

Photo by Cathy Halligan

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MEET THE
TEAM AT
OCEAN PINES

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Meet Ocean Pines Police Chief Tim Robinson

New Ocean Pines Police Chief Tim Robinson didn't waste any time tackling the tough issues after being hired in late July.

He met with community members during the annual National Night Out event on his first day, formally adopted a body camera policy later that week, and then began an unprecedented hiring campaign to help restaff the Ocean Pines Police Department.

Robinson inherited a department that had been without a chief for six months, after the retirement of former chief Leo Ehrisman.

He brings more than three decades of experience in law enforcement, most recently serving in a leadership position with the Wicomico County Sheriff's Office.

A brief history of a history professor

Robinson said he was inspired to become a cop by his father, a retired major from the Prince George's County Police Department.

"It just seemed like it was a way of life," he said. "I've been exposed to police work and been around police officers my entire life, and they're all great people trying to do a great job for their community. To me, it just seemed natural to follow in my dad's footsteps."

Originally from Bowie, Robinson moved to Salisbury in 1989 to attend then Salisbury State University. He studied history and Spanish, and said he fell in love with the area instantly. He still lives in Salisbury today, some three decades later.

His first police job was with the City of Rehoboth Beach as a seasonal police officer in the summer of 1992.



"I was with uniform patrol along the boardwalk and the downtown area," he said. "I did make some arrests, but I also had a lot of fun. And I met a young lady at the end of the summer named Angie who became my wife, and we are getting ready to celebrate 29 years of marriage."

Robinson spent the next summer in Rehoboth Beach before being hired by the

Delmar Police Department on the following year.

"They sent me to the police academy for a full-time officer position, and I stayed there for three-and-a-half years before I was hired by Sheriff Hunter Nelms at the Wicomico County Sheriff's Office."

That, he said, was a big leap.

"It was a much bigger department and there were much more opportunities," Robinson said. "I really enjoyed my time at Delmar, and I worked with some great people. But, career-wise, it opened many more opportunities by going to the Sheriff's Office."

In Wicomico County, Robinson said, crime also operated on a bigger scale.

"It was everything from quality-of-life issues to thefts and domestic assaults, to some pretty serious felonies and drug cases," he said.

(cont. on pg. 2)



Tim as a seasonal Rehoboth Beach Police officer



Tim with Delmar Police Chief & Mayors

(cont. from pg. 1)

During that time, Robinson became one of the faces of the department, which included a regular guest spot on the *Delmarva Life* TV program

to help raise awareness for police issues.

"I gravitated towards being the public information officer for the sheriff's office, and I started doing a lot of interviews with local media – and they kept asking me for more and more interviews," he said. "*Delmarva Life* started periodically, but I think with the response they got with the 'most wanted' segments, they decided to make it a regular feature. I used to joke around that I was their number one repeat guest!"

Robinson said those appearances paid off, helping to catch many on the local most-wanted list – sometimes within hours of the broadcast.

"There were many times when that show would air and, shortly after, the crime solvers tip line would start getting calls," he said.

Robinson also continued his studies at Salisbury University, earning a master's degree in history with a specialization in Colonial and Revolutionary America that led to a second career.

"I stayed in contact with the folks there and they eventually invited me to do some part-time teaching work," he said. "I started that in 2009 and I'm now starting my 15th year there, teaching evening history classes."

Moonlighting as a teacher, Robinson said, was "kind of an accident."

"I have a passion for history and a love of history," he said. "When I got my master's degree, it was basically to help support my career to get that on my resume, and next thing I know I was invited to teach part time and I just fell in love with it."

"I describe myself as a fiend about history. I love reading it. I love studying it. I love talking about it. And, apparently, I love teaching it too," he added.

Getting to know Ocean Pines

Robinson's parents, Fred and Jackie Robinson, have owned a home in Ocean Pines for the last two decades. They became full-time residents in 2020.

"I always thought it was a beautiful community," Robinson said. "They talk about it all the time, and I spent many a Saturday at the Ocean Pines Beach Club with my parents. I also attended

many of the events at Veterans Memorial Park. So, I was very familiar with the community."

Robinson said he was probably three or four years from retirement with Wicomico County, when the opportunity came up to become chief of police in Ocean Pines.

"I thought about it a lot, and this is a very attractive community. It's a wonderful place to be not only a police officer, but a police chief," he said. "And so, I decided to throw my hat into the ring, and I was selected."

"I'm very, very humbled that I was selected, but at the same time I'm very excited about the opportunity," he continued. "And I'm very appreciative of the faith that the leadership of Ocean Pines has in me."

At the end of his first day as police chief, Robinson was joined by hundreds of Ocean Pines residents for the annual National Night Out at White Horse Park. The event is billed as is "an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships." Along with meeting the public, he was also congratulated by many law enforcement friends from Worcester County and the State of Maryland.

"Everywhere I go everybody's been very warm. When they realize that I am the new police chief, everybody wants to introduce themselves and to talk to me and welcome me. I cannot express enough how much it has meant to me that I have been so warmly welcomed into the community of Ocean Pines."

During his first week, police body cameras went into use on Aug. 9, after Robinson was able to approve a "body camera worn policy" for the department.

"These body cameras are an incredible tool," he said. "In my professional experience, they have been invaluable at getting a correct accounting of what happened on any scene involving a police officer."

Next on the list, Robinson brought in a company called Lexipol to help update policies and procedures for the Ocean Pines Police Department.

"They will help us create and maintain our policies and procedures from here on forward," he said. "It's a great program and a great organization that a lot of police departments use, including Worcester and Wicomico counties and Ocean City."

"What they do is they look at best practices from other police departments around the country, in addition to making sure we're in

(cont. on pg. 4)



Tim with Patrol Shift B, 1997



Tim with wife Angie & his parents, Fred & Jackie



(cont. from pg. 2) compliance with federal and state law,” he continued. “And if there are any changes in best practices, or any changes in federal or state law, they will automatically update our policies for us and provide training to our officers on the new policies.”

Robinson said he’s also working on technology improvements, and the recruitment of new officers.

“I want to maintain a competitive starting salary, along with a viable pay scale for the officers that are already here,” he said. “We’re also looking at the pensions and working on the retirement program. And having things like take-home cars is a huge benefit to our officers.

“All those things are geared towards not only attracting and recruiting new officers, but also keeping the officers that we have,” he added.

Asked about his quick pitch for new hires, Robinson simply said, “it’s Ocean Pines.”

“I knew firsthand what a great community this is before I even applied here,” he said. “If you do the research, Ocean Pines always comes up and ranks among the safest and best communities in the state of Maryland. It’s just



beautiful here. Driving along the treelined streets and seeing the canals, there’s just nothing like it.”

Robinson said he’s hoping to hire both new and veteran officers.

“I’m looking to get people that are new that we would send to the academy so they can learn how to be officers. But I’m also looking to hire a couple of experienced folks to help guide some of these younger officers,” he said.

Looking ahead

In the future, Robinson hopes the Ocean Pines Police Department will continue to supply the best possible service to the community, and to be as self-sufficient as possible.

“We do get a lot of help from the sheriff’s office, in addition to other allied agencies and state police, but we want to be in a position where we can supply most of the basic services that this community needs,” he said.

“Overall, I’m just thrilled to be here – and I plan to be here for a while,” he continued. “If you see me out and about, please stop by and say hello. I plan to be very present here in the community.”

The Ocean Pines Police Department is seeking new recruits and certified police officers. For more info, visit www.oceanpines.org and also see page 31.



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Parks recognizes 2022-2023 Board accomplishments

Outgoing Ocean Pines Association President Doug Parks highlighted many of the 2022-2023 Board of Directors accomplishments during his annual meeting presentation on Aug 26.

Those included working with General Manager John Viola and the Budget and Finance Committee on the budget, supporting the Jenkins Point Restoration Project, authorizing upgrades to the Yacht Club Marina, hiring a new law firm, and extending the Matt Ortt Companies management agreement.

Parks credited Viola, staff and the committee for their work on the fiscal-year budget process. He said the budget included only a modest assessment increase and “will certainly serve ... to meet all of our operational needs.”

The Jenkins Point Restoration Project aims to restore and reconnect the eroding islands that were once part of the Jenkins Point peninsula to provide a nature-based buffer for the Ocean Pines Yacht Club and Marina, and the Osprey Point condominium community.

Parks said Ocean Pines has worked closely with Maryland Coastal Bays Program on funding and other aspects of the project, which he noted is still very much ongoing.

“It’s going to take the better part of a year or a year-and-a-half,” he said, because of dredging and other requirements.

Parks said repairs and upgrades to the marina dock were recommended by Viola. That included installation of the new aluminum fuel dock, said to be more efficient and longer lasting than similar wooden structures.

“It was sorely needed, not only from a functional perspective, but from a safety perspective as well. That place has now met all the safety requirements and is operating as it should be,” he said.

Parks said hiring a new law firm, Ayres Jenkins Gordy & Almand, was part of being a good steward.

“In any good organization, you look at the goods and services that are provided over the years and you reassess



2023 Annual Meeting

them over time,” he said. “It’s good corporate practice.”

On the other hand, he said extending the Matt Ortt Companies contract was something of a no-brainer because of their success over the last several years managing the food and beverage operations.

“That [partnership] has been very beneficial,” Parks said. “Matt, kudos to you and your group. You’ve served Ocean Pines well.”

Because safety was identified as a top priority by homeowners in a recent

survey, Parks said the Board also heavily invested in public safety initiatives. That included increased compensation for police officers, again based on a recommendation from Viola.

The Board also approved the purchase of body cameras and three new police vehicles, and coordinated with the general manager during the hiring process of a new police chief, Tim Robinson.

Parks closed by recognizing outgoing Board members Frank Daly and Colette Horn, as well as the volunteer advisory committee members.

“We have 14 advisory committees, and those people work just as hard as anybody else to make sure things that they see around the community are brought up to the Board for consideration,” he said.

Parks also congratulated the three newly elected Board members, Elaine Brady, John Latham and Jeff Heavner.

“I think we’re in a pretty good spot right now, so we’re looking forward to continuing with what we’re doing,” he said.

Parks’ final term on the Board officially expired with the annual meeting. He was appointed in 2016, and then elected in 2017 and again in 2020, and he served as president for four of his seven years.

“It’s been an honor and privilege to have been elected to serve this community over the past seven years, and I just wanted to recognize and thank the folks that supported during that time. I appreciate all the help that I got,” he said.



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New law firm gets introduction, auditor presents 'clean' opinion on financial statements

Included in the Ocean Pines Annual Meeting reports on Aug. 26 were an overview of legal services by law firm Ayres Jenkins Gordy & Almand, and the yearly audit report from UHY LLP.

Attorney Bruce Bright of Ayres Jenkins Gordy & Almand spoke on the firm's history and current duties with Ocean Pines, while Chris Hall summarized the annual audit process.

Bright said his firm was newly retained in May, so there's "not a lot of activity to report" just yet.

He said Ayres Jenkins Gordy & Almand was established 50 years ago, in 1973, in Ocean City. The firm has represented the Town of Ocean City for the last four decades, has represented the Worcester County School Board for many years, and currently represents the Town of Snow Hill.

"We are happily accustomed to representing important institutions in this local area," Bright said.

Bright said the firm also has experience serving HOAs and condominium associations, both locally and as far away as Easton. He said Ayres Jenkins Gordy & Almand is presently comprised of 11 attorneys, including eight partners and three associates.

"We will take a team approach toward fulfilling the legal needs of Ocean Pines," Bright said, adding that he will serve as the principal attorney, with firm partner Maureen Howarth serving as co-counsel. Howarth previously served as the Worcester County attorney and has ample experience representing community associations.

As general counsel to Ocean Pines, Bright said his firm will cover "the full array of legal services," including representing the community in any litigation, and providing legal support and advice to the general manager, various departments, and Board of Directors. They will also assist with contracts and represent Ocean Pines in assessment collections.



2023 Annual Meeting

"We do that kind of [collections] work for dozens of condominium associations and HOAs, so we're well prepared," he said.

Bright added his firm will supply all those services "at two-thirds the hourly rate of our predecessor."

"We're hopeful to be a lot more cost effective in delivering these services to Ocean Pines and its members, and we're really looking forward to a productive relationship between one of the oldest law firms on the Eastern Shore and the largest community association on the Eastern shore," he

said. "We're very proud to serve in this capacity, going forward."

Later in the meeting, Hall supplied the annual auditor's report. If his name sounds familiar, Hall previously served Ocean Pines with the TGM Group.

"We merged our firm a few years ago ... [and] are now part of a larger firm," he said. "We're the 28th largest firm in the country, so we have a lot of resources and expertise behind us."

Hall added the UHY offices remain locally based, with "the same partners [and] the same staff."

As the auditor, Hall said UHY audits and renders an opinion on the Association's financial statements each year.

He said the process starts each April, with internal control documentation and risk assessments, and continues through the spring and early summer with inventory counts, balance sheet and income statement testing of accounts and transactions, and other fieldwork.

The process generally wraps up in July with a review of the final fiscal-year financial statements.

Once again, Hall said Ocean Pines earned a "clean" and unmodified opinion.

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Guest column:

Humbled to serve

By Mary Beth Carozza

*Maryland State Senator for District 38 –
Somerset / Wicomico / Worcester Counties*



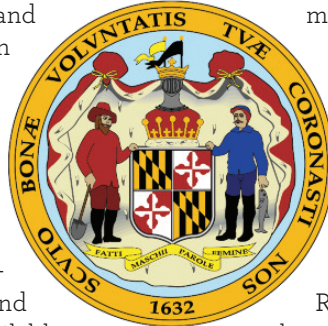
My family life took an unexpected health turn in August when my dad was hit with a triple whammy plus – pneumonia that went into atrial fibrillation (AFIB), followed by mild sepsis on top of severe hip bursitis. Now, looking back on those days when it was a little touch and go for my father, our family is so grateful for the professional and caring medical services rendered by the Ocean Pines Fire/EMS paramedics; the Emergency Room (ER), Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and floor team at Atlantic General Hospital; and the physical and occupational therapists at Encompass Rehabilitation in Salisbury.

Our family's recent health care experience has brought a greater appreciation for the support needed to ensure that quality, timely, and life-saving medical emergency services are available to my constituents across the board. It comes at a time when both the Ocean Pines Fire Department and Atlantic General Hospital have stepped up their efforts in seeking and raising the necessary funds to ensure quality health care services now and for the future.

I'm proud that the Maryland Board of Public Works approved \$250,000 during its Aug. 23 meeting for AGH to acquire new equipment for minimally invasive surgery. I sponsored this Legislative Bond Initiative (LBI) at the request of AGH, and supported Del. Wayne Hartman's LBI request for \$75,000 to improve the South Fire Station. This is in addition to the \$200,000 LBI grant in 2022 that I sponsored for the OPVFD last year, and \$1.35 million in the supplemental budget during Gov. Hogan's last year in office.

Now the Ocean Pines Fire Department is launching a special fundraising campaign to help fund the South Station while celebrating OPVFD's 50th anniversary this year. Personal engraved bricks are available for purchase, and this campaign gives our local Ocean Pines residents and visitors the opportunity to be part of the legacy of the new South Station. Not only will a new South Station better serve our residents and visitors, but an added benefit is that it may attract more emergency personnel to serve and stay right here in Ocean Pines at a time when all public safety agencies are facing worker and volunteer shortages.

As we address these personnel shortages in every major industry, my appointment in July to the 2030 Apprenticeship Commission by the Senate president should put local employers and students in a strong position to maximize apprenticeship opportunities. The charge of the commission is to make recommendations to reduce skill shortages in high-demand occupations and provide affordable training for career pathways for young people.






Specifically, the Apprenticeship Commission will be focused on achieving the goals of expanding registered apprenticeships to 60,000 statewide and having 45% of high school graduates complete the high school level of a registered apprenticeship by 2030. This appointment will support

my ongoing work with local industry, students, and community leaders interested in apprenticeships to meet the needs of employers while keeping our young talent right here on the shore.

In closing, I formally want to congratulate Tim Robinson on his appointment as our new Ocean Pines Chief of Police. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to work with Chief Robinson on several public safety initiatives and have always respected and appreciated his professional and caring approach to law enforcement. His 26 years of service with the Wicomico County Sheriff's Office will be invaluable to now protecting the largest population base in Worcester County. I especially appreciated that Chief Robinson's first day was on National Night Out, where so many of us could visit together in a relaxed community setting.

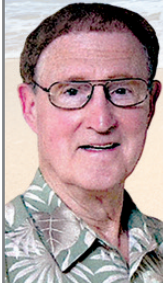
Congratulations also go out to John Latham, Jerry Murphy, and Elaine Brady on their recent election to the Board of Directors for Ocean Pines. I look forward to working with them on local priorities benefitting our shared Ocean Pines constituents, and believe we can continue to strengthen local, county, state, and federal partnerships, and protect our shore way of life.

I often comment that I represent the best Senate District in the entire State of Maryland, and it all comes down to the people who live, work, recreate and retire here on the shore. I am humbled to serve as your State Senator and invite you to share your views and ideas with me at marybethcarozza.com or marybeth.carozza@senate.state.md.us.

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Guest column: County updates

By Chip Bertino

Worcester County Commissioner, Ocean Pines District



The Commissioners recently approved a staff request to work with Ocean Downs to explore an agreement to take over their water system with an objective to interconnect this water supply with the adjacent Riddle Farm and Ocean Pines systems. It is believed that the more water supply we preserve by interconnections and load sharing between resources, the more effective of a protective shield against saltwater intrusion we can create.

In August, I participated in a boat tour of the Ocean City inlet put together by Sen. Mary Beth Carozza. Included on the tour were the entire Maryland Senate Education, Energy and Environmental Committee, members of the Eastern Shore state delegation, representatives from the Department of Natural Resources and the Army Corps of Engineers, as well as commercial and sport fishermen. The tour's objective was to underscore the importance of much needed improvements to the inlet to address shoaling issues detrimental to navigation, commerce and recreation. It's hopeful that this show and tell tour will spur action on the part of the state and federal government to address this worsening situation.

The 2020 Census found the county's population to be 52,607, an increase of 1,059 residents (2%) since the 2010 Census. With the updated figures, the Department of Development Review and Permitting has been tasked with creating new maps for the county's election district. Some districts will have to grow, and others will have to shrink to ensure the population in each remains nearly equal. The Ocean Pines' District 5 grew by 455 residents, which means some residents will have to move into District 6. The public is invited to com-

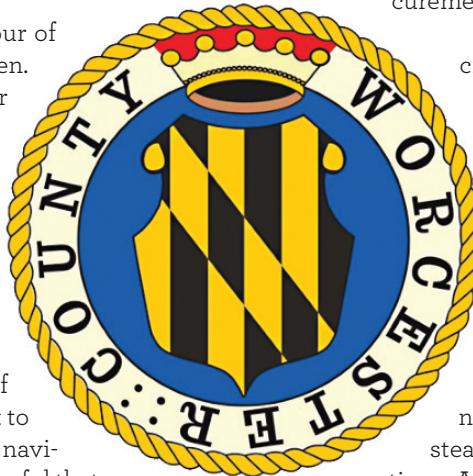
ment on the proposed maps at a public hearing during the Oct. 17 Commissioners' meeting. The public comment window will remain open for four weeks after the public hearing. For more information, contact redistricting@co.Worcester.md.us.

I want to make you aware of efforts to save taxpayer money by streamlining and making more efficient county procurement.

Late last summer, the Commissioners created a position for a County Procurement Officer, hiring Nick Rice to fill the position.

Since that time, county procurement procedures have been restructured by utilizing cooperative contracts for various goods and services and reducing administrative costs. Productive working relationships have been fostered with department heads across county government, nearly eliminating tedious paperwork that steals hours of productivity from their operations. Also implemented has been the use of purchase orders to assign county funds to the specific purchase of a good or service. By using purchase orders, county departments know, in real-time, how much funding is actually available versus committed. A great benefit of this procurement tool is avoiding budget overspending by showing open commitments as part of projected expenses. As a result of these efforts, since last August, county taxpayers have saved over \$915,000. On top of this, the county has benefitted from the sale of two surplus properties resulting in unanticipated revenue of \$660,000.

If you have any questions or comments, please reach out to me at 443-783-3248 or cbertino@co.worcester.md.us.



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Fall into healthy habits with Worcester Health

Guest column by the Worcester County Health Department

Prevent diabetes with *Lifestyle Balance*

In the Worcester County Health Department's *Lifestyle Balance Diabetes Prevention Program*, a trained coach will help you and a group of people like you learn how to lose weight, become more physically active, and reduce stress.

If you have been diagnosed with prediabetes or have a history of gestational diabetes, this program is proven to help you improve your eating habits, increase your daily activity, lose weight, and reduce your chance of developing type 2 diabetes. On average, participants lose 5-7% of their body weight.

The *Lifestyle Balance: Diabetes Prevention Program* is a year-long group program that will be offered throughout the county in-person, beginning this month. Classes will be held at the following locations:

- **Snow Hill Health Department: 5-6 p.m., Wednesdays (Oct. 18, 2023 – Oct. 16, 2024) at 6040 Public Landing Rd. in Snow Hill**
- **Berlin Health Center: 9-10 a.m., Thursdays (Oct. 19, 2023 – Oct. 17, 2024) at 9730 Healthway Dr. in Berlin**
- **Pocomoke Health Center: 5-6 p.m., Thursdays (Oct. 19, 2023 – Oct. 17, 2024) at 400-A Walnut St. in Pocomoke**

Please call 410-632-1100 ext.1108 to discuss program enrollment and eligibility. To find out if you're at risk for prediabetes, take the prediabetes risk test today at www.DoIHavePrediabetes.org. Local prediabetes resource guides are also available for free download at worcesterhealth.org.

group learning and activities. The program is designed for youth ages 7-17 and their parents/guardians to attend together.

Sessions are two hours per week over the eight-week program, and a free family dinner will be provided at the start of every session. Families can receive up to \$100 in Amazon gift cards and other incentives for participation in the program. Topics covered include communication skills, healthy behaviors, financial literacy, and other skills to strengthen the family connection.

Berlin and Pocomoke class locations are being planned and will be available within the year. For more information, call Lynn Suarez at 410-632-1100 ext.1109.

Kick the habit this fall!

The Worcester County Health Department's free fall adult Quit Smoking and Vaping classes begin in October. Worcester Health is committed to helping smokers and vapers establish new behavior patterns that lead to a tobacco-free lifestyle.

Join one of the smoking cessation classes available throughout Worcester County starting next month:

- **Tuesdays, 5-6 p.m., (Oct. 10 – Dec. 26) at the Snow Hill Health Center, 6040 Public Landing Rd.**
- **Wednesdays, 1:30-2:30 p.m., (Oct. 11 – Dec. 27) at the Atlantic Club, 11827 Ocean Gateway**
- **Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m., (Oct. 11 – Dec. 27) Distance Learning**
- **Thursdays, 4-5 p.m., (Oct. 12 – Dec. 28) at the Pocomoke Health Center, 400-A Walnut St.**

For more information or to register, call 410-632-1100 Ext. 1103.

We want to hear from you! Take our Quit Smoking and Vaping Class poll and be entered into a raffle for a free prize. Click this link to participate: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HNHH2JY>

Healthy Worcester Families

Get the whole family involved in adopting a healthier lifestyle with the Worcester County Health Department's new program Healthy Worcester Families. This eight-week program uses an evidence-based curriculum to help strengthen the family bond and communication through



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Is your loved one living with Alzheimer's or another type of dementia?

Guest column by Lauren Blair,
Community Relations & Development Manager

Caring for patients with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia may bring uncertainty regarding disease progression and care, making it difficult to recognize when they may benefit from hospice care.

Our team of experts is here to support you. Call us when you observe these signs and symptoms of late-stage Alzheimer's disease in your loved one:

- Requires help with eating, dressing, bathing, toileting
- Incontinence, intermittent or constant
- Weakness
- Sleeping more
- Talking less
- Experiences changes in physical abilities, including walking, sitting, and holding their head up
- Increase in falls
- Becoming more frail
- Loss of appetite and/or weight loss
- Trouble swallowing or eating
- Unable to correctly use or understand words
- Recurrent or intractable infections
- Increasing ER visits, hospitalizations, and/or physician visits related to disease progression

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- Septicemia (blood infection)
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- Inability to maintain sufficient fluid and calorie intake with 10% weight loss during the previous six months

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- Our doctors work with your loved one's own doctor or specialist to manage care and make house calls as needed.
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For more information, email Lauren Blair (Community Relations & Development Manager) at lblair@coastalhospice.org or call 410-742-8732 ext. 658.



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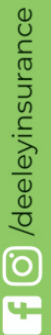
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Working to keep Ocean Pines safe & beautiful

Guest column by the Environment & Natural Assets (E&NA) Committee



As the leaves and the temperatures drop, we are reminded of nature's beauty and cycles at this time of year. Your OPA Environment and Natural Assets (E&NA) Committee has worked throughout 2023 to help preserve, protect, and enhance the natural beauty of our community.

The mission of the committee is to provide "suggestions and recommendations for improving the health and vitality of our natural resources, as well as keeping the OPA Board informed on environmental issues impacting Ocean Pines." Following are some of the projects that the committee worked on this year:

Preservation of Ocean Pines' tree canopy: While the name of our Association only mentions one tree, Ocean Pines is home to many others, including oaks, maples, sweetgums, magnolias, and hollies. In recent years, age, disease, storm damage and development has led to an increase in tree removal. This year, the E&NA Committee worked with OPA management to help ensure that homeowners follow the proper permitting and removal requirements as outlined in the ARC guidelines and the revised Tree Removal Request Form. The committee is also encouraging OPA to consider installing suitably sized replacements for trees removed from our parks and other common areas.

South Gate Pond erosion/shoreline buffer:

Concern for increasing erosion around the main South Gate Pond and interest in controlling the resident goose population led the committee to seek input from organizations specializing in addressing those issues. The goal is to slow down erosion in certain areas of the shoreline and to install plants on the shoreline that discourage geese from taking up residence there. The committee is awaiting a decision on a grant request submitted by OPA to fund such work.



Goose/duck crossing signs: If you've ever wondered why geese and ducks risk crossing roads instead of flying over them, the answer is simple: at certain times of the year, they simply cannot fly. In the spring when goslings and ducklings emerge, the parent birds stick to the ground with their babies. Geese also lose their flight feathers in the summer, allowing those who fly south to grow a full, brand-new set for migration. While they are molting, geese are grounded and cannot fly. Ducks molt in the late summer and in early spring. During the fall, ducks molt all at once, losing and replacing all their feathers in a short period of time.

To help alert drivers to the presence of grounded waterfowl, the E&NA Committee researched options for portable signs to be placed around the South Gate. OPA Public Works had the signs made and installed them with the help of committee members.

Route 90 Pond improvements: Whether you know it as South Gate Pond II, Route 90 Pond, or by some other name, the body of water between Route 90 and Cathell Road in Ocean Pines is a hidden treasure. While exploring ways to improve access and usage of the trail circling the pond, the E&NA Committee discovered some safety issues. These included rotted and missing boards on the trail bridge near the Ocean Pines Library, fallen trees on the pathway, and potholes in the small parking area located on Ocean Parkway. With the cooperation of the Recreation and Parks Committee, OPA Public Works was informed about the safety issues and has since corrected them. In the coming year, the E&NA Committee hopes to explore making the pond a turtle sanctuary and perhaps installing interpretive signs identifying the flora and fauna that can be seen along the trail. The pond trail is easily accessed from the back of the Ocean Pines Library lot and from the small parking area just south of Offshore Lane on Ocean Parkway.



Teach a Kid to Fish Day: Sponsored by the Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks Department, this annual event held on June 17 provided an opportunity to introduce a new generation to the sport of fishing. Participating along with the Ocean Pines Anglers Club and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, E&NA Committee members provided education on the importance of clearing fishing gear to protect the environment. Of particular concern is the proper disposal of monofilament fishing line. Discarded monofilament lines are extremely difficult to spot when submerged in water, and fish, birds, and other marine life can easily become entangled, causing starvation, amputation, and death.

An E&NA committee member created a prototype of a monofilament fishing line container made from readily available inexpensive materials. The committee has recommended that OPA place several of these containers around the South Gate Pond.



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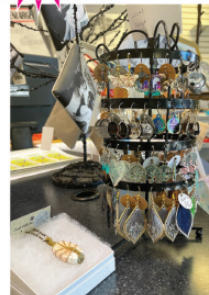
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Message from the OPA BOARD PRESIDENT



Richard Farr
OPA President

Humbled by your support

Now that fall is here, life always seems busy in our Ocean Pines community with school, football, soccer, dance classes, pickleball, farmers markets and all the activities that have us running around trying to keep up. I hope you have had an opportunity this summer to pause for renewal and relaxation with family and friends. It is also my hope that everyone in our community and their families and friends enjoyed our awesome OPA amenities this summer.

As we have completed another election and a new Board has been seated, I am humbled and honored to be selected as President of our Association. The community has selected three new outstanding directors to work with the existing directors that have one goal, and that is to serve the best interests of our Ocean Pines community.

This past year, our General Manager, John Viola, and his team have continued to keep the association in an outstanding financial position. We have hired a new Police Chief, Tim Robinson, to lead our Police Department; and we have hired a new Aquatics Manager, Michelle Hitchens, who has been with Ocean Pines for 11 years, to lead our Aquatics Department.

All our departments continue to provide outstanding service to our community, along with our Police Department and Fire/EMS services. They are the main reason Ocean Pines is considered one of the safest communities in the State of Maryland.

The Matt Ortt Companies continue to make our Yacht Club the outstanding amenity that our membership and guests enjoy - AND it was recently voted the #1 wedding venue in the Berlin /Ocean City area. Kudos to Matt Ortt and his staff for providing excellent service to all our food and beverage establishments in Ocean Pines.



photo by Judie Scotti

This past year we replaced more bulkheads, replaced old drainage pipes, repaired/replaced community mailboxes, added new T-docks to our marina, replaced gas pumps to our marina, a new roof for the Swim and Racquet Club, new fencing for the Yacht Club pool, new pickleball courts, improvements to the dog park, renovation of the North Gate Bridge, several miles of road paving, and updated the administration building with new HVAC systems, paint and flooring.

Some of the priorities that this current Board will be focused on are the South Firehouse replacement, continued bulkhead replacement, drainage, golf course irrigation system replacement, and increased beautification efforts throughout Ocean Pines, just to name a few.

I would like to thank all those individuals who volunteer their time to serve on our committees, and the Board for ensuring that Ocean Pines remains financially stable and a safe community for all our membership and their family. I wish all our membership and their families a safe fall season.

If you want official news and updates on what's going on in Ocean Pines, there is ONLY ONE official news source at www.oceanpines.org. On social media, search for "Ocean Pines Association" on Facebook, or follow @oceanpinesmaryland on Instagram, @OceanPinesMD on X (Twitter), and @oceanpinesmaryland on Threads.

Ocean Pines Association BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is a legislative policy-setting body of the Ocean Pines community. The affairs & business of the Association are managed by a Board of 7 & the terms of the Directors will be for 3 years & until their respective successors are duly elected policy-setting. The Board of Directors appoints a General Manager to oversee the executive management of the operations of the Association. **Email all members at directors@oceanpines.org.**



PRESIDENT

Elected in 8/2021, 1st term ends in 2024

Richard Farr

rfarr@oceanpines.org

410-390-1425



VICE PRESIDENT

Elected in 8/2022, 1st term ends in 2025

Stuart Lakernick

slakernick@oceanpines.org

215-869-6343



TREASURER

Elected in 8/2022, 1st term ends in 2025

Monica Rakowski

mrakowski@oceanpines.org

410-493-4202



SECRETARY

Elected in 8/2023, 1st term ends in 2026

John Latham

jlatham@oceanpines.org

410-404-8907



DIRECTOR

Elected in 8/2022, 1st term ends in 2025

Steve Jacobs

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240-595-0605



DIRECTOR

Elected in 8/2023, 1st term ends in 2026

Elaine Brady

ebrady@oceanpines.org

443-614-1576



DIRECTOR

Elected in 8/2023, 1st term ends in 2024

Jeff Heavner

jheavner@oceanpines.org

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EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT



GENERAL MANAGER

John Viola

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Election results announced: Brady, Latham, Heavner take top-three spots

The Ocean Pines Elections Committee on Aug. 24 announced voting totals for the 2023 Board of Directors Election.

Voting totals were as follows:

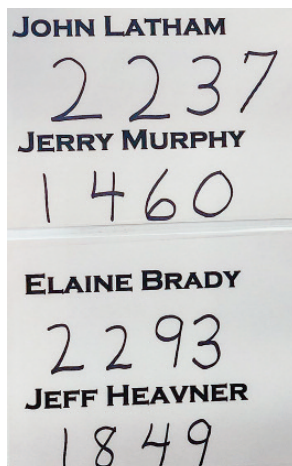
- **John Latham:** 2,237
- **Jerry Murphy:** 1,460
- **Elaine Brady:** 2,293
- **Jeff Heavner:** 1,849

Elections Committee Chairman Tom Piatti said Brady and Latham had each earned three-year terms on the Board, and Heavner earned a one-year term.

Per Ocean Pines Bylaws, elections results were validated

two days later, during the Annual Meeting on Aug. 26.

The three new directors were seated during an organization meeting on Sept. 9.



Board selects officers: Farr to serve as president, Lakernick as vice president

Rick Farr will take over as Ocean Pines Association President after a unanimous vote during an organization meeting on Sept. 9 at the Golf Clubhouse.

Also decided during the meeting, Stuart Lakernick will serve as Association Vice President, John Latham will be secretary, and Monica Rakowski will be the treasurer. Each was a unanimous selection.

Other Board appointments included Linda Martin as assistant secretary, Steve Phillips as assistant treasurer, UHY as the auditing firm, Bruce Bright (Ayres, Jenkins, Gordy & Almand) as legal counsel, and Doug Parks as parliamentarian.

Directors also set the regular Board meeting schedule for the next year:

- **Sat, Sept. 30**
- **Sat, Oct. 28**
- **Sat, Nov. 18**
- **Sat, Dec. 16**
- **Sat, Jan. 20**
- **Sun, Feb. 4 (town hall)**
- **Sat, Feb. 17**
- **Sat, March 23**
- **Sat, April 20**
- **Sat, May 18**
- **Sat, June 15**
- **Sat, July 20**
- **Sat, Aug. 10 (annual meeting)**

OPA Board honors outgoing directors

The Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors took a moment during their July regular meeting to honor and express gratitude to three outgoing Board members for their service.

Then Vice President Rick Farr presented commemorative plaques to Doug Parks, Colette Horn, and Frank Daly, acknowledging their significant contributions to the community.

Parks and Horn stepped down from their positions in August because of term limits. Daly resigned in June following a relocation to Florida.

Parks served as the Association President for four years. Horn was president for one year, and Daly served as vice president for one year. Collectively, the trio had dedicated nearly two decades of time and effort to the OPA Board, with Parks serving for seven years, Horn for six years, and Daly for five years. "On behalf of the current Board and the members of



our Association, I would like to present you with this plaque in recognition for your outstanding dedication to our OPA community as a director, president, committee member, and liaison. Your dedication to service is recognized and truly appreciated. Thank you," Farr said.

Farr emphasized the importance of recognizing the contributions made by volunteers, and he expressed his

gratitude to the honorees for their service to Ocean Pines.

"I think it important to recognize Doug, Colette, and Frank for taking the time for the countless hours in volunteering their service to our OPA community. Volunteering in this capacity allows Colette, Doug, and Frank to have a sense of purpose and to connect to the community and make it a better place. Moving forward, this current board and future Boards will ensure that we recognize those that voluntarily serve our community in the capacity as a director or committee member."



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John Viola
General Manager

Annual GM report highlights where OPA has been, where it's going

Ocean Pines has celebrated financial and other successes, but must continue to invest in public safety and infrastructure, Ocean Pines General Manager said during his annual meeting presentation on Aug. 26.

Viola said the Association has “something special here” because of its positive financial results, but also because of the team of staff, Board members and volunteers that helped produce those results.

During his tenure as general manager, Viola said Ocean Pines jumped-started its bulkhead and roads programs, initiated the repair and replacement of community mailboxes, and focused on drainage, maintenance, and other infrastructure needs.

Spending on drainage improvement efforts has averaged more than \$500,000 during each of the last five years – while drainage spending had totaled just over \$120,000 during the prior six years combined.

Other recent maintenance efforts have included the administration building that saw new paint, flooring and HVAC units, and beautification efforts focused on the North and South Gate entrances and landscaping along Ocean Parkway.

Looking at amenities, Viola said Ocean Pines invested in a new roof for the Swim and Racquet Club, and new fencing for the Yacht Club Pool.

“The fence at the Yacht Club has needed a lot of work for years. The team was able to put that together ... and that was a big win for that Yacht Club,” he said.

Viola said the Beach Club benefited from maintenance and decking repairs, as well as beautification efforts like the arrival of new palm trees. He said investments there helped produce profits at Beach Parking, and the Beach Club restaurant and pool.

“It’s a big number [and] it fuels a lot of the stuff that we do,” he said.

Viola said recent improvements at the Golf Clubhouse – the site of the annual meeting – included acoustic panels and refurbishment of the entry hallway. He said the accordion doors between the meeting space and restaurant made it possible for the meeting to occur there.

“That was the vision [and] the concept, and what everybody worked at,” he said. “The acoustic tiles brought it all together, and I think we have a real nice place here.”

He added that Clubhouse Bar & Grille Manager Judie Scotti and the Matt Ort Company team “do a great job” with their part of the operation that includes an increasingly busy breakfast, and the NFL Sunday Ticket that started on Sept. 10.

Viola said the Golf operation has greatly benefited from the leadership



2023 Annual Meeting



OCEAN PINES ASSOCIATION

VISION: Ocean Pines will be a premier resort community, offering exceptional value & quality of life to property owners who are diverse in age, economic status & interests.

MISSION: Provide the governance, administration, facilities, services & amenities that are necessary to make Ocean Pines an attractive, affordable, safe & enjoyable place to live & work.

The Ocean Pines Association will observe the following upcoming holidays. Please note that OPA administrative offices will be closed for:

Veterans Day: Sat, Nov. 11

Thanksgiving: Thu, Nov. 23 & Fri, Nov. 24

Christmas: Mon, Dec. 25 & Tue, Dec. 26

New Year's Day: Mon, Jan. 1

Martin Luther King Jr. Day: Mon, Jan 15

OCEAN PINES REPORT

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of Director of Golf Bob Beckelman and Director of Golf Maintenance Justin Hartshorne.

Six years ago, Viola said he was tasked with helping to turn around conditions at the course. Today, he said they're top notch.

"Ninja tine" aeration and increased sand topdressing has improved the greens, while verticutting fairways, deep tine aeration and additional drainage work has been very beneficial.

Also notable was the addition of new golf carts and the restoration of an iconic gazebo with nearly four decades of history. Those efforts combined to help fuel a year-over-year improvement of about \$78,000 during July and August, Viola said.

This year also saw the debut of golf instructor Matt Ruggiere, who grew up playing at the Ocean Pines Golf Club.

"Compliments to the golf team ... it's operating on all cylinders," Viola said.

Viola said new Yacht Club Marina gas docks were installed using longer-lasting aluminum that now meet not only new safety standards, but also the needs of a bustling marina operation. New T-docks were also installed to help meet the growing demand.

Racquet Sports saw the installation of new pickleball courts and the hiring of a new manager, Tim Johnson, a longtime Ocean Pines Racquet member and the former tennis supervisor for the Town of Ocean City.

"I think he's doing a great job," Viola said. "The feedback we've received is all positive ... and we're seeing the membership grow for many reasons."

Court maintenance that was put off for years is now a regular occurrence. Going forward, Viola said the Association will also evaluate the Racquet Center's main building.

The Yacht Club entranceway and ballroom also benefited from maintenance efforts. There and elsewhere, Viola said portions of the work were done by outside contractors that help to supplement the Public Works staff.

"It's certainly showing a difference in all the maintenance [initiatives]," Viola said.

On public safety, Viola highlighted the hiring of new Police Chief Tim Robinson, formerly of the Wicomico County Sheriff's Office. He also recognized Lt. Greg Schoepf, who has served Ocean Pines for more than four decades.

Viola said Robinson has "hit the ground running" to help build on public safety initiatives that already included take-home vehicles for police officers and the introduction of an employee pension plan.

"I'm excited about working with that team," Viola said.

Viola said workgroups continue to be a big part of planning for the Association's future. General manager workgroups are currently focused on the new south fire station, and evaluating the Racquet Sports building.

He said the fire station workgroup "has a very good story to tell" at a future Board meeting, likely in October and to include funding options and a recommendation.



2023 Annual Meeting

To sum up, Viola said in five years Ocean Pines has transformed operations from a \$1.6 million deficit with stalled maintenance programs and slumping amenities, to the operating surplus and robust programming enjoyed today.

As of July 31, he said operations are favorable to budget by more than \$300,000, with Golf, Aquatics, Racquet Sports, and food and beverage operations all trending upwards.

"The surplus has been reinvested into the assessment," Viola said. "It's not like we're just putting this [favorability] somewhere ... we are reinvesting it."

He said the Association is also addressing big-ticket items, including the need for a new south fire station and Golf Course irrigation system, along with the next phase of drainage, bulkhead and road maintenance, and an ongoing list of requests from the 14 advisory committees.

Viola said public safety will continue to be a big focus.

"[Public safety] is one of our strengths in Ocean Pines, but there is a cost to it - and it's nationwide. It's going up everywhere," he said.

A decade ago, he said public safety made up about 22-22% of the budget - today it's 35%.

"We have funded - and rightfully so - the increases for

safety," Viola said. "We're putting in pensions for the police, the [take-home] cars ... it's all needed to retain talent.

"Let's give them what they need," he added.

Viola credited Administrative Assistance Michelle Ross for doing "a lot of the heavy lifting" in helping to prepare his annual report.

For questions and concerns about Ocean Pines operations, email info@oceanpines.org or call 410-641-7717 during normal business hours.



2023 Annual Meeting



Marlene Ott

Associate Broker, CRS

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ADMINISTRATION

Update email address for official correspondence

Ocean Pines homeowners are encouraged to update the email address associated with their homeowner account.

This can be done by contacting the Ocean Pines membership office at member@oceanpines.org and including first and last name and lot number in the email, along with the preferred email address.

Homeowners can also change their email by logging into their account at oceanpines.org and clicking on "My Profile."

Email addresses on file with Ocean Pines are primarily used for billing purposes and can also be used in official correspondence.

Emails associated with homeowner accounts are different than emails associated with the weekly e-blast distributed by the Ocean Pines Public Relations Department. To sign up for the weekly e-blast, visit oceanpines.org, and click on the "News" section and select "Weekly Emails."

Homeowners responsible for grass cutting around utilities

Grass cutting around fire hydrants and other utilities is the responsibility of homeowners, according to Ocean Pines Declarations of Restrictions and Worcester County Code.

Worcester County asks that all residents clear a five-foot area around water meters, fire hydrants, sewage holding tanks, or other facilities that may be located on your property, to help provide the most effective and efficient service to customers.

Worcester County is responsible for the installation, maintenance, and operation of all public water and sewer facilities in the Ocean Pines service area. These facilities are located within easements that are reserved exclusively for

such utilities.

If for any reason Worcester County Public Works (WCPW) needs to access these facilities within this easement area, bushes, plants, and all other landscaping materials will be removed and not replaced. WCPW will place topsoil and plant grass seed in the areas disturbed by maintenance and repair activities.

For questions, call WCPW at 410-641-5251 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. If necessary, WCPW staff may be willing to meet to discuss specific concerns.



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Steve Phillips

*Director of Finance/
Controller*

Another successful summer, and looking ahead to the next budget cycle

As we wrap up another busy summer in Ocean Pines, we're happy to report another strong financial showing.

We are currently tracking approximately \$300,000 ahead of our fiscal-year budget expectations. Through the end of August, we have also already exceeded our Membership budget by approximately \$30,000. This favorability is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff, and to the continued support of our community.

Much of the positive performance we've experienced can be attributed to the overall success of our amenities. These facilities, which make Ocean Pines such a special place to live, have played a pivotal role in driving our financial favorability. As we continue to invest in and improve our amenities, we expect to see even more positive outcomes in the coming years.

We're also happy to report that the audit for the fiscal year 2023 is now behind us and, once again, we received a "clean" audit report with no audit adjustments needed. That rating is the highest level of assurance an auditor can provide, and it shows our commitment to financial transparency and sound fiscal management.

Lastly, it's important to note that we are already in the beginning stages of planning for the next fiscal year. The budget process is a critical part of our financial strategy, and we do this each year with input and guidance from the Budget and Finance Committee.

The committee, and then the Board of Directors, will host a series of public meetings on the FY25 budget starting in January. Homeowners will have a chance to weigh in on their priorities during those meetings.

As always, we value the input and feedback from our homeowners, and we appreciate the continued support from the community as we work hard to be good stewards of your assessment dollars.



SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT

YEAR-TO-DATE 7/31/2023

OPERATING
ACCOUNT SUMMARY

UNAUDITED

	ACTUAL	BUDGET	VARIANCE
(AMOUNTS IN THOUSANDS)			
REVENUES			
Assessments	\$8,436	\$8,410	\$26
Grants	550	550	-
Amenities (Net)	3,885	3,599	286
Recreation & Parks	195	187	8
Other fees and Income	463	341	122
Total Revenues	13,529	13,087	442
Add: Budgeted Surplus Transfer	650	650	-
Less: Transfers to Reserve Accounts	(3,404)	(3,329)	(75)
Net Operating Revenues	10,775	10,408	367
OPERATING EXPENSES			
Administration & Management	636	621	(15)
Amenities	1,914	1,773	(141)
Recreation & Parks	290	294	4
Police	450	523	73
Fire / EMS	252	252	-
Public Works / CPI	473	500	27
General Maintenance	201	188	13
Total Operating Expenses	4,216	4,151	(65)
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	6,559	6,257	302
NEW CAPITAL	0	0	0
NET	\$6,559	\$6,257	\$302



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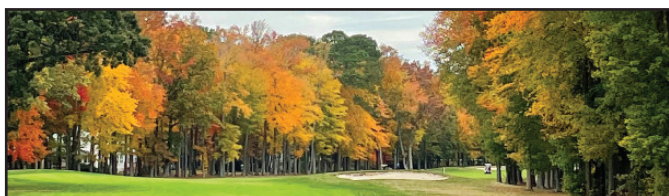
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OPA continues to post strong financial returns

The overall financial picture for Ocean Pines Association remains strong, based on the 2023 annual meeting report on Aug. 26.

Senior Executive Office Manager Linda Martin and Finance Director Steve Phillips, in presenting the report, detailed the fifth consecutive year with a positive variance to budget, and the third-straight year with a favorability greater than \$1 million.

The Association finished fiscal year 2023 roughly \$1.1 million favorable to budget, according to Martin.

She said about half that was based on the positive performance by amenities, with Golf favorable to budget by \$268,000, combined food and beverage favorable by \$150,000, and Aquatics favorable by \$128,000. Altogether, the amenities produced a positive variance of \$615,000.

The actuals for the Beach Club, Clubhouse Grille, Golf, Aquatics, Beach Club Parking and Racquet Sports are all trending upward compared to the prior fiscal year. In total, the combined amenities finished with a net of \$1.596 million, or a \$135,000 improvement over the prior year.

Martin also broke down where the assessment dollars are spent.

From the \$896 assessment and based on FY23 actuals, \$279 was used to fund police, fire and EMS, and \$447 went to all other operating departments. That included \$258 for Public Works, Maintenance and CPI; \$100 for Finance, Membership, IT and Human Resources; \$53 for Recreation and Parks; \$38 for the General Manager's Office; and \$33 for Marketing. General Administration subtracted (\$35).

An additional \$202 went to general replacement reserves, and \$25 went to bulkhead reserves.

Combined amenities subtracted (\$189), meaning homeowners are not subsidizing the amenities – but rather benefiting from their strong performance. That includes Beach Parking (\$62), combined food and beverage operations (\$52), Golf (\$38), Marinas (\$27), Aquatics (\$8) and combined Racquet Sports (\$1).

"That shows where your money is going that you pay for your assessments," Martin said.

Of the budgeted \$896, only \$764 was utilized, which produced the \$1.1 million positive variance.

Notably, public safety spending increased roughly 17% year-over-year, and those costs are likely to continue to go up.



2023 Annual Meeting

Phillips began his part of the report with the operating fund history, from the FY17 and FY18 deficits that totaled more than (\$1.6 million), to the positive operating fund balance of \$2.586 million as of April 30, 2023.

"You can see the last few years [the Association had] over \$1 million in surpluses. This year, [OPA was] \$1.113 million favorable to our budget," he said.

Phillips said the bottom-line fund balance of approximately \$2.6 million includes reserve transfers approved by the Board, and the surplus used to reduce the assessment.

He said assessments overall were trending favorable over the last seven years, starting with \$921 in FY18, peaking at \$996 in FY22, and then dropping to \$883 as of FY24 – and marking the second straight year of lower assessments.

Phillips said the Association has roughly \$25 million invested in fixed assets, that includes Ocean Pines' buildings, roads, land improvements, and furniture and equipment.

"Land improvements would be things such as parking costs, tennis courts, pools, bridges – all your non-building stuff," he said.

Phillips said reserve projections are also trending upward, from \$6.691 million total reserves as of April 30 of this year, to a projected balance of \$7.695 million by April 30, 2024. The projection includes roughly \$6.2 million for replacement reserves, \$885,000 for roads, \$467,000 for bulkheads and waterways, \$124,000 for new capital, and

\$40,000 for drainage.

To view the FY23 audited financials and other Ocean Pines Association financial reports, visit www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/finance.



2023 Annual Meeting

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Linda Martin
Senior Executive
Office Manager

Unregistered and junk vehicles

What is a junk vehicle?

A junk vehicle is clearly defined in the Architectural Review Committee Guidelines, Section 1100.1.C.2., as a vehicle with “conditions such as, but not limited to, flat tires, missing headlights, broken windows, the absence of current state registration and other on-site conditions.”

Are they allowed in Ocean Pines?

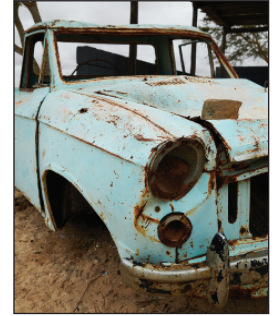
No! The Declaration of Restrictions, Section 8.A.(h), states, “no stripped down, partially wrecked, or junk motor vehicle, or sizeable part thereof, shall be permitted to be parked on any street in the Section or Subdivision or on any lot.”

The Compliance, Permits, and Inspections (CPI) Department has received numerous complaints about junk vehicles. While we are understanding to certain situations regarding

hardships (such as a death in the family or illness) that the homeowner is unable to take care of the vehicle, junk or unregistered vehicles are not allowed, and a violation will be issued.

CPI has issued 68 violations over the last year for unregistered or junk vehicles, with 10 remaining open. We appreciate those that have complied with this restriction and we look forward to resolving the other open violations hopefully soon.

For any questions, concerns, complaints, and general info, contact info@oceanpines.org or call 410-641-7717 during business hours (410-641-7747 on nights and weekends).



Message from **PUBLIC WORKS**

FAQ about leaf removal

Will Ocean Pines collect my yard leaves this fall?

Yes. Ocean Pines residents and property owners have several options for disposing of leaves that have fallen in their yards: bagged leaf collection, yard waste disposal at the Ocean Pines Public Works yard.

Republic Services customers may also use their biweekly trash collection service to dispose of yard waste.

When will bagged leaves be collected?

Ocean Pines Public Works will collect bagged leaves from Nov.27 to Dec.29. Bagged leaves will be picked up on days opposite of Republic Services' regularly scheduled collection days.

If Republic Services normally collects your trash on Mondays and Thursdays, which are the scheduled collection days for all Ocean Pines homes north of the Route 90 bridge, Ocean Pines will collect bagged leaves in your neighborhood on Tuesdays and Fridays.

If Republic Services normally collects your trash on Tuesdays and Fridays, which are the scheduled collection days for all Ocean Pines homes south of the Route 90 bridge, Ocean Pines will collect bagged leaves in your neighborhood on Mondays and Thursdays.

Is there a limit to how many bags I can place at the curb for collection?

There is no limit to the number of bags that Public Works

will collect curbside. Republic Services will collect up to four bags of leaves for each regularly scheduled trash collection day.

Can I include other yard debris (grass clippings, weeds, branches, etc.) with the bagged leaves?

Ocean Pines' bagged leaf collection is restricted to leaves. Republic Services customers can include leaves and yard debris in bags left curbside; branches should be tied in bundles no longer than four feet.

When will the Public Works yard be open for yard waste disposal?

The Ocean Pines Public Works yard, on 1 Firehouse Lane next to Ocean Pines Public Works and the south Fire Department, will be open to Ocean Pines residents and property owners **Nov.27 to Dec 30, Monday through Saturday, from 8 a.m.-3 p.m.** The yard will be closed Dec. 25-26 for the Christmas holiday.

Can I bring yard waste in addition to leaves to the Public Works yard?

Yes. All types of yard debris may be dropped off. Please note that plastic bags will not be accepted – yard waste must be brought in loose or in paper bags only.

Will the vacuum truck collect all my yard leaves?

No. The vacuum truck option is no longer available.



Eddie Wells
Director



Nobie Violante
Manager

FAQ about new sticker program for leaf and yard debris drop-off

Why is Ocean Pines making this change to the leaf collection program?

The program was originally designed to help keep the ditches clean by having residents rake out the ditches in front of their homes. Some residents have taken advantage of the annual vacuum truck operation by raking their entire yards into their ditches and expecting the truck to clear the ditches out, which has become very costly in terms of labor, equipment, and disposal.

Ocean Pines Association encourages residents to rake out their ditches and bag the leaves and other debris, which Public Works will continue to collect in the fall. Republic Services will also collect bagged yard debris year-round.

The only change is the vacuum truck will not be running through every neighborhood and will just be used to clear out ditches on Association owned property.

Additionally, by requiring a sticker to use the Public Works yard for drop-off of leaves and other debris, the Association will be able to control who is using the OPA facility to dispose of yard debris. This will save the Association money by not having to dispose of leaves dropped off by contractors and those living outside of OPA.

Won't this cause flooding and drainage problems, if OPA does not clean out the ditches?

The Association will continue to pick up bagged leaves in November and December, and Republic Services will continue their leaf collection program. Public Works will still be cleaning ditches as needed.

What will happen to the vacuum truck?

The vacuum truck will be used on an as-needed basis, and to clean out ditches owned by the Association.

Where can I get the sticker?

Stickers can be picked up at Ocean Pines Public Works. Call 410-641-7425 or stop by the Public Works office on 1 Firehouse Lane.

The cost is free for the first year. What will the cost be for the second year?

This will have to be determined by the General Manager and Board of Directors during the next budget cycle.

Can I use another form of ID, such as a driver's license or OPA member card?

No. Those who want to use the Public Works yard to drop off yard debris must get a sticker.

If I get a new car, will I have to get another sticker?

If you already got a sticker from Public Works and you get a new car within the same year, Public Works will give you a new sticker for free.

Can the stickers be shared with other members of my household? What about friends, family, etc.?

No. The stickers are for the property owners' yards and cannot be shared with people living outside of your household. The stickers have the tag number of the vehicle it was issued to at the time of purchase, by the property owner.

Are the stickers easy to remove?

Yes, they are very similar to the stickers used when you get an oil change and are easily removed.


Can I drop off loose debris, or does it have to be bagged?


Leaves and other yard debris may be dropped off loose or in paper bags. Plastic bags will not be accepted.

When will the Public Works yard be open for drop-off?

Those with a sticker may use the Public Works yard to drop off yard debris **Nov. 27 through Dec. 29, Monday through Saturday, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.** Special drop-off times will be posted on the website. Recently, the yard has been open on Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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Tim Robinson
Chief of Police

Police receive two major grant awards

The Ocean Pines Police Department recently received two grant awards, for police retention and for community engagement.

Police received \$20,000 from the Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention for police retention.

Chief Tim Robinson said the funds would be used for providing both retention incentives for current officers and recruitment incentives for future new hires.

The department also received \$2,750 from the Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention for the police department's community engagement programs,

specifically to help pay for police overtime for events like the recent National Night Out celebration and staffing for July 4th fireworks and other large events.

Both grants were secured by grant specialist Valerie Mann, with help from former Ocean Pines Police Lt. Shakhon Toppin.

Robinson said Ocean Pines Police would continue to seek and utilize grants to help fund police activities, and to help recruit and retain officers.

"We are grateful to the Governor's Office of Crime Control and prevention for awarding these two grants to Ocean Pines," he said. "With this help we will be able to help maintain our current staff of officers while attracting new ones with one of the grants, and it will make it easier to provide police assistance with major events in our community."

Reminder: Lock your vehicles!

The OPPD would like to take this opportunity to remind residents and visitors to make sure they lock their vehicles, especially at night. No area is totally immune from crime and Ocean Pines is no exception.

Throughout our region, police agencies regularly investigate thefts from motor vehicles and the thefts of the vehicles themselves. In an overwhelming percentage of these investigations, it is usually discovered that the vehicles were left unlocked.

We know that many of these crimes can be prevented by taking the easy steps of removing the key and locking the doors. We have seen many instances in our region where would-be thieves will go through a neighborhood, many times at night, looking for unlocked cars and easy victims.

Locking car doors goes beyond just preventing theft - it also serves as a fundamental step towards ensuring personal safety and security. Police consistently report cases of car break-ins, thefts, and even instances of violent crimes occurring because of unlocked vehicles. The act of locking one's car doors can act as a powerful deterrent against potential criminals, significantly

reducing the risk of becoming a victim.

The advantages of locking car doors extend beyond the vehicle itself. Items left inside an unlocked car are easy targets for thieves, potentially resulting in financial loss and emotional distress for the owner. Moreover, stolen vehicles can be used for further criminal activities, compounding the harm caused to the community. By locking car doors, individuals contribute to a safer environment for themselves and their neighbors.

Ocean Pines Police recommends the following safety tips:

- **Develop a Routine:** Make locking car doors a habit every time you exit your vehicle, regardless of your location.
- **Park Wisely:** Choose well-lit and secure parking areas to reduce the risk of vandalism or theft.
- **Remove Valuables:** Keep valuable items out of sight or take them with you, minimizing the temptation for criminals.
- **Activate Alarms:** If your vehicle has an alarm system, ensure it is activated whenever you leave your car unattended.

Don't be a victim, lock your car!

Ocean Pines Police adopts body camera policy

Ocean Pines Police have adopted a policy for body cameras and the equipment officially went into use in August.

Body cameras were leased by Ocean Pines at an annual cost of \$30,000. However, there was a delay in implementation because police first needed to adopt a policy to use the equipment.

Police Chief Tim Robinson said he reviewed and approved a "body worn camera" policy and was able to get the equipment out to the officers of the Ocean Pines Police Department on Wednesday, Aug. 9.

"These body cameras are an incredible tool.

First and foremost, they act almost as an independent witness to what happened. In my professional experience, they have

been invaluable to ascertaining an accurate accounting of what transpired on any scene involving a police officer," Robinson said.

General Manager John Viola said the body cameras will benefit both police and the Ocean Pines public.

"Safety is always a top priority, and we believe the use of these cameras will help foster mutual trust and accountability between our dedicated police force and our valued Ocean Pines homeowners and residents," Viola said.



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OPPD hosts successful National Night Out



A well-attended National Night Out on Aug. 1 was highlighted by the introduction of new Ocean Pines Police Chief Tim Robinson.

National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live.

Millions of neighbors take part in National Night Out across thousands of communities from all 50 states, U.S. territories and military bases worldwide on the first Tuesday in August.

In Ocean Pines, the event was held in White Horse Park and organized by Ocean Pines Police, with help from the Recreation and Parks Department. It featured law enforcement and fire and emergency services personnel from Ocean Pines, Worcester County, and the State of Maryland, along with dozens of vendors and a team of volunteers helping behind the scenes.

The Kiwanis donated hotdogs, ice cream and cold drinks, and radio station 97.1 The Wave provided music.

Robinson, who brings more than 30 years of experience in law enforcement, capped his first day in Ocean Pines with the National Night Out celebration.

"It makes me excited, and it really warms my heart, the fact that I'm being welcomed with open arms everywhere I go," Robinson said.

Robinson has been involved in National Night Out events

for more than two decades and said the event in Ocean Pines was meaningful as his first as a police chief. He was also able to share in the event with his wife, Angie, and his parents, Fred and Jackie Robinson, who are longtime Ocean Pines residents.

"I've been involved in National Night Out for many, many years in my previous department," he said. "Now, coming here as the police chief, the staff here has done an awesome job setting this up – it's incredible what they've set up! And just to be here with them, supporting them, and meeting everyone in the community was special. That's ultimately why I'm here, is to meet people."

Looking ahead, Robinson said his top priority is to help rebuild the Ocean Pines Police roster.

"One of my most pressing goals is to get staffing up in the Police Department, and to really make sure that we have a number of personnel that can continue doing the good job of keeping Ocean Pines safe," he said.

General Manager John Viola said he was pleased by the strong turnout for National Night Out and the warm reception for his new chief of police.

"We appreciate everyone in the community coming out to support our law enforcement and especially those who warmly greeted our new chief," Viola said. "We're excited to have him here and we think he's going to do great things for Ocean Pines."



Walk safe, bike safe: OPPD encourages pedestrian and bicycle safety

Ocean Pines Police is reminding residents of the importance of pedestrian and bicycle safety, and asking that walkers and bicyclists follow the rules of the road.

All pedestrians and bicyclists are encouraged to wear light colored or reflective clothing, so they are visible to drivers. Dark colors, worn at night or on overcast days, can be difficult for cars to see and may lead to slower reaction times.

When walking at night, it is also a good idea to carry a flashlight and wear a reflective vest or armbands. Taking a few extra moments to prepare can save someone from an accident, or even death. Safety is everyone's responsibility.

Where a sidewalk is not provided, pedestrians must walk on the left shoulder or the left side of a roadway, facing any traffic that might approach from the opposite direction. Walking on the opposite side is a violation of Maryland Transportation Code 21-506b, and violators are subject to a \$50 fine.

Cyclists must ride on the right-hand side of the roadway, going with the flow of traffic. Riding on the wrong side of the road could put turning cyclists in the path of oncoming traffic and would make them at fault in the case of an accident. Violators are also subject to a \$50 fine under Maryland Transportation code 21-1205a.

Maryland Transportation Code 21-1210b states that riders cannot operate a bicycle and wear ear plugs in both ears, including headphones. Many people like to listen to music or have a GPS for directions as they ride, but riders must only cover one ear so they can hear what is going on around them, such as an approaching emergency vehicle or a motorist trying to alert them. This violation carries a \$60 fine.

Helmets are encouraged for all bicycle riders and are required by all persons under the age of 16 riding as a passenger or driver of a bicycle. If a parent or guardian allows such a violation, they may be subject to a \$50 fine.

For more information about pedestrian and bicyclist safety, visit <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/road-safety/pedestrian-bicyclist-safety>.

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**David
Van Gasbeck**
OPVFD President

OPVFD launches fundraiser to commemorate 50th anniversary

The Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department announced the first of several special fundraising campaigns to help celebrate its 50th anniversary.

As part of this milestone celebration, the department is raising funds to construct a new and improved South Station. The centerpiece of this initiative is the personalized brick fundraiser, offering community members an opportunity to leave their mark on this historic project.

The personalized brick campaign invites supporters to contribute to the construction of the South Station by purchasing engraved bricks. Two options are available: a 4x8-inch Brick for \$100, or an 8x8-inch Brick for \$200.

These bricks will play an integral role in constructing a unique feature at the new South Station, showcasing the lasting contributions and support of the community.

Additionally, donations of \$1,000, \$5,000, and \$10,000 and up will be recognized in a series of plaques highlighting the generosity of the community and their contributions to public safety.

Individuals interested in participating in these fundraisers can

make their contributions at www.opvfd.com starting on Oct. 14, or by visiting the station in person.

The Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department encourages everyone, whether a resident or a supporter from afar, to be a part of this historic endeavor.

Fire Chief Steve Grunewald and Fire Department President Dave VanGasbeck expressed their gratitude for the continued support of the community.

"This anniversary represents a significant milestone for our department and community. Along with celebrating 50 years, we are also thrilled to invite everyone to participate and be part of the legacy that will be the new South Station," VanGasbeck said.

"Your support ensures that we can continue to serve and protect our community effectively," Grunewald said.

Details on additional fundraising efforts for the new South Station will be announced at a later date.

For more info, visit www.opvfd.com or call 410-641-8272.



**Steve
Grunewald**
OPVFD Chief

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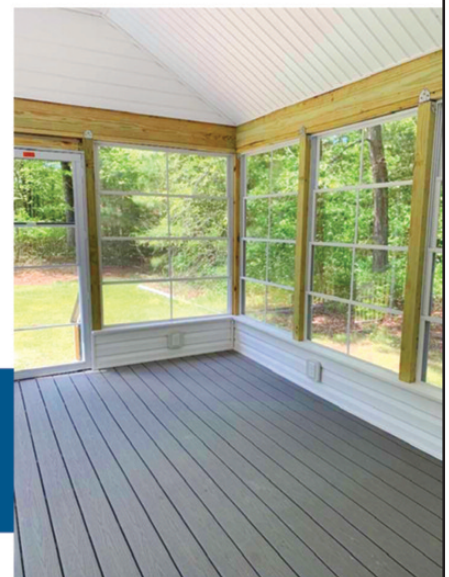
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Debbie Donahue

*Director of
Recreation & Parks*

Fall into fun this season!

Although the summer season has just ended, the Recreation Department is still working hard for the community.

Cooler weather is coming but that doesn't mean racquet play is over. **All racquet courts – tennis, pickleball, platform tennis, Spec Tennis – will be open throughout winter** (subject to change due to weather). For questions about racquet play at the

are an individual or a full team, give us a call and we will get you in. Wall-to-Wall Adult Dodgeball is back this year. Give us a call for more information.

Zumba class continues throughout the year on Tuesday mornings and Wednesday evenings. Also, don't forget about **tai chi, yoga and pilates**, plus multiple sessions of **line dancing** on Tuesday evenings.

Back by popular demand – the **Hometown Christmas** celebration returns Nov. 25. Help light up White Horse Park by purchasing or sponsoring a tree. Trees are normally sponsored by local business, nonprofit organizations, social clubs and family members. Call Katie Goetzinger for more info on how to be a part of this event. We'll see you on Nov. 25 for a festive tree lighting and celebration of our wonderful community.

Throughout the fall and winter seasons, we'll host **Pumpkin Painting, Fall Festival, Haunted House, Breakfast with Buddy the Elf & The Grinch and many more holiday events**. Visit oceanpines.org for dates and details.

One program we are particularly proud to be a part of is the **"Be a Santa to A Senior"** sponsored by Home Instead. Ornaments with the names of community seniors will be placed on a tree in the lobby of the Community Center Nov. 13-17. Stop by and pick up an ornament and make Christmas a special time for a local senior. Giving is always better than receiving!

Rooms are also available for rent for those holiday parties. Give us a call and Katie, Cindy, Kathy, and Katelynne will be happy to find you the perfect room for your event.

If you still don't have a fall/winter *Activity Guide*, stop by the Recreation Department and pick one up, or view it at oceanpines.org. We have lots of fun things happening for everyone.

If you're looking to join a group, make new friends and help the local community, there are many different organizations within Ocean Pines. Stop by the Community Center to pick up a list of contacts, or give us a call and request an email listing.

And if you would like to volunteer with the Recreation Department, please stop by or give us a call. We can always use an extra hand and a friendly face.

Let's all stay safe and healthy!

Ocean Pines Racquet Center, call the center at 410-641-7228.

Check out some of the **free seminars offered by local businesses** and held in the Recreation Department's Community Center. We host multiple classes each week to help keep you healthy.

The **Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisan Market** is still going strong, and they will continue to have hours throughout the winter. Check the oceanpines.org website for current market hours and the winter hours, as they change.

The **Pine'eer Artisan Gift Shop** is open Saturdays and Sundays throughout the winter alongside the Farmers Market. The handmade pieces in this gift shop are amazing and always looking for a new home. The Winter Wonderland Artisans & Craft Fair will be held in the Community Center on Nov. 4 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Come by and pick up those special holiday gifts.

We are working on a coed **Hoopster Basketball Clinic** for ages 4-13, on Saturdays starting in November. Bring the kids to work on those skills and drills before the league starts in January.

Our **youth basketball program** starts in January. All games are on Saturdays, with practices set by the coaches on weeknights. COACHES ARE NEEDED! If you are interested in coaching, please reach out to the Recreation Department at 410-641-7052.

Reminder: Soccer fills up fast! Keep an eye out for **indoor soccer dates starting Feb. 8** for ages 2-3 and 4-6. To register or for more soccer info, call Katie Goetzinger at 410-641-7052.

Our Men's Basketball League starts on Feb. 16. Whether you



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Kiwanis given Sam Wilkinson Volunteer Award

During the annual meeting on Aug. 26, Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks Director Debbie Donahue named the Kiwanis Club of Great Ocean Pines/Ocean City as the recipient of the 2023 Sam Wilkinson Volunteer Award.

Since 2003, the award has recognized local people who dedicate their time and talents to help others. The award also honors the memory of its namesake, 8-year-old Sam Wilkinson, who died in a tragic water accident in Ocean City.

Sam played soccer in Ocean Pines and his father, Bob, was a volunteer coach for Ocean Pines Recreation programs. The award was established to recognize a volunteer within the Recreation and Parks Department.

Donahue said the department depends on many volunteers to help run the various programs, sports leagues, and classes held in Ocean Pines.

"This year, we decided that there was a group of people that do a considerable amount for Ocean Pines. They do a lot of work for the Recreation Department, and they give back to our community," she said.

The Kiwanis Club of Great Ocean Pines/Ocean City was founded in 1980 and is part of a global nonprofit that "shares the challenge of community improvement," Donahue said.

"Members of the club contribute their time and energy, helping those less fortunate than themselves, with a heavy focus on the children in our community," she said.

Donahue said Kiwanis members help many local groups and also

sponsor clubs at local public schools. They provide financial assistance, including college scholarships for local high school students. The group also collects items for needy children and the local homeless population.

"Giving back to the community and bringing the community together is what the Kiwanis are all about," she said. "At different times of the year, they are toy collectors, food collectors [and] school supply collectors."

"Kiwanis are proud to participate in the Ocean Pines Community. They have been around a long time and plan to continue to have a significant presence," she continued. "And, if you've never been to one of their pancake breakfasts, you're really missing out!"

Donahue presented the award to Kiwanis Club President Bob Wolfing.

"I'm accepting this award on behalf of our 50 members that we have, and they will be very proud to see this. And we'll be around for a long time," he said.

The Kiwanis Club of Great Ocean Pines/Ocean City meets Wednesday mornings at 8 a.m. in the Ocean Pines Community Center on 235 Ocean Parkway. Prospective new members are always welcome.

For more information visit www.kiwanisofopoc.org or www.facebook.com/servingthechildrenoftheworld.



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This Holiday Season!

REGISTRATION | NOV 20 - DEC 8
Visit oceanpines.org for an online map of participating homes

Brighten the Ocean Pines Community by registering your home for this **FREE** annual outdoor decorating event. **Register by Dec. 9** to be entered into the drawing to win one of three \$50 bill credits from Choptank Electric Cooperative! Plus the **first 25 homes** to sign up will receive Choptank Electric goodies!

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CALL 410.641.7717
OR EMAIL INFO@OCEANPINES.ORG

Homes registered after Dec. 9 will still be added to the online map



Michelle Hitchens

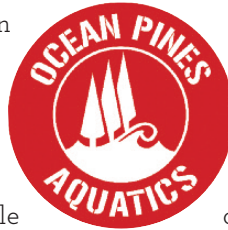
Aquatics Manager

Hitchens grew up outside of Philadelphia and moved to the Delmarva area in 2004. Starting at a young age, she worked at an array of recreation and aquatic facilities.

Hitchens, the mother of four children, moved to the Berlin

OPA Announces Hitchens as new Aquatics manager

Ocean Pines Association announced an important transition within the Aquatics department, as General Manager John Viola in early September introduced Michelle Hitchens as the new Aquatics manager.



area and joined the Aquatics department for Ocean Pines 11 years ago.

With Ocean Pines, she has coordinated Aquatics exercise classes and programs, taught exercise classes and lessons, supervised instructors and employees of the department, and helped the department to run smoothly overall.

Hitchens said she is excited to move forward into the Aquatics manager position. She loves working for the Ocean Pines Association and for the Aquatics department.

She plans to make the transition as smooth and comfortable as possible for the staff, and to make the department and facilities a joy for all to take part in.

Join us in the Sports Core pool for our fall & winter programs!

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Ron Fisher
Dock Master

Suggested severe weather action plan for vessel owners

The following is the Ocean Pines Marina's suggested action plan for vessel owners in the event of a tropical storm or hurricane, or any severe weather with winds greater than 50 MPH.

Precautionary Measures (should be initiated at the beginning of each hurricane season and on an ongoing basis).

- 1.) Have your vessel Hurricane Plan established. Know in advance where you are going to go, what you are going to do, and when you are going to do it. **IF YOU REQUIRE A MARINA TO HAUL YOUR BOAT, DON'T WAIT, THEY MAY BE TOO BUSY TO HELP YOU.**
- 2.) Involve a friend or family member(s) in your vessel Hurricane Plan, so that they may assist you if you are out of town or unable to get to your vessel in the event of an approaching storm. Contact numbers for the owner and alternates, as well as e-mail addresses, must be kept current and provided to the dock master.
- 3.) Make sure that your vessel's operating systems are in

good working order. Replace fuel filters, inspect batteries / charging system, and keep fuel tanks topped off. Inspect all bilge pumps and thru hull connections.

4.) Inspect all working and spare dock lines and ensure that all extra line is in good condition and in an accessible location. Have sufficient chafing gear for all working lines. (neoprene hose works well).

5.) Devote some time to practice tying your vessel as you would for a Hurricane or severe storm. Make sure that your extra line is of sufficient quantity and strength.

6.) Vessel owners should monitor the OPA website at oceanpines.org and also their e-mails on a regular basis for updates and any potential Marina evacuation notices.

7.) **OCEAN PINES ASSOCIATION, INC. Is not responsible for any damage to any vessel not removed under these circumstances. Any vessel owner who does not remove their vessel assumes all responsibility for damage to their vessel as well as any damage to any other vessel or to any Ocean Pines property.**

For additional information on hurricane boat preparation, including a checklist, visit the Boat U.S. web site at <http://boatus.com/news/hurricane>.

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Bob Beckelman
Director of Golf

Enjoy fall at Ocean Pines Golf Club



As the leaves begin to change and the air turns crisp, we can't help but get excited about the fantastic fall season ahead here at Ocean Pines Golf Club! Autumn brings with it not only great weather, but also an array of exciting opportunities to enhance your golfing experience.

Fall is arguably the best time to be on the golf course. The summer heat has subsided, making for more comfortable rounds, not to mention all the stunning fall foliage that surrounds our course. The vibrant reds, oranges and yellows create a beautiful backdrop that can make even the toughest round feel like a stroll through a park.

Our dedicated groundskeeping team has been hard at work, ensuring that the course is in impeccable shape for your enjoyment. The greens are rolling true, the fairways are lush, and the rough is just challenging enough to keep things interesting. It's the ideal time to tackle the course and work on perfecting your game.

Speaking of improving your game, don't forget about our ongoing golf instruction programs. Whether you're a seasoned pro or just starting out, our professional instructors are here to help you refine your skills and take your game to the next level. Fall is an excellent time to focus on your swing and technique.

With cooler temperatures on the horizon, it's also time to update your golf wardrobe. Our pro shop is fully stocked with the latest fall golf apparel and gear. We have everything you need to stay comfortable and stylish on the course.

That includes the latest attire featuring your favorite sports teams, like the Baltimore Ravens and Orioles. Whether you're teeing off in purple and black or orange and black, we've got you covered.

As we embrace the fall season at Ocean Pines Golf Club, we invite you to join us for a round or two and experience the season's beauty and charm firsthand. Whether you're a seasoned golfer or a newcomer to the game, our course is ready to welcome you.

Thank you for being a part of our golfing community. We look forward to seeing you on the course!

Reminder: Golf course access and respect for property

The Ocean Pines Golf Club is offering a friendly reminder to the community about course access and the importance of respecting the property.

Golf Club staff are focused on ensuring the safety of registered golfers, preserving the course's integrity, and minimizing any potential damage or liability issues.

To help maintain a safe and enjoyable environment for all golfers, it is crucial that the public – including nonregistered individuals – refrain from accessing the course. Instances of unauthorized access pose risks such as accidents, property damage, vandalism, and interference with ongoing play.

To prevent such incidents and ensure the well-being of all participants, the Ocean Pines Golf Club would like to reinforce the following guidelines:

- **Restricted access:** The golf course is exclusively for registered golfers. No walking, biking, dog walking, or any other activities are permitted on the course. Additionally, no fishing is permitted anywhere on the golf course property.
- **Safety and liability:** Unauthorized access to the course can result in potential hazards and liability issues. It is important that community members and their children understand and respect these

regulations to ensure the well-being of everyone involved.

- **Property respect:** The Ocean Pines Golf Club requests that all visitors to the course remain mindful and respectful of the course and its property. Engaging in any activities that may cause damage or disrupt play is strictly prohibited.

Golf Director Bob Beckelman said there have been incidents involving damage caused by individuals who access the course without authorization. He said these actions not only compromise the course's quality, but also hinder the enjoyment of golf for registered players.

"We kindly ask the community to cooperate and respect our regulations to ensure the safety and satisfaction of all our registered golfers. The golf course is a big asset to our community, and by adhering to the access guidelines we can continue to provide an exceptional golfing experience for everyone," Beckelman said.

For more information on the Ocean Pines Golf Club, visit oceanpinesgolf.org.



Hops Scramble nets more than \$2,000 for local charities

The Ocean Pines Golf Club on Aug. 25 played host to the successful return of the Ernie Stiles Bavarian Hops Scramble.

After several years off because of the COVID pandemic, the 16th annual event paid homage to the late Ernie Stiles, who founded the event in the early 2000s as a fun, boozy fundraiser for local charities.

During the tournament, 62 players teed off for a nine-hole experience accompanied by four refreshing hops beverages.

Karen Lill earned the coveted "hops hat" with her closest-to-the-pin shot of 8 feet, four inches on the seventh hole.

Golf member Bob Long said the tournament also featured "a grand tee box party on the seventh that featured live music by the Bearded Men Society."

"There were shots and hors d'oeuvres, along with a noise that rivaled the 16th at the Phoenix Open - well, almost!" Long said with a laugh. "Following play, Judie Scotti and the Clubhouse Bar & Grille crew hosted a nice dinner that was well attended."

Proceeds this year went to a \$1,035 donation to Diakonia and a \$1,000 donation to the Worcester County Humane Society. The tournament has raised more than \$30,000 for local charities since its inception.

"Thank yous go to Don McMullen and Patty Curtin, who coordinated the event, and to the Bearded Men Society who donated their time and expertise to make the seventh-hole tee box party a grand event," Long said.



OPLGA hosts annual Solheim Cup

The Ocean Pines Ladies Golf Association played their annual Solheim Cup tournament on Aug. 29.

The tournament consisted of nine matches and a "Red vs. Blue" team format. The Blue team prevailed, with 51 points against the Red team with 30 points.

The Blue team's players were G. Fasulo, S. Morris, K. Monaco, N. Kessler, A. Shockley, C. Neal D. Stevens, G. Lynch and D. Hedde.

The Red team's players were J. Myers, T. Banachowski, D. Schwertner, J. Stoer, D. Kelly, L. Schneider, V. Dunn, D. Earhart and C. Horn.

Upon conclusion of the tournament, the teams gathered in the Golf Clubhouse to award the Solheim Cup trophy to the winning team and also to celebrate with a champagne toast for the winners.





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From tee ball to the big leagues: Local kid gets drafted by MLB

The dreams of a local family came true in July, when the Tampa Bay Rays drafted Hayden Snelsire in the 17th round of the annual Major League Baseball Draft.

The Snelsires lived in Ocean Pines for 17 years, before recently moving. But the entire family has left a lasting legacy on the area.

Hayden was a star on Berlin Little League All-Star teams for almost a decade. His dad, Eric, was a league coach and past vice president, and his mom, Jocelyn, was heavily involved in the league as a fundraiser and booster.

"It was a little surreal," Hayden said of being drafted. "It still hasn't really clicked yet. But it was just crazy to see my name on that board. It was an awesome moment."

Jocelyn posted a video of the draft announcement on Facebook on draft night and the post went viral, as well-wishers from all over the community congratulated Hayden and the family. Many had watched Hayden play Little League and high school baseball in person, or during all-star games that were nationally televised on ESPN.

"It is hard to put into words how rewarding it is to see your kids achieving goals they set for themselves at such a young age," Jocelyn said. "Hayden has always been focused on developing his skills and competing at the highest level, even when he was starting out in tee ball."

Hayden started playing tee ball in Ocean Pines when he was just 3 years old.

"I also remember a lot of times going to the rec center there, and playing basketball over there behind the police station," he said. "That was always fun."

Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks Director Debbie Donahue also remembers watching Hayden play Pop Warner football.

"We were so excited to see Hayden get drafted!" she said. "I remember seeing him play Little League, and he was involved very early on with some of our rec programs, so it's amazing to see a homegrown talent achieve his goals."

Hayden threw a no-hitter in 2011 as the youngest player in Berlin Little League.

Three years later, in 2014, he was one of the standouts of the Berlin Intermediate All-Star team that reached the Little League World Series championship game in Livermore, California. It was a moment that captivated the community and was also the start of several years of deep post season runs by Berlin Little League teams.

"His journey through Berlin Little League for almost 10 years was a highlight for all of us," Jocelyn said. "Watching that group of boys play together for all those years was so much fun. They helped establish BLL at the state and



regional levels.

"But the best part is that when Hayden was drafted, each of those amazing young men reached out to congratulate him," she added. "They really are brothers for life!"

Hayden said it was a special moment when his old teammates reached out on draft night.

"We've always stayed in each other's lives through social media, kind of following each other, but it's been a while since I've talked to some of them," he said. "So, it was really nice to hear from them."

Hayden went on to play for the Stephen Decatur Seahawks and was named Pitcher of the Year in the Bayside Conference South during his last season, in 2019. During his senior year, he threw 41 1/3 innings in nine games, striking out 65 and walking 12. He allowed just three earned runs for an ERA of 0.65.

He went on to pitch for Randolph-Macon College and tied a program record this year with 17 strikeouts in a single game. He also holds the career strikeout record for the college (237).

In 2023, Hayden went 8-2 with a 2.99 ERA and 107 strikeouts in 69 1/3 innings. He earned All-America Second Team honors and was named to the All-Region First Team and All-State (Virginia) First Team.

"He was laser focused on playing at the collegiate level and going somewhere where he felt he could make an impact — RMC was that place for sure," Jocelyn said. "Coach Ray Hedrick has been so supportive of Hayden and has helped him reach so many of his goals. His teammates there are awesome too, and we couldn't be happier with the choice he made."

As for what's next?

"I'm going to get a chance to talk to some of the people at the Rays and they're going to kind of give me the lowdown of what's next," Hayden said. "But it's been so cool to see everything come full circle, and to get to continue playing at a professional level."

"We are so excited for this next chapter for Hayden and know that he will work hard to represent himself, Berlin, SDHS and Randolph Macon well," Jocelyn said. "We are so thankful for the support of this community, and our friends and family!"



Delmarva Chorus celebrates the 20th year of charter with Sweet Adelines International

The Delmarva Chorus hosted a successful “Coffee, Tea and 20’s Harmony” show on July 15 in Ocean Pines.

The “Roaring 20’s” themed event celebrated the 20th anniversary of the popular local singing group, which is a charter chapter of the Sweet Adelines International.

Maryland Sen. Mary Beth Carozza surprised the group with a special citation, and guests enjoyed the festive costumes and familiar tunes, along with delicious desserts, prizes, and more.

The Delmarva Chorus practices every Monday night at the Ocean Pines Community Center under the direction of Certified Director Carol Ludwig.

The chorus is open to all women who love to sing, laugh and make new friends. Members entertain at civic events, charitable functions and social events.

The first open house for the chorus was held on Aug. 20, 2001, as the “Delmarva Women’s Barbershop Chorus.” Since then, the group has entered 14 Sweet Adelines regional competitions and earned multiple awards for most improved, audience choice, and small chorus.

The chorus has regularly performed during ceremonies for the Worcester County Veterans Memorial Foundation, along with Ocean Pines anniversary events and parades, boat parades, Hometown Holiday events, and holiday community

singalongs. They have also performed during Ocean Pines Garden Club Arbor Day ceremonies, and at Village Fairs, the Berlin Nursing and Rehab, Gull Creek, Stephen Decatur High School choral boosters, OPA ALS Walks, and during fundraisers and holiday celebrations throughout Worcester County.

The chorus is very proud to be invited, for many years, to perform at the American Legion Department of Maryland convention ceremonies.

Community donations by the group have included the flagpole, American flag and eagle topper at the Ocean Pines Community Center, and annual charitable giving to Worcester County G.O.L.D., spring backpack and Christmas projects, Girl Scout singer’s patches, and more.

The chorus holds its annual fundraising event in July, which helps fund the purchase of copyrighted music and members’ vocal education. The chorus appreciates the support of family, friends and local businesses, and finds joy in volunteer performances for community service organizations and special events throughout the year, as well as paid performances.

The Delmarva Chorus is seeking new members. For more information, call Mary Costibile at 410-208-4009, or visit www.delmarvachorus.org, or search “Delmarva Chorus” on Facebook or Instagram.



BJ’s Wholesale Club membership offer returns to Ocean Pines

BJ’s Wholesale Club is once again partnering with the Ocean Pines Association to bring a special membership offer, effective Oct. 1-31, to benefit the Worcester County Veterans Memorial at Ocean Pines Foundation.

With this offer, new members receive a 12-month BJ’s Inner Circle Membership for \$25 and \$10 in cash awards to be used at the register, or a BJ’s Perks Rewards Membership, which earns 2% cash back on most BJ’s purchases, for \$75 and \$20 in cash awards, with BJ’s Easy Renewal.

Existing Inner Circle members can purchase a 12-month renewal for \$55 and receive \$10 in cash awards to be used at the register. Existing Perks Rewards members can purchase a 12-month renewal for \$110 and receive \$20 in cash awards, with BJ’s Easy Renewal.

Cash awards will be added to the member’s primary membership account 24 hours after enrollment and must be used within 30 days from the membership enrollment date.

In addition to offering special membership discounts, BJ’s will donate \$10 for each completed new BJ’s Inner Circle application, or \$5 for each completed BJ’s renewal membership application received, to the Worcester County Veterans Memorial at Ocean

Pines Foundation.

To take advantage of this special offer by phone, call 800-313-8887 and use promo code 100407 (Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.).

BJ’s membership applications are also available at the Ocean Pines Association Administration Building at 239 Ocean Parkway and online at oceanpines.org. Applications must be returned with payment by Oct. 31. Check and credit card payments will be accepted.

Applications may be dropped off at the administration building front desk or mailed to Ocean Pines Association, Attn: Marketing, 239 Ocean Parkway, Ocean Pines, MD 21811.

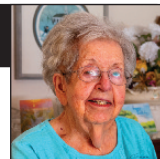
To download an application, visit oceanpines.org and click on the “News” section.

This offer is not available online, at any BJ’s location, or for any current Easy Renewal members.

This special promotion is only offered through Ocean Pines two times a year. The next promotion will be in April 2024.

Current BJ’s members whose memberships will expire before then are encouraged to renew during the fall offer. Members can check their current expiration dates by checking their BJ’s receipts or the BJ’s app, or by calling 800-313-8887.

Ocean Pines resident celebrates 101st birthday



Ocean Pines resident Vivian Mumford celebrated a huge milestone on Aug. 4, when she turned 101.

Mumford was born on Aug. 4, 1922, on a farm in a town called “Friendship” that today is known as Pittsville.

She said the farm grew various crops and had one cow and a few chickens. She remembers picking strawberries.

“I loved it because I didn’t have to work on it!” she said.

Mumford went to high school in her hometown, where she was an honor student and was crowned May queen her senior year. She earned a partial scholarship to attend college, but said the family at the time couldn’t afford the rest of tuition.

“Instead, I worked at Woolworth’s dime store. That was my first job,” she said. “And then I worked at JCPenney’s and Benjamin’s. I worked all over the place.”

Mumford did everything from running the jewelry counter, to serving as a buyer for a sporting department.

Her eyes lit up when asked about meeting her late husband, Jack.

“You know, we met in Ocean City, at the Pier Club,” she said. “I was there with some friends that I worked with, and I was dancing with another fella and he cut in,” Mumford said. “I found out later he worked in the dime store across from Woolworth’s called McCrory’s.”

Jack was drafted into the Army during World War II. After basic training he returned home, and the couple were married.

Around 1942, he was discharged and went to work for the electric company, then called Eastern Shore Public Service. Today, it’s Delmarva Power.

“He was a linesman when he first started, and he climbed poles,” Mumford said. “He put those spikes on his legs and climbed up those poles – they don’t do that now! They have a truck with a bucket.”

The couple had four children: Susan, Jay, Cynthia and Mike. She said Mike is the youngest and was born on her 46th birthday. Susan is the oldest.

“I have four children and four grandchildren – and I might have four great grandchildren,” Mumford said, pausing to count them off by name.

The family lived on Truitt Street in Salisbury for 38 years, and later nearby on Beaglin Park Drive.

Jack suffered from Alzheimer’s disease and passed away at Deer’s Head Hospital in Salisbury in 2006.

Mumford, on doctor’s orders not to drive any more, moved into the Gull Creek senior care facility in Berlin about eight years ago, at age 93.

Her daughter, Susan Blanton, often “ran back and forth” from Ocean Pines to help care for her.

“I lived there for four-and-half years, and then Susan said would



it just be easier if you came and lived with me?” Mumford said.

That was four years ago in 2019, when Mumford moved in with Blanton on Ivanhoe Court in Ocean Pines.

Blanton said it was good timing, with the pandemic coming a year later and cutting off access to senior centers.

She said her mom was strict growing up.

“You didn’t mess with mother,” she said.

“But I always stuck up for you!” Mumford added. “She was seven months old before [her father] ever saw her,” because of his service.

Mumford said her children helped out with small chores, like doing dishes and clearing the table.

“She didn’t make us do too much around the house, because we couldn’t do it to suit her,”

Blanton said with a laugh. “But everyone always thought my mother was the nicest and the prettiest.”

Now, Blanton is the caretaker for her mother – when she’ll let her be.

“She can still take care of herself. She does her own laundry and makes the bed. She does let me cook, because she can’t really remember recipes,” Blanton said.

“She doesn’t want me to turn the stove on, that’s what it is!” Mumford added. “But she does the cooking and I eat it – whatever it is.”

Mumford said she enjoys being in Ocean Pines with her daughter.

“I’ve got my own bedroom, and there’s a sitting room and I read a lot,” she said. “I’ve read the same books over and over again.”

They also take frequent trips to the local library.

“I like books that were written back in the time when there were dukes and princes and things like that, like ‘Gone with the Wind.’ And I’ve read a lot of Nicholas Sparks books,” Mumford said.

One Sparks series that she’s read many times frustrates her to no end.

“He wrote these two books [in a series] and this guy was so much in love with this girl, and then she died. If you want to read a book about how somebody mourned, that will really hurt you,” Mumford said. “I said I’d never read another one of his books. He killed that girl! But anyway, I have read many more of them.”

The most recent, she said, was “The Last Song.”

She’s also read “With Every Breath I Take” by Celia Martin at least three times.

“Every time, you find something different,” she said.

Mumford celebrated her birthday on Aug. 4 at the Ocean Pines Yacht Club with family and friends.

She said the milestone “just means I’m getting older.”

Asked for words of wisdom on living to 101, Mumford said, “don’t smoke, don’t drink, but dance all you want.”

“Just be yourself,” she said. “And be honest.”

Anglers Club hosts successful Art Hansen Memorial youth Fishing Contest

The Ocean Pines Anglers Club in July hosted the Art Hansen Memorial Youth Fishing Contest at the South Pond in Ocean Pines.

The event is named for the late Anglers Club founder, who once held a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records for fishing.

The event garnered an impressive response, attracting youths from three age categories ranging from 4-16 years old, along with their parents and grandparents.

With a turnout of about 70 participants, the contest proved to be a resounding success, resulting in the capture of 94 fish collectively. The competition was fierce, as the young anglers showcased their skills and enthusiasm throughout the day.

The highlight of the event was the presentation of trophies for the largest fish caught in each age category, along with prizes for the second and third place winners.

Additionally, special recognition was given for the most fish caught, adding an extra level of excitement to the event.

First-place winners by age group were:

- **Dominic Wasen, ages 4-7, largest catch for a 13.25" catfish**
- **Reid Landis, ages 4-7, most fish caught (7)**
- **Ben Briles, ages 8-11, largest catch for a 12" bass**
- **Griffin Landis, ages 8-11, most fish caught (8)**
- **Kylar Middleton, ages 12-16, largest catch for a 19.5" bass**
- **Isabel Schoonyoung, ages 12-16, most fish caught (19)**

Two lucky winners were also selected in the grand prize drawings. Eva Thompson received a custom rod crafted by Mike Vitak, and Mitchell Leisure won a deep-sea fishing trip generously donated by The Angler in Ocean City.

All contestants received a prize, as a token of appreciation for their involvement in the contest.

The Ocean Pines Anglers Club extends its heartfelt gratitude to the Ocean City/Berlin Optimist Club, Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks Department, and the Department

of Natural Resources for their invaluable support and contribution to the success of this event. Their partnership and commitment to fostering a love for fishing among the youth have played a significant role in making the Art Hansen Memorial Youth Fishing Contest a memorable experience.

For more information on the Anglers Club, call John McFalls at 610-505-1697.




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Annual Meeting FAQ

*The following questions were asked during
the 2023 Ocean Pines Association Annual Meeting:*

What do motions by homeowners at the annual meeting actually do?

According to Ocean Pines Bylaws Section 4.02.(a) "Issues not contained in the notice of the meeting ... shall not be binding on the Association or the Board of Directors."

Doug Parks, at the time serving as Association President, summarized, "If [the motion] passes, it will be a recommendation from the membership to the Board for further consideration."

To view the bylaws, visit <https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/board-of-directors>.

How can a homeowner initiative a referendum?

According to Ocean Pines Bylaws Section 4.07. "A petition may be used to propose action requiring a referendum ..." According to Section 4.07.(c)(2) "For issues for referendum ... a petition requires signatures of members who are eligible to vote representing at least ten percent (10%) of the votes in the Association as referenced in Section 3.01(a)."

To view the bylaws, visit <https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/board-of-directors>.

Ocean Pines has about 8,500 homes, but the Elections Committee only sent some 7,000 ballots for the 2023 Board of Directors election. What happened to the others? Are people on monthly payment plans eligible to vote? If not, can that be changed?

For the 2023 Board of Directors election, 7,781 ballots were mailed to members who are eligible to vote. Alternatively, 701 letters were sent to members informing them that they were ineligible to vote.

Members' voting rights are stated in Section 3.01 of the Ocean Pines Bylaws: "Payment of the annual charge levied by the Board of Directors is a prerequisite to the right to vote. No member may vote if, thirty-five (35) days prior to the voting deadline (July 6, in 2023) the member has failed to pay the annual charge, including any assessed interest levied by the Association."

Accordingly, members on payment plans are ineligible to vote. Changing this section of the bylaws to allow voting by members on payment plans would require a referendum.

To view the bylaws, visit <https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/board-of-directors>.

Some homeowners throw grass clippings and other lawn debris into the canals, as well as cigarette butts and other trash. This can increase harmful levels of nitrogen and phosphates that damage the environment. What can be done to address this issue and to increase public awareness?

Any policy related to the canals would fall under the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), as there is currently nothing in Ocean Pines' governing documents to allow for enforcement. The Association will reach out to DNR, with the goal of having more publicity on this issue published in a future Ocean Pines newsletter.

Why does OPA use Northstar for financial processes, instead of something much cheaper like QuickBooks?

Northstar, rather than just serving as financial software, helps to run many of the Association's operations and is considered "club management software." Along with running everyday financial systems, it also runs processes for billing, accounting and membership, and the public and private sides of the [oceanpines.org](https://www.oceanpines.org) website.

Has OPA considered using electronic signs instead of the old marquee signs? What will the signs look like and what will the upkeep costs be?

The Communications Committee has proposed converting the North Gate marquee sign to a digital sign, although a motion to do so failed during the 2023 annual meeting. A 2023 online survey of 401 people found that roughly 61% said that, in general, they are "in favor of replacing the current signs with new digital signs."

A mockup of the signs submitted by the committee showed a 36x60-inch LED sign that was white with black letters.

For more information on the proposed signs, contact the Communications Committee here: <https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/communications-committee>.

Has OPA considered converting the North Gate exit onto Route 589 to two lanes, to help improve the flow of traffic and avoid backups?

The Association will consider this in the future, but any decision would need to involve Maryland State Highway, as the change would involve access to a state road and would also require a redesign of the North Gate Bridge.

Has OPA considered changing the governing documents to allow for fines of continuing ARC violations?

While certain section of Ocean Pines already have in their Declaration of Restrictions (DRs) the system for fines (Sections 12, 15B, 17, 18C, 18E, 18F, 18G, 18S, 19, and 20), adding fines in the remaining sections of Ocean Pines would require a change to the remaining DRs. Doing this would require 50%+1 of the owners of each section approving adding fines, which would need to be done by a referendum vote.

Some violations lead to multiple letters, and then action taken in court, but the process is currently very slow. Can anything else be done about these violations to help protect property values?

Resolution M-01 states the violation process. While some consider the process to be slow, it is in place to assure that all rules and regulations are followed prior to going to court for the violation. To view M-01, visit <https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/board-of-directors>.

Does OPA offer guest passes to pools, for homeowners to give out to their guests?

The Association currently does not offer guest passes. However, guests may purchase a daily pool pass.

Why can't the Yacht Club be an adults-only pool or have times for adults only?

Because of Ocean Pines Association's 501(c)(4) nonprofit status, all amenities by law must be open to the public and cannot discriminate against certain groups because of age or other reasons. This is based on a 2012 U.S. Court of Appeals decision involving the Association that found, "...to be exempt from taxation, the trade or business undertaken by a tax-exempt 501(c)(4) organization must itself causally advance or contribute importantly to the organization's promotion of the common good and welfare of the general public."

Can anything be done about the abundance of noisy, young children at the Yacht Club Pool?

The lifeguard on duty should immediately address any safety situations, such as a child being unruly or causing harm to other guests. Normal play noises are not considered a safety issue.

What can be done about speeding and other safety issues affecting pedestrians, bicyclists, dog walkers, etc. along Ocean Parkway and other streets in the community? What is Ocean Pines doing overall to enforce traffic laws in the community?

The Ocean Pines Police Department (OPPD) would like to remind all residents of their responsibility to adhere to traffic regulations that exist to promote safety. All drivers in the Pines are requested to respect the posted speed limits, while all pedestrians and cyclists are reminded of their responsibility to walk and ride on the correct side of the road.

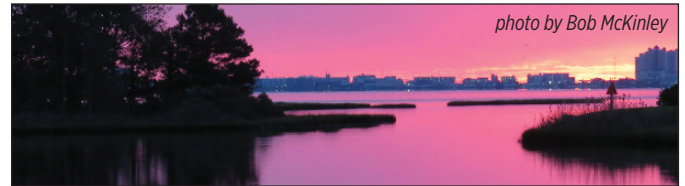
Walkers and joggers are permitted to walk or run on the opposite side of the road facing traffic, while cyclists are required to ride with the same direction of the traffic flow. Cyclists are also reminded they have the same responsibility to adhere to traffic related signage that cars are held to, including stopping for stop signs.

The OPPD takes the safety of residents seriously and will be patrolling throughout the community and will be monitoring the speed of motorists with the use of radar.

What can be done about improperly parked cars in Ocean Pines? What is the best way to handle such issues?

Maryland law allows vehicles to be parked on the street if they do not interfere with the flow of traffic. As for vehicles parked on a property (such as on the grass) instead of the designated driveway, the Compliance, Permit and Inspections (CPI) Department will initiate a violation for these vehicles. To contact CPI, visit <https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/cpi>.

For additional questions, contact info@oceanpines.org.



Has your phone number or email address changed?

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Get ready for fall: Market to reflect change in season

Hints of autumn were already abundant at the Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market in early September, and with that transition the market selections are shifting too.

Market Manager David Bean said the last of the locally grown tomatoes and sweet corn will linger well into autumn, as sweet potatoes start to arrive, along with more varieties of apples than one can name.

"There's nothing better than fresh-pressed local apple cider and the first sight of pumpkins," Bean said. "Alongside those will be fall flowers, and greenery for the porch and garden. Mums, asters and pansies of every color will brighten the autumn marketplace, ready for shoppers to take home."

Shoppers should also be on the lookout for decorative gourds and miniature pumpkins at the market.

"They'll look terrific on your dining table or fireplace mantel," Bean said. "They keep for months, so you can decorate now and keep them out through Thanksgiving. You can even hollow out mini pumpkins and gourds to make fun, seasonal candle holders. When you're done with using them for décor, put them outside for the wild critters to enjoy the seeds and pulp!"

David Joseph of **D.J. David Greengrocer** said his market display will be piled high with autumnal produce.

"This fall we're selling broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, pumpkins and winter squashes of all sorts, along with leeks, greens, lettuces, beets, carrots, radishes and parsnips, all directly from our local growers gardens and farm fields," Joseph said.

Brandon Brady of **Stag Run Farm** said the market has just as many locally grown treasures in the fall and winter as it does during spring and summer.

"We always have to fight the expectation of customers that we will not have local produce after a frost has hit – that's a



false assumption that requires continual shopper education," Brady said. "There will be plenty to offer after Jack Frost has visited our family farm."

Along with fresh produce, Bean said the selection at the market's bakeries will also reflect the season's change, with warming spices and autumn orchard fruit

flavors in abundance.

Apple dumplings are a favorite of the customers at **Pies Etcetera**. Owner Belinda White has family roots in Pennsylvania Dutch Country, where she learned to perfect her family's recipe. She suggests pre-ordering, as the dumplings always sell out fast.

Bean said shoppers can also find jams and jellies for their morning toast, eggs for fall baking, and a roast for Sunday dinner.

What's more, **Dize Seafood** will have the last of the Maryland hard-shell crab harvest, and freshly harvested Chesapeake oysters will return just in time for the upcoming holidays.

According to the Maryland Farmers Market Association, the state boasts more than a dozen farmers markets that are open for business during the colder months, with the Ocean Pines market being one of the few open year-round on the Eastern Shore.

"There are also not as many folks from out of town who are buying during the fall season, so it is a great time for the market businesses to reconnect with their local shoppers after a very busy summer," Bean said.

Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market is open on Saturdays, next to the Ocean Pines Administration Building and Police Department.

The market will return to its off-season hours of 9 a.m. to noon, starting on Oct 7.

For more information, visit oceanpines.org.


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VENUES AT OCEAN PINES



Ocean Pines Yacht Club voted 'Best Wedding Venue'

The Ocean Pines Yacht Club has once again secured the prestigious title of "Best Wedding Venue" in Worcester County, as declared by the readers of *Coastal Style* magazine.

This marks the third time in four years that the Yacht Club has received such recognition from *Coastal Style* readers. Ocean Pines' venues were also honored for four consecutive years, from 2015 to 2018.

The consistent recognition of excellence underscores the dedication of Ocean Pines to provide unmatched experiences for couples on their special day.

The Yacht Club features a spacious ballroom with draped ceilings, a private bar, bridal suite, and a stunning waterfront view of the Ocean City skyline, Katie Krynitsky, general manager of the Yacht Club, said.

"We are so humbled and honored to be recognized as the best wedding venue in Worcester County," events manager Lia Isel said. "Our chef and staff truly enjoy creating fantastic food and atmosphere, and providing great service for the perfect wedding day for each and every couple."

"From all of us at Ocean Pines Yacht Club, thank you again!" Krynitsky added.

For information on weddings at the Ocean Pines Yacht Club, visit www.opyachtclub.com/weddings.



Prime dates are booking up fast! For more info on booking your special event, call 410-641-7501 ext. 4 or email Lia@mattorttcompanies.com.



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