – 1:00 pm

\$8 Residents, \$10 non-residents

Ocean Pines Community Center

235 Ocean Parkway

CHRISTMAS CLASSIC MOVIE NIGHT

– "IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE"

Friday, December 8 7:00 pm

Ocean Pines Community Center

235 Ocean Parkway FREE

HOLIDAY MOVIES: "DR. SEUSS' THE GRINCH AND "A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS"

Friday, Dec. 15 7:00 pm

Ocean Pines Community Center

235 Ocean Parkway FREE

SWIM WITH SANTA

Saturday, Dec. 9

11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Sports Core Pool

11144 Cathell Road

\$6 swimmers / \$3 non-swimmers

Join Santa in the heated indoor pool.

OPEN TO PUBLIC
OCEANPINES.ORG
410.641.7717

NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

The Cove at Mumford's in Ocean Pines

7:30pm-1:30am

\$100

per person, plus tax & gratuity

Includes cocktail hour, plated dinner,
champagne toast, beer, wine & soda.
Cash bar for liquor. Prime Time LIVE!
RSVP REQUIRED, 410.641.7501

