

# OCEAN PINES REPORT

COMPLIMENTARY

Your Connection to the Ocean Pines, Maryland Community

Vol. 56, No. 2 | Spring 2024

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# Ocean Pines Anglers Club

*A legacy of fishing and community engagement*

The Ocean Pines Anglers Club was formed in the mid 1990s by the late Art Hansen, an Ocean Pines resident who once held a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records for fishing.

Today, the club boasts about 100 members and, among their missions, is teaching the next generation how to fish and appreciate the sport.

John McFalls was among the earliest members. He fished his whole life, but never fished saltwater until coming to Ocean Pines.

"I joined the Ocean Pines Anglers around 1996, and there were only like six or seven guys and one woman," he said. "I've really learned what little I know from that small group."

Originally from Philadelphia, McFalls moved often for work and lived in upstate New York and the Washington, D.C. area. His background was in IT, and he worked for IBM.

"I retired here in Ocean Pines in 1993," he said. "We built our house in 1992 and came down a year later, and we absolutely just love it here."

He said Anglers Club meetings were originally held in Hansen's kitchen - before the group grew too large. Later meetings were held at the Yacht Club, and now the club meets at the Ocean Pines Library.

Jerry Leuters recently took over for McFalls as club administrator.

Growing up, Leuters remembers "fishing by the creek when I was a kid."

"My kids have been on boats since they were four years



old, and my son just built his first boat," he said. "We've been around boating and fishing for a long time."

Leuters moved to Ocean Pines and joined the club



in 2018. In his professional career, he was a director of IT for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. He and his family previously lived in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.

## Club activities

This year, the Anglers Club will host "Teach a Kid to Fish Day" on Saturday, June 22, and the Art Hansen Memorial Youth Fishing Contest on Saturday, July 20. Both

events are held at the South Gate Pond, and both are free and open to the public.

McFalls said the fishing contest was the first club function geared toward children.

"And then, a year or so after that, we thought we ought to be teaching the kids to fish if we're going to put them in a contest!" he said with a laugh.

During Teach a Kid to Fish, Anglers Club members and representatives from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources show local children the basics, from preparing their rods and lines, to casting and catching a fish.

"We have tables to show them how to tie their hooks and another one about using different baits," Leuters said.

"Usually, DNR is there with little giveaways, talking about safety and those types of things."

McFalls said they also bring a display board of different kinds of lures, plus different kinds of fish to help with identification.

"We're looking at the next generation of people that may fish, and helping to foster the love and the continuation of the sport," Leuters said. "Plus, it helps kids to focus on things other than roaming around the streets - or being locked on their computers. They can get outside, breathe the air, enjoy a little bit of nature, and learn how to fish." *(cont. on pg. 4)*



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(cont. from pg. 3)

Leuters said club members benefit from the event as much as the children do.

“A lot of the guys are really happy and smiling, and they remember doing this with their kids and grandkids. It brings a lot of fond memories back,” he said.

For McFalls, one of the most rewarding aspects of the event is seeing so many familiar faces.

“I’ve been around for 28 years now. There are parents who come out now who were kids when I first started working with the club,” he said. “It’s rather amazing to see them grow up like that.”

The Art Hansen Memorial Youth Fishing Contest is open to three age groups: 4-7, 8-11 and 12-16 years old. There are prizes for winners in each age group, and Leuters said no one walks away emptyhanded.

“Every kid gets something – a t-shirt, a hat, and we give away tackle boxes and rods,” he said.

Leuters has also seen some impressive catches over the years.

“They stock the pond with little bluegills and stuff like that, but there are some pretty big fish in there. Occasionally, someone will hook into a big catfish or a carp or a big bass – it’s not just catching little fish,” he said.

Each event draws 60-70 participants, plus scores of parents and grandparents.

“The interesting thing about both events is that you end up teaching a lot of parents too,” McFalls said. “We have a lot of parents who come and don’t know anything, and they’ll bring the kids because they’re interested.”

Often, he said, parents will bring still-wrapped fishing kits from Amazon or Walmart.

“We end up actually opening them and putting the thing together, because the parents don’t know how. So you can

also say, ‘teach a kid, teach a parent,’” he said. “There’s a real benefit that runs through each generation.”

### Looking forward and giving back

Leuters said there are plans for additional fishing tournaments for adults this year, to help expand club offerings and provide an alternative to the larger Ocean City tournaments.

“We’re trying to establish more in-club tournaments where it’s just the anglers fishing against each other, and you’re not competing against the ocean charter guys or the bigger charter guys. It’s just the club members fishing and having fun,” he said.

The Anglers Club will host a Fishing Flea Market on April 6 to help raise money for upcoming events and activities.

Members also participate in Believe in Tomorrow programs and the Bay Day event, and the club hosts an annual holiday dinner with the Atlantic Coast Sportfishing Association.

“A lot of our people are members of the Believe in Tomorrow program, and we have boaters who will take critically ill children out for fishing or crabbing, or just for a ride in a boat. That program’s been going on for a long time and one of our board members, Budd Heim, runs it,” McFalls said.

Leuters said the best way to join the Anglers Club is to come to one of their meetings, held on the second Saturday of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Ocean Pines Library.

“As you get older in life, it kind of gives people a place to go and something to do and keep moving,” Leuters said. “And it’s just a great group for camaraderie and to help find new fishing partners.”

For more information, search for “Ocean Pines Anglers Club” on Facebook.

**Did you know?**  
*The South Gate Pond is stocked with fish by the Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources. About once each decade, DNR will “shock” the pond & do a fish count, & then add additional fish & fish species as needed & based on what’s beneficial to that ecosystem.*





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# Violante retires

Staff fondly remembers dedicated worker, man with the big smile

**N**orbert Violante finished his last official day of work for Ocean Pines on Friday, March 1. Like most days, he could be found at the Community Center doing many odd jobs and wearing his trademark smile.

Originally from Baltimore, Violante worked for Ocean Pines for 18 years. His son, Nobie, is the deputy director of Public Works and has been with the Association for 23 years.

On an average day, Violante would do a little bit of everything, from changing message boards along Ocean Parkway, to getting the community center ready for civic and social club meetings, to keeping the grounds neat and tidy.

“Up here [at the community center] it’s mostly setting up rooms and even taking care of the parks and leveling off the trails and cutting the grass. But I’ve been all over the place! I used to do tennis sometimes too,” he said.

He’s also been a big part of events, like helping with the annual Hometown Christmas celebration at White Horse Park.



“I would do the decorating and light displays. I won’t have to climb up on the roof anymore!” he said with a laugh.

Violante also drives a school bus for Worcester County Public Schools.

“Altogether, I leave the house around 6 in the morning and I don’t get home until 7 in the evening,” he said. “I always got eight hours in here – or more.”

Asked what he will miss the most, Violante said, it’s “the people.”

“I like working with people and helping people,” he said. Violante said he plans to continue driving a school bus. “I’ll be busy,” he said. “[The bus] is probably a little louder than this place.”

Many Ocean Pines staffers said they will miss seeing Violante who, each day, provided a steady hand and a friendly smile.



“It’s been really nice for me to be able to work with him all these years – almost two decades. Not everybody has that opportunity to work with their dad. And it’s wonderful that so many people appreciated what he did, each and every day he came into work. He’s a great role model.”

– Nobie Violante, Deputy Public Works Director

“Norbert truly was the backbone of many of our special events that Recreation and Parks puts on. I could always count on having his help preparing for every special event we hold for the community ... it really was a team effort, and I am very sad that part of our team is now gone. Norbert always had a positive attitude, and he enjoyed assisting the various community groups that meet in our building with their room set up. I will miss him very much. While I do hope they find someone soon to fill his position, he can never be replaced.”

– Katie Goetzinger, Recreation and Parks Program Supervisor

“As far as Norbert, he is awesome to work with. Always willing to offer a helping hand and share a corny dad joke to make you laugh. He’s a hard worker and just an all-around good guy, and he will be missed!”

– Kevin Powell, Recreation and Parks Event Coordinator

“Norbert was one of the first people I was introduced to when I started working in Public Works back in 2006. He was always willing to help others and never complained, even when given

a task that was not so wonderful. I will miss seeing his smiling face every day working around Ocean Pines.”

– Linda Martin, Senior Executive Office Manager

“Norbert was a great employee and worked on many, many different projects for us. He was one of those indispensable people who just kept things running, and he knew how to do a little bit of everything. More than that, he is just a really nice guy. He always had a smile and always had nice things to say, and he would just lift your spirits whenever you saw him.”

– Josh Davis, Public Relations Director

“Norbert will really be missed by the Kiwanis Club of OP-OC. He got the Assateague Room ready for every Wednesday morning meeting. He helped get tables and chairs to many of the club’s events in Ocean Pines when concessions were sold. He’s been a real asset to both Ocean Pines and Kiwanis. He will be hard to replace. Wishing him the best in his retirement and future endeavors!”

– David Landis, Kiwanis Club Press Relations Chair

“Norbert was always a big part of the Kiwanis Club. Members show up every Wednesday at 7:30 a.m. to a place set up specifically to accommodate our needs. Whatever we needed, Norbert made it happen with a nod and a smile. His efforts are already missed. Our club wishes him the best in his retirement.”

– Bob Wolfing, Kiwanis Club President



# Mary Mac Foundation seeks donations for summer camp programs, food banks

Each year, the Mary Mac Foundation supports hundreds of low-income and homeless children and their families, thanks to the generous donations of local people.

The foundation funds summer camp scholarships for education and recreation programs, including Camp Ocean Pines locally, and Camp St. Vincent in Baltimore and Camp Barnes in Delaware.

Mary Mac also supports food banks and shelters such as Diakonia in West Ocean City, the Cricket Center and Cold Center in Ocean City, Mid Shore Meals in Cambridge, and the Bayside Shelter in Millsboro, Delaware.

The nonprofit is named for Mary McMullen (1948-2012), a former special education instructor at Severna Park High School and Ruth Eason School in Millersville, Maryland. During the 1970s, she also helped establish the Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks Department.

Tim McMullen said the foundation's activities are inspired by his late wife, Mary. "Many of us have found ourselves asking what Mary would do or say in certain situations," he said. "Her generosity and unconditional love for her students, family and community bound us together."

McMullen is also driven by his own experiences growing up and later teaching in Anne Arundel County.

"The first year I taught, I was in a school that had just been integrated and there were eight kids who got there every day at 7 o'clock in the morning - school started at 8 a.m. I told one of my other teachers I was really impressed with these

kids, but he said, "Tim, they don't have heat at home," he said. "It means a lot for us to be able to take homeless kids and put them on a bus going to St. Vincent for three meals a day, swim lessons, and lessons in English, math and science," McMullen added.

Along with education and summer recreation programs, McMullen said food banks and area shelters became an added focus during the pandemic.

"We realized how many local families were being impacted," he said. "In one of our programs, every Friday, teachers will take backpacks and fill them with food that the kids can take home.

"Backpack programs and food banks provide weekend food for food-insecure children. For many, this may be the only food they have until they return to school," he continued. "We believe in providing opportunities for young people, so they can live a better life by offering the resources they need."

Tax-deductible donations may be made to the Mary Mac Foundation at [www.paypal.me/marymacfoundation](http://www.paypal.me/marymacfoundation) or by sending a check payable to the Mary Mac Foundation, 174 Nottingham Lane, Ocean Pines, MD 21811.

"We thank you for your continued support and ask that, if it is within your means to donate, please consider doing so. No amount is too small," McMullen said.

For more information on the Mary Mac Foundation, visit [www.marymac.org](http://www.marymac.org).



**Mary T. McMullen**  
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# Marine Corp League recruiting veterans, first responders and patriotic Americans



Several former U.S. Marines recently started a new chapter of the Marine Corps League Peacemakers Detachment based in Ocean Pines.

The group is part social club and part fundraising arm for the Tunnels to Towers Foundation that supports fallen first responders.

The Peacemakers Detachment was first established in 1923 by Gen. John Lejeune.

"In 1937, the 75th Congress chartered the Marine Corps League and Franklin Roosevelt signed it," Cpl. John Whitehead, the local junior vice commandant, said. "Today, we have over 1,000 detachments and over 45,000 members.

"Our mission is about veterans and our community, as well as being a social organization to promote the idea and traditions of the United States Marine Corps," he added.

Whitehead said the group was initially set up to help World War I veterans, "and then it morphed into a part social club and part charitable group."

"We'll get together, have social events, and collect money for charities in the area," he said.

Whitehead said the Peacemakers Detachment isn't just for former Marines.

"We have veterans from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast



Guard, and we also have some first responders in the detachment," he said. "We basically look for any patriotic American that wants us to support what we do."

He said the group is also not limited to military activity and the traditions of the U.S.

Marine Corps.

"We're also a social organization," he said. "We have breakfasts, we have dinners, cookouts, the Marine Corp ball, and we'll attend car shows and the farmers market in Ocean Pines."

He said the primary fundraising focus is Tunnels to Towers.

"Tunnels to Towers will help the families of any military or first responders who are killed or seriously wounded, by helping to pay their mortgage. Tunnels to Towers also purchase and renovate hotels, giving homeless veterans a place to live," he said. "We talk a lot about people who make the ultimate sacrifice but, to me, these people who lose arms or legs or are seriously burned have to live with that every day for the rest of their lives, so they're also making a tremendous sacrifice - even though they're still alive. They all deserve our thanks and gratitude."

Whitehead said the group currently has about 40 members, and they're always looking for more people to join and get involved.

"It's just a social organization where we do these things together, and it's up to each member's discretion to be as active or as inactive as they want," he said. "We will do fundraisers and generate funds that we distribute to needy community organizations, so we want to help the community and have some social events that we all can participate in and have fun.

"The camaraderie of the military and patriotic Americans is basically what we are all about," he continued. "All of us were in the military or were first responders. And, it's just a good feeling to help out people in need. It's a lot of work at times, but it's very rewarding. Come join us and help make a difference!"

The Marine Corps League Peacemakers Detachment 1492 meets on the second Thursday of each month at 11 a.m. at the South Fire Station on 911 Ocean Parkway, in Ocean Pines.

Marines, veterans, first responders and patriotic Americans are invited to participate.

For more information, contact Whitehead at 301-372-8993 or naphar@aol.com.





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Guest column:

# 2024 Maryland General Assembly

By Mary Beth Carozza

Maryland State Senator for District 38 -  
Somerset / Wicomico / Worcester Counties



My focus during the 2024 Maryland General Assembly (Jan. 10 - April 8) has been on public safety, fiscal responsibility, health care access, and local issues that support priorities in Worcester, Wicomico, and Somerset counties.

During the week, I remained in Annapolis during the 90-day session and returned home every weekend to attend community events, teach Sunday school, and see my parents, Mary Pat and Tony Carozza, who live in The Parke in Ocean Pines.

I, along with Senators Ron Watson (D-Prince Georges) and Chris West (R-Baltimore County), sponsored several bipartisan public safety bills this session to fight crime and make our streets and communities safer.

Our effort to put together a bipartisan, anti-crime package of bills has led to pieces of our bills included in the juvenile law reforms that passed the Senate and House this session. Notably, our legislation to require a 10, 11, or 12-year-old who commits a crime with a firearm come under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court system, rather than to simply be released, has been included in the reforms passed by both the Senate and House.

Both Del. Wayne Hartman and I introduced legislation to assist the families of our fallen heroes by eliminating a tax liability on the death benefits received by the families of first responders who died in the line of duty. These death benefits are intended to relieve the immediate financial burden caused by their loss. The need for this legislation was brought to our attention by our constituent, Mrs. Tashica Hilliard, the widow of Cpl. Glenn Hilliard of the Wicomico County Sheriff's Office, who was murdered by a repeat violent offender on June 12, 2022. I publicly want to thank Wicomico County Sheriff Mike Lewis for ensuring the Hilliard family received their death benefit check in record time and Tashica Hilliard for her leadership in advocating for the families of all Maryland's fallen heroes.

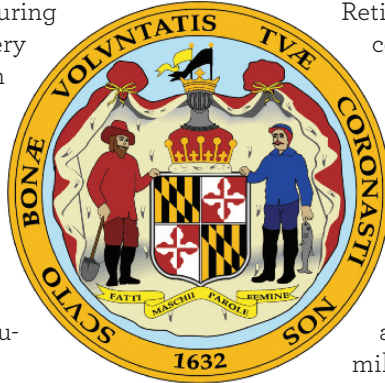
I have been working with Fruitland Police Chief Plunkert, fire and emergency medical personnel, and 9-1-1 specialists to increase recruitment and retention of 9-1-1 specialists. Our 9-1-1 specialists are an absolute lifeline for police, fire, and EMS, and these dispatchers often are the first emergency contact for the public in most life-and-death emergencies. I sponsored legislation, SB 700, which would give local jurisdictions the option to allow 9-1-1 specialists to qualify for the Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System, and SB 1034, which would establish a workgroup to assist with recruitment and retention of 9-1-1 specialists.

My colleague, Sen. Mike McKay, introduced SB 349, which would authorize retired state employees who began working for the State of Maryland before July 1, 2011 to be eligible for prescription drug benefits in the State Employee and Retiree Health and Benefits Program. I remain committed to working with the leadership in the Maryland General Assembly and Gov. Moore's Administration to ensure our state retirees receive the benefits they earned and deserved.

During the Jan. 20 Congressional hearing in Ocean City, I testified that the impact of offshore wind industrialization on the local economy and tourism, and the negative effects on marine life, fishing, and the military, taken together, are unacceptable and unaffordable risks to my constituents. Maryland Congressman Andy Harris (MD-1), along with Chris Smith (NJ-4), and Jeff Van Drew (NJ-2), heard from experts presenting documented information on the negative impacts of offshore wind projects.

On Jan. 25, Ørsted decided to withdraw from the Skipjack project, which would have built 60 to 70 turbines of Maryland's Coast. With Ørsted conceding that the project is no longer commercially feasible under its current agreement with the State of Maryland, we must remain vigilant and strongly oppose any future request from any offshore wind developers for more government subsidies. US Wind is still in negotiations with Maryland regarding potential offshore wind projects along Maryland's Coast and is considering placing an operating and maintenance facility in the West Ocean City Harbor. A public hearing was held by the Maryland Department of Environment on March 25 at Wor-Wic Community College.

As always, I was delighted to see many of my constituents in Annapolis either visiting during special events like Tourism Day and the popular Taste of The Eastern Shore, or testifying on various proposed legislation. I look forward to seeing you at home as I make my rounds in Ocean Pines and all three counties in District 38. Please let me know whenever I can be of assistance to you.



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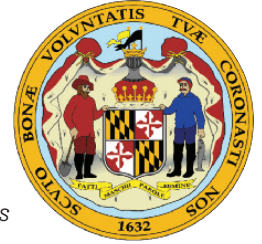
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Guest column:  
**2024 Legislative Session**

**By Wayne Hartman**

*Maryland State Delegate for District 38C, Wicomico & Worcester Counties*



Hello to my friends in Ocean Pines! It is an honor to represent you in the Maryland House of Delegates for a sixth legislative session. Over the last three months, I have been steadily working to pass meaningful legislation and defeat bad bills in the General Assembly. As I write to you, we are currently in “cross-over week” which is a very busy week leading up to the deadline for bills to pass their respective chambers.

In the early days of session, I met with our local casino workers to discuss the potential of iGaming in Maryland. During our discussions, I promised that I would not support such legislation as it will be damaging to the employees of Ocean Downs Casino. House Bill 1319 would allow the State Lottery and Gaming Control Commission to issue licenses to conduct and operate internet gaming in the State. In essence, iGaming allows the access of everything from a casino to be played on your phone or computer. I have major concerns about the foreseeable loss of jobs, the cannibalization of brick-and-mortar casinos, the potential for increased problem gambling, and the loss of local impact grants from casino money to our communities. I lobbied hard against iGaming in the Racing & Gaming Subcommittee as well as in the Ways & Means Committee. Through the Speaker’s office, I was able to add an amendment that will restore the local impact grants if iGaming is initiated. The bill will most likely be moved out of the House, but I am hopeful that it will be defeated in the Senate. I will continue in my efforts to see that iGaming is not authorized in Maryland.

During a recent briefing with the State Comptroller, my colleagues and I were informed of yet another revenue write-down of \$255 million to the State budget. It is clear during this time of economic uncertainty that Marylanders are bringing in less income and spending less in the State’s economy. Maryland needs to control spending and not resort to burdensome tax hikes on our citizens. In an attempt to raise revenues, House Bill 1515 was introduced in the Ways & Means Committee that would expand the sales and use tax to services such as lawn care, pet grooming, legal services, pest control, and many more. I am adamantly opposed to this legislation as it will have a significant negative impact on businesses and consumers in Maryland. Our State should not balance the budget by proposing one of the largest tax increases in Maryland’s history. Instead, our goal should be to keep dollars in the pockets of taxpayers, establish a business-friendly environment, and reel back government spending. While I do not think that this bill will move out of my Committee, I remain firmly against the expansion of the sales and use tax and will continue working to defeat such legislation. Many additional tax increases have been proposed

to offset the spending problem that this current administration has. For example, House Bill 925 would have increased the vehicle excise tax from 6% to 6.5%, and House Bill 754 would have repealed the trade-in allowance under the vehicle excise tax. These bills were defeated in the Ways and Means Committee, however I am disappointed to find that these tax increases along with others have been included in the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act. While I support some aspects of this Act, such as increased funding for Shock Trauma, I am very concerned with the tax hikes tied to the bill.

Many of you have contacted me to express your concerns with House Bill 935 that would establish an 11% excise tax on firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition. This bill has not moved out of the Ways & Means Committee, but I am anticipating that the Senate version of this bill will be brought up for a vote. I am opposed to any legislation that targets law-abiding gun owners and believe that this proposed tax attempts to restrict our second amendment rights. If given the opportunity, I will argue against this legislation and remind my colleagues that creating barriers for law-abiding gun owners does nothing to address violent crime in Maryland.

Juvenile crime remains to be one of the top issues facing our State. To address problems with the current juvenile system, my colleagues and I in the Joint Minority Caucus introduced the Juvenile Justice Restoration Act to restore accountability to juveniles who are committing serious offenses. Although this legislation did not pass, the General Assembly addressed some of our concerns in the Speaker’s Juvenile Reform bill such as lengthening probation periods, expanding accountability to 10-12 year olds, and establishing additional judicial oversight. As a member of the Minority Caucus leadership team, I will continue to sponsor legislation that tackles the pressing issue of juvenile crime.

My opposition to the implementation of offshore wind in Maryland remains strong. During debate on the House Floor, I offered amendments to House Bill 1296; legislation designed to advance offshore wind projects. My first amendment was to institute a one-year moratorium on the construction of offshore wind turbines and survey work that utilizes seismic testing on the seafloor. I firmly believe that the commercialization of our ocean along the east coast has a major role in the unprecedented number of whale deaths that we are witnessing. Unfortunately, this amendment was voted down on party lines. My second amendment was intended to ensure that any costs associated with renegotiating Offshore Wind Renewable Energy Credits could not be passed on to ratepayers. Marylanders are already paying record-high utility prices, and adding additional costs to subsidize offshore wind projects would be harmful to our residents and deter

businesses from coming to Maryland. Again, this reasonable amendment was voted down by the Majority party. The construction and operation of wind turbines will destroy our beautiful coastline and be detrimental to our marine life, ecosystems, and tourism. I can assure you that I am going to keep pushing back against the industrialization of the Atlantic Ocean.

I am pleased to report that House Bill 1064 (Income Tax Subtraction Modification – Death Benefits – Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters), a bill that I sponsored, has successfully passed in the House of Delegates with unanimous support. This important piece of legislation will create a subtraction against the personal income tax for a payment of a death benefit to the surviving spouse, or other beneficiary, of a law enforcement officer or fire fighter who died in the line of duty. As many of you know, Corporal Glenn Hilliard gave the ultimate sacrifice to protect the citizens of our region. While I hope that this tax subtraction never has to be used again, this will alleviate the state tax burden on the Wicomico County death benefit for the Hilliard family and other families of fallen heroes in Maryland.

If you are interested in receiving an end of session wrap-up with more details and information, please reach out to my office and we will gladly provide it to you. Additionally, my staff and I are always available if you need help when working with State agencies. Please do not hesitate to contact my office at wayne.hartman@house.state.md.us or call 410-841-3356 for assistance. Thank you!

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## Guest column: Community updates

By Chip Bertino

Worcester County Commissioner President



Let me start with some very good news. The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has reviewed discharge monitoring reports for calendar year 2023 for the Ocean Pines Water Wastewater Treatment Plant. MDE confirmed that the plant was under minimum discharge requirements, resulting in an exception from paying into the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) during calendar year 2024. That means Ocean Pines ratepayers will not see the \$15 BRF on their 2024 bills, saving each of us \$60 for the year. Special thanks go to Worcester County Public Works staff for their efforts to ensure the exemption.

We're heading into budget season. As I write this, I haven't yet seen the comprehensive county budget, which I expect will exceed a quarter billion dollars. You may want to make a note that the public hearing on the FY 2025 budget will be Tuesday, May 7 starting at 6 p.m. at Government Center in Snow Hill. The Commissioner budget work sessions are scheduled for May 14 and 21. The budget will be adopted at the June 4 Commissioner meeting.

The Commissioners recently sent to the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) the county's annual transportation priorities letter. Included again this year, Route 589 improvements were at the top of the list, along with dualizing Route 90 and replacing the Route 50 bridge. The letter read in part, "Congestion and delay issues along MD 589 are at or are approaching failing conditions as the road network reaches maximum capacity. MD 589 needs to be dualized to address the congestion issues and increasing safety concerns as additional residents come to the area."

During a fall Commissioners' meeting, MDOT Sec. Paul Wiedefeld and members of his staff briefed us on the MDOT's five-year plan. In response to one of my questions, Sec. Wiedefeld confirmed that no funds are allocated in the plan for the MD 589 project. Further, it's likely funding will not be earmarked for the roadway for many years to come. The

likelihood of this delay was underscored just after the new year, when the MDOT announced plans to cut \$3.5 billion from its budget in response to restated priorities from the Governor's office. We will keep the MD 589 front and center with MDOT.

During recent periods of higher than seasonal rainfalls, I received calls from many Ocean Pines residents concerned about rising water levels in yards and ditches. The topographic reality of our community is that it is, for the most part, flat. With increased rain levels, water backs up and takes longer to drain - longer than any of us would like. To facilitate drainage, please keep the ditch in front of your property clear of debris. I want to take a moment to commend several departments who worked many hours responding to drainage issues around the Pines and to my calls on behalf of constituents: OPA Public Works Director Eddie Wells and his staff; County Environmental Programs Director Bob Mitchell and his staff; and County Public Works Director Dallas Baker and his staff. These individuals and their departments coordinate their efforts to work in the best interests of our community. If you see them on members of their staffs, you may want to say, "thank you."

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 443-783-3248 or by email at [cbertino@co.worcester.md.us](mailto:cbertino@co.worcester.md.us).



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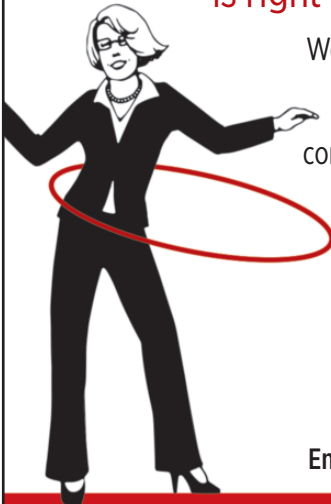


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# Blue-green algae in Ocean Pines ponds & canals

**GREEN STREET** Guest column  
by the Environment & Natural Assets  
Committee (ENAC)



Occasionally blue-green algae, scientific name cyanobacteria, will appear in the local ponds and canals of Ocean Pines. Cyanobacteria presence tells us about how safe or unsafe a waterbody is for recreational use.

When high levels of cyanobacteria are present, the biological condition of the water resource is degraded, as the conditions that allows for the algae growth are typically high in nutrients and low in dissolved oxygen, which chokes off the natural habitat in the water. Large cyanobacteria blooms also degrade the bottom living organisms and submerged aquatic plants because of decreased light penetration.

Floating mats of algae will emit foul odors as the algae decays. Dissolved oxygen levels can be increased by the use of continuous water aerators in the water body, which you will notice at various locations in the canals and ponds around Ocean Pines.

When cyanobacteria degrade, they release algal toxins that can be harmful to aquatic and human life. One such toxin (also known as a cyanotoxin) is named microcystin. Exposure to cyanobacteria may produce allergic reactions such as skin rashes, eye irritations, respiratory symptoms, nausea, and sometimes more severe health effects. A common pathway to exposure for humans is through accidental ingestion or inhalation during recreational activities in the waterbody, such as water skiing or swimming (Sources: EPA, National Aquatic Resource Surveys; Science Oxygen).

Above are two pictures of the north gate pond in Ocean Pines, taken in May 2021. Notice the thick algal mats present on the pond.

What conditions enhance algal blooms? Several physical and chemical factors contribute to the formation and persistence of cyanobacterial blooms:

1. Sunlight availability
2. Higher water temperature
3. Reduced water flow
4. Lack of vertical mixing
5. Change in acidity, usually less acid
6. Nutrient loading (nitrogen and phosphorus); and
7. Increased trace metals

Because of the interplay of these factors, there may be temporal or seasonal fluctuations in the levels of cyanobacteria and their toxins in the water. Specifically, nitrogen and phosphorus levels, organic matter, temperature, and sunlight play an interactive role in determining the algal bloom composition and toxin production.

This means that fertilizer and organic matter (yard waste, food debris) in runoff has a major impact on the ponds and canals. The fertilizers and organic matter come from lawns frequently treated with fertilizers and the dumping of grass clippings into the water.

As Ocean Pines residents desire ponds and canals that are safe for swimming and fishing, do not emit foul odors, and looks nice, we need to be watchful of what is going into runoff through the drainage ditches or direct into the canals. Fertilizer use on lawns must be controlled and grass clippings should never be discharged into the canals.

Please find ways not to degrade the quality of water runoff as you take care of your properties. Grass clippings can easily be mulched when mowing, which provides the perfect fertilizer back to the lawn and saves on cost of added chemical fertilizer.

The Environment and Natural Assets Advisory Committee wants all of Ocean Pines residents to enjoy its beautiful waterways for many decades.



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Guest column:

## The journey of your electricity

By Mike Malandro, President & CEO  
*Choptank Electric Cooperative*



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Most of us don't think about the journey of electricity when we flip a switch or press power on a device. But the energy travels a long way through your Choptank Electric power-lines before making it into your home.

Choptank Electric Cooperative receives power from our generation and transmission (G&T) co-op, Old Dominion Electric Cooperative (ODEC) in Virginia. We work closely with ODEC to provide electricity at the lowest cost possible. Being part of a G&T benefits members like you by placing ownership and control in the hands of your co-op, prioritizing affordability and reliability, supporting local economic development and fostering a sense of community.

Power plants can be thought of as factories that make electricity using various energy sources, like natural gas, solar, wind and nuclear energy. Across the U.S., more than 11,000 power plants deliver electricity to the grid.

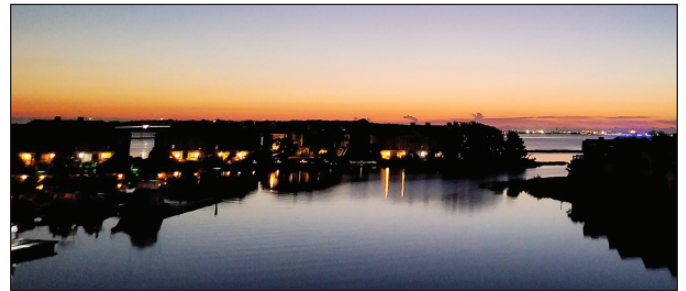
To get the electricity from power plants to you, we need a transportation system. High-voltage transmission lines act as the highways for electricity, transporting power over long distances. These lines are supported by massive towers and travel through vast landscapes, connecting power plants to electric substations.

Substations are like pit stops along the highway, where the voltage of electricity is adjusted. They play a crucial role in managing power flow and ensuring that electricity is safe for use in homes and businesses. Once the electricity is reduced to the proper voltage, it travels through distribution power lines, like the ones you typically see on the side of the road. Distribution lines carry electricity from substations to homes, schools and businesses. Distribution transformers, which look like metal buckets on the tops of power poles or large green boxes on the ground, further reduce the voltage to levels suitable for household appliances and electronic devices.

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## Message from the OPA BOARD PRESIDENT



**Richard Farr**  
OPA President

### A time of renewal and growth

As the days grow longer and the temperatures start to rise, I am delighted to welcome the arrival of spring to our community! With the change of seasons comes new opportunities for us to come together, enjoy the outdoors, and continue to build on the strong sense of community that makes Ocean Pines so special.

Spring is a time of renewal and growth, and I encourage each of you to take advantage of this fresh start by getting involved in community events, volunteering your time, or simply taking a moment to appreciate the beauty that surrounds us.

Ocean Pines has some exciting plans in the works for the coming months, including neighborhood clean-up days, social gatherings, and improvements to our wonderful amenities. I invite you to stay tuned for updates and join us in making our Ocean Pines community an even better place to live.

As your Association President, I am here to listen to your ideas, address any concerns you may have, and work together with our outstanding Board members to make our community the best it can be. I look forward to seeing all of you enjoying the warmer weather, blooming flowers, and longer days ahead.

**Let's make this Spring a season to remember in our community!**



Ocean Pines homeowners and residents send us **AMAZING photos each and every week**, and we're constantly blown away by your talent and by the incredible beauty of our **AWESOME** community. We can't wait to see what you're seeing and capturing in 2024!

To send us photos, please email [info@oceanpines.org](mailto:info@oceanpines.org).

## 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](mailto:directors@oceanpines.org).**



### PRESIDENT

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

**Richard Farr**  
[rfarr@oceanpines.org](mailto:rfarr@oceanpines.org)  
410-390-1425



### VICE PRESIDENT

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

**Stuart Lakernick**  
[slakernick@oceanpines.org](mailto:slakernick@oceanpines.org)  
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### TREASURER

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

**Monica Rakowski**  
[mrakowski@oceanpines.org](mailto:mrakowski@oceanpines.org)  
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### SECRETARY

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

**John Latham**  
[jlatham@oceanpines.org](mailto:jlatham@oceanpines.org)  
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### DIRECTOR

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**Steve Jacobs**  
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### DIRECTOR

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**Elaine Brady**  
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### DIRECTOR

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

**Jeff Heavner**  
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## EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT



### GENERAL MANAGER

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**John Viola**  
General Manager

## Operations updates: Financial news, construction and maintenance updates, and more

### Financial updates

The February financials show \$48,000 favorability to budget for the month, including \$9,000 favorability in revenues and \$39,000 favorability in expenses.

On expenses, we continue to be efficient and effective. That doesn't mean we have surplus. That just means we're favorable. Everything has been earmarked and it will be part of the budget going into next year.

Year-to-date favorability is now approximately \$908,000.

The total reserve balance as of Jan. 31 is \$8.3 million, including \$6.1 million in general replacement. The forecast for the next fiscal year is about \$1.5 million in spending and a total reserve balance of approximately \$7 million.

### Promotions announced

We recently announced the promotions of Michelle Hitchens as the new Aquatics director and Terry Underkoffler as the new Racquet Sports director.

Michelle took over as lead for the department several months ago and has reestablished swim lessons, along with many events that had not been done for several years.

Congrats to Michelle and her team. Aquatics is going to have a good start this year.

Terry stepped up and answered a need in that department. He has been involved in Ocean Pines Racquet Sports for roughly a decade. He'll have help from Membership Supervisor Ruth Ann Meyer, Deputy Public Works Director Nobie Violante, Recreation and Parks Director Debbie Donahue, and Tim McMullen

I'm very happy that Terry and Tim McMullen are back. We're looking forward to good results and good stuff this summer.

### Electronic signs

The existing sign structure at the North Gate had to be moved six feet because it was found to be in an easement. That caused a slight delay with the installation of the new electronic sign.

That was all completed. We have the permit. We have the sign ordered, and installation is likely in mid-April. I know there's a lot of anticipation for that. We definitely will have it installed before the beginning of the season.

### Landscaping efforts

Landscaping and beautification efforts continue, including new bulbs planted at the north and south entrances.

You'll see seasonal flowers on the North Gate bridge. The banners are also seasonal now and I've gotten a lot of phone calls and a lot of positive input.

### Worcester County Tourism collaboration

Department heads for Golf, Aquatics and Racquet Sports met with Worcester County Tourism officials on March 14 for a promotional video shoot. Each director talked about their department and what homeowners, residents and visitors can expect this spring and summer.



**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:

**Memorial Day:**  
Mon, May 27

**Independence Day:**  
Thu, July 4

## OCEAN PINES REPORT

A Quarterly Publication by  
**OCEAN PINES ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
239 Ocean Parkway, Ocean Pines, MD 21811

### Marketing & Public Relations Dept.

*Responsible for promoting Ocean Pines' amenities, as well as establishing & maintaining the Association website, cable access channels, & serving as the staff liaison to the local media.*

### Marketing & Public Relations Dir.

**Josh Davis**  
jdavis@oceanpines.org • 443.366.1844

### Marketing Coordinator

**Nancy MacCubbin**  
nmaccubbin@oceanpines.org  
410.641.7717 Ext. 3014



**To Advertise**  
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or visit OceanPines.org



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## Message from the **GENERAL MANAGER**

Worcester County Tourism Director Melanie Pursel oversaw the shoot, which will debut on April 6 and be part of upcoming county promotional efforts.

### **New golfers' lounge**

Golf Director Bob Beckelman approached us about creating a golfers' lounge in the Clubhouse Meeting Room.

What I've been told by Bob is, to be competitive with other golf courses, we really needed a golfers' lounge.

The lounge was put together using new patio furniture donated by a local golfer.

I've gotten good results on it. We are committed to getting a lounge here, like we have at Racquet Sports.

### **Tiki bar update**

We're committed to finishing the new tiki bar expansion before Memorial Day. Public Works removed dock boards for new power lines and removed some existing pavers to make room for the addition.

The main thing is getting the materials onsite. I believe and the team believes we're on track.

### **Veterans Memorial pavilion**

I met with Worcester County Veterans Memorial Foundation President Marie Gilmore to discuss plans for a new pavilion at the memorial grounds. Based on her feedback, I'm working with contractors on several different styles and options.

Plans are to finish the project before Veterans Day, in November, and we're on track for that.

### **Racquet Sports updates**

About \$25,000 has been spent on maintenance of the Racquet Sports building, including materials and labor. That includes a new HVAC system, office furniture, window repairs, paint, and other amenities.

The Association is also planning a renovation and/or expansion of the building. The main things were bigger bathrooms, a bigger pro shop, and a bigger office.

Our new Racquet Sports Director Terry Underkoffler gave

his feedback, and former Board member Frank Brown has done initial sketches for the improvements.

That will save us money once we go to Vista Design and the architects.

New tables and chairs were also ordered for pickleball players at the center, and that will help enhance the shade down there.

### **Safety updates**

Ten trees identified as safety issues were removed from White Horse Park. Several other large trees were trimmed.

We are on top of that and, anything that has come to our notice, we have worked on.

At the request of a homeowner, the Association also added "look again" safety signs at the intersection of Mumfords Landing Road and Yacht Club Drive.

### **Dog Park updates**

New sand was added at the Dog Park, to help with drainage issues.

The Association also repaired a damaged fence and will investigate a rain shelter for dog owners using the park. We have that on our task list.

### **Soft Shoreline project**

Public Relations Director Josh Davis, Public Works Director Eddie Wells, and Deputy Public Works Director Nobie Violante are leading a "soft shoreline" project at the South Gate Pond. The project aims to improve water quality and reduce erosion in that area, along with aesthetic improvements.

In cooperation with Maryland Coastal Bays Program, the Association received a \$150,000 federal grant for the project.

An RFP was sent in February and bids came back on March 21. The team will evaluate the bids and make a recommendation to the Board.

### **Other items**

If anyone has additional questions, please email the Info Team at [info@oceanpines.org](mailto:info@oceanpines.org) or call 410-641-7717 during normal business hours.



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## OPA announces promotions for Violante and Meyer

Ocean Pines Association General Manager John Viola on Feb. 1 announced a pair of promotions to senior staff members.

Viola said Nobie Violante, currently the Public Works Manager, will be promoted to Deputy Director of Public Works.



**Nobie Violante**  
*Deputy Director  
of Public Works*

Viola said both staffers were highly recommended by their respective department heads.

“Nobie will take on increased responsibility for maintenance of the Racquet Sports complex, in addition to the Marina,” Viola said.

Additionally, Ruth Ann Meyer, currently the Assessment and Memberships Manager in the Finance Department, will be promoted to Senior Manager.

“Ruth Ann has taken on increased responsibilities and she will now be in charge of the business side of Racquet Sports, in addition to her current responsibilities in Finance and Assessments,” Viola said.

“Nobie has been my right hand for many years now and he always does a great job for us,” Public Works Director Eddie Wells said. “It’s well deserved and I’m very happy for him.”

Finance Director Steve Phillips said Meyer has been a key part of the team for more than 25 years.

“Ruth Ann has stepped up for us on a number of occasions, and she’s extremely knowledgeable about our organization,” Phillips said.

Viola said both Violante and Meyer would continue to report to their department heads and will also have a “dotted line” to the general manager’s office on the organizational chart, at this time.

“I am very pleased to make this announcement. Recognizing our staff is one of my favorite parts of the job,” Viola said. “Nobie and Ruth Ann both earned this and, as I structure the organization to meet the needs of the coming year, I hope to be able to make a few more announcements like this down the road.”



# Navigating Medicare with Confidence

## UPCOMING MEDICARE EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

**APRIL 10<sup>TH</sup>**  
**11:30 am**

with Marissa Clark  
and Brandy Guy  
**EASTON, MD**

**MAY 8<sup>TH</sup>**  
**11:30 am**

with Alyssa Sinagra  
and Steve Mason  
**SALISBURY, MD**

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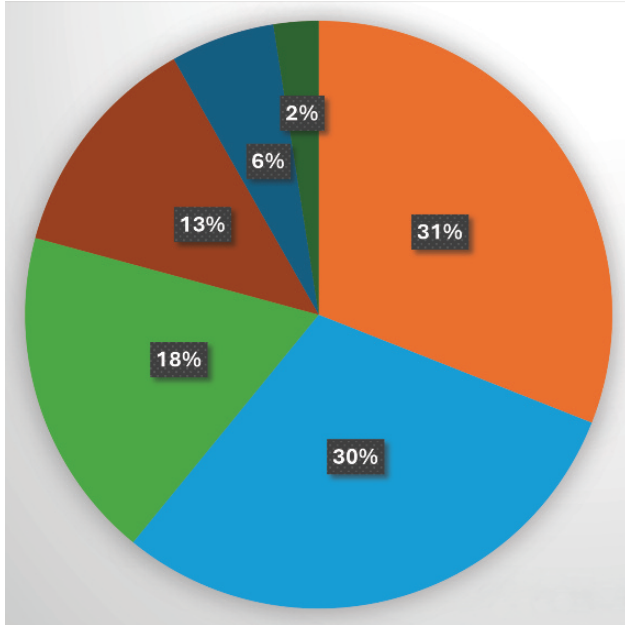
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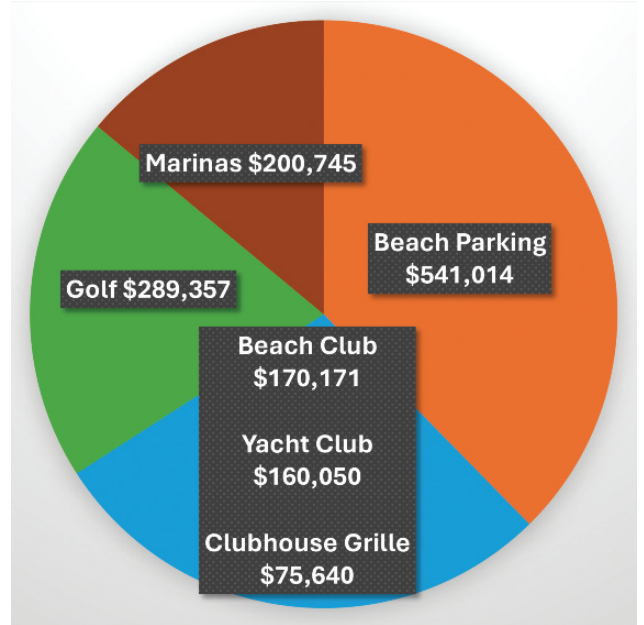
## Where your assessment dollars go



\*Calculated net costs are reduced by (\$160) because of the FY24-25 net profit for amenity operations.

<span style="color: orange;">■</span> <b>Public Safety</b>	<b>(\$313)</b>
<span style="color: blue;">■</span> <b>Public Works, Gen. Maintenance, CPI</b>	<b>(\$302)</b>
<span style="color: green;">■</span> <b>Capital Replacement</b>	<b>(\$185)</b>
<span style="color: brown;">■</span> <b>Admin</b>	<b>(\$127)</b>
<span style="color: darkblue;">■</span> <b>Rec and Parks</b>	<b>(\$ 58)</b>
<span style="color: darkgreen;">■</span> <b>Bulkheads</b>	<b>(\$ 25)</b>

## Amenities with an Operating Profit



<span style="color: orange;">■</span> <b>Beach Parking</b>	<b>\$541,014</b>
<span style="color: blue;">■</span> <b>Beach Club</b>	<b>\$170,171</b>
<span style="color: darkblue;">■</span> <b>Yacht Club</b>	<b>\$160,050</b>
<span style="color: blue;">■</span> <b>Clubhouse Grille</b>	<b>\$ 75,640</b>
<span style="color: green;">■</span> <b>Golf</b>	<b>\$289,357</b>
<span style="color: brown;">■</span> <b>Marinas</b>	<b>\$200,745</b>

- The majority of OPA homeowners' assessments dollars goes toward keeping the community safe and well maintained.
- More than half, **61%**, pays for public safety (including **Police, Fire and EMS**), and **Public Works and Maintenance**.
- Roughly **18%** goes to funding for current and future year **capital expenses**, and about **13%** pays for **administration costs**, which includes the GM Office, Finance and PR/Marketing departments, along with other administrative costs such as legal expenses, IT contracted services, bad debt expense, Board expenses, etc.
- About **6%** helps pay for **Recreation and Parks** programs, and **2%** pays for common area **bulkhead replacement**.
- Four of Ocean Pines' six amenities were budgeted with an operating profit in fiscal year 2024-2025.
- That includes:
  - **Beach Parking** with a **\$541,014** operating profit
  - Combined **Food and Beverage** with a **\$405,861** operating profit
  - **Golf** with a **\$289,357** operating profit.
  - **Marinas** with a **\$200,745** operating profit
- A fifth amenity, **Racquet Sports**, is budgeted close to breaking even.
- Combined amenities are budgeted with an overall operating profit of about **\$1.367 million**, meaning the amenities help to reduce the overall Ocean Pines assessment.



2024

OCEAN PINES FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET

# Events & Happenings

**SATURDAYS IN WHITE HORSE PARK**

**8am-1pm Mar 2-Sep 28 | 9am-12pm Oct 5-Feb 28**

- MAY 11 Blooms & Bouquets** *Celebrate Mother's Day with a home & garden market: Flowers, hanging baskets, starter plants, decor & more.*
- MAY 25 Memorial Day Weekend Market** *Produce, meats, baked goods, desserts & fixings for a holiday cookout.*
- JUN 1 Strawberry Market** *Large displays of locally grown strawberries, strawberry baked goods & more, plus entertainment and fun.*
- JUL 4 July 4th Celebration (Thur. 8am-1pm)** *Featuring an abundance of fresh local produce, jams, eggs, local honey & baked goods.*
- AUG 31 Labor Day Weekend Market** *The marketplace is the perfect place to pick up the ingredients for an end-of-summer cookout.*
- SEP 21 Apple Harvest Jamboree** *Celebrate the diverse & unique fall offerings of Delmarva & have old-fashioned family country fun.*
- OCT 19 Pumpkin Festival** *Enjoy an unforgettable experience of choosing the perfect pumpkin, get lost in our artisan village and enjoy a glass of fresh pressed apple cider!*
- NOV 23 Thanksgiving Harvest Market** *All of the best fixings for your Thanksgiving table & home. Food, demonstrations, contests, live music & more.*
- NOV 26 Turkey Market (Tue. 9-11am)** *Gather your special orders & pick up last-minute items for a bountiful holiday.*
- NOV 30 Small Business Saturday** *Visit and shop the many unique marketplace shops, boutiques, and galleries for one-of-a-kind gifts.*
- DEC 21 Christmas Market** *Capture the spirit of the holiday season with us. Browse a selection of handmade crafts, artisanal gifts, and delicious treats.*



Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market | 239 Ocean Parkway, Ocean Pines, MD | 410.641.7052  
oceanpines.org



**Linda Martin**  
Senior Executive  
Office Manager

## Good fences make good neighbors!

If you ever lived in a HOA in the past, you know that any addition or alteration to your property requires a permit. Ocean Pines is no exception.

The Declaration of Restrictions and the Architectural Review Guidelines outline the “dos and don’ts” of living in a HOA, and what requires a permit. For more information, please review the Architectural Review Guidelines on

the Ocean Pines website at: [www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/architectural-review](http://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/architectural-review).

The Architectural Review Committee has been hard at work over the last year reviewing and detailing the guidelines, so there are no questions as to what is/is not allowed in Ocean Pines. Look for the updated guidelines to be approved by the Board of Directors at the April Board meeting.

One violation that has been creeping up a lot lately – just because one person sees it, then another person sees it, then it turns into a “pandemic” so to speak – is the number of metal or wire enclosures being placed on properties throughout our community, with all of them so far being placed without a permit, or at least contacting Ocean Pines ahead of time to see if they are allowed.

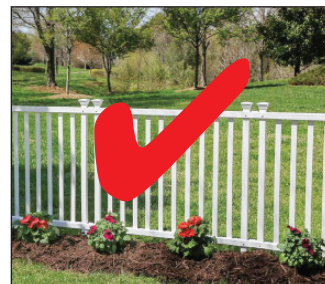
Some get confused as they feel these are “temporary” fences, as they are just staked into the ground. But, according to the guidelines, “temporary” fences, which do not require a permit, are fences that are put around vegetable gardens or

newly landscaped areas. They cannot exceed 2’ above the ground and need to be removed after the growing season, or when the newly landscaped area is established. If the enclosure that you have on your property does not meet these requirements, and you have not contacted the CPI Department to inquire, then yes – you need a permit.

Regardless of if the enclosure is staked in the ground or in concrete, for a regular 4’ fence (or 24’ of a 6’ high privacy fence), you will need to get a permit from Worcester County and Ocean Pines, and the enclosure must follow the guidelines:

- Enclosure shall be behind the front foundation line of the main structure and shall not extend beyond the side building restriction line, or closer than 10’ from the rear property line (or 15’ from the bulkhead cap).
- **The enclosure shall not be constructed of metal posts, metal rails, or wire mesh.**
- The outside perimeter shall have shrubs or plantings enough to screen the enclosure.

When it doubt, just ask! Contact [info@oceanpines.org](mailto:info@oceanpines.org) (or 410-641-7717) for any questions you have. The Info team is here to assist you.



## Keep ditches clear

*Clogged ditches can lead to CPI violations and fines*

Ocean Pines Association is asking homeowners to keep their ditches clear of leaves and other debris.

Clogging one ditch can cause drainage problems that impact multiple properties, or even an entire neighborhood. Filling ditches with leaves or other debris can lead to a Compliance Permit and Inspections (CPI) violation from Ocean Pines, along with up to \$1,000 fine from Worcester County.

Additionally, if clogged ditches cause property owners upstream a hardship and those areas become flooded, violators can be sued civilly under Maryland Common Drainage Laws. Homeowners may report improperly clogged ditches by emailing [info@oceanpines.org](mailto:info@oceanpines.org). Doing so will trigger an investigation by CPI staff.

For residents who are cleaning out their ditches, Republic Services will collect up to four bags of yard debris per house during normal trash collection, year-round. Ocean Pines Public

Works collects bagged leaves in November and December only.

Homeowners can also drop off loose or paper-bagged yard debris at the Public Works yard on 1 Firehouse Lane. Doing so requires a sticker, which can be picked up at the Public Works building. There is currently no fee for the stickers. The Public Works yard is generally open on Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., and special drop-off times will be posted on [oceanpines.org](http://oceanpines.org).

Ocean Pines Public Works will continue to clean ditches in common areas.

The prior practice of having the Association clean out all ditches was discontinued after some residents took 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 became very costly in terms of labor, equipment, and disposal.

In Worcester County, roadside ditches are the typical means for providing flood control for roads, but if not managed optimally, these ditches can also contribute to water pollution.

The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide Worcester County citizens with information about the roadside drainage system, specifically, where does roadside drainage occur, how it is maintained, why certain maintenance techniques are preferable, and what actions citizens can take to ensure optimal road safety and water quality associated with the drainage system.

Download the complete fact sheet at [www.co.worcester.md.us/departments/publicworks/roads](http://www.co.worcester.md.us/departments/publicworks/roads)

## What is the Purpose of Roadside Ditches?

Roadside ditches, swales or similar drainage features are installed to move water from rain and runoff from the road to a pond, creek, or other waterway. A ditch may require design and maintenance that is based upon specific local characteristics and needs to ensure adequate road drainage as well as safety.

## Who is Responsible for Drainage in Worcester County?

All public roads are located within land which is referred to as the road right-of-way (R-O-W). Roadside drainage features, typically ditches, are also located within road R-O-Ws. The R-O-W is typically owned and managed by a public entity, such as the County or a homeowners' association. The Worcester County Department of Public Works has jurisdiction over, and is responsible for managing, County road R-O-Ws.

Importantly, the role of a ditch or other drainage feature within the road R-O-W is to drain the road, not the adjacent private property. Drainage of private properties is the responsibility of homeowners' associations, Public Drainage Associations (these exist primarily in agricultural areas) or individual property owners.

## How Can a Ditch be Designed & Managed to Minimize Pollution?

Pollutants from the roadway as well as sediment can be transported from the road R-O-W to surface waters or groundwater, and ultimately, to the bays. Adequate vegetation and/or ponding slow and filter runoff. To ensure water quality is protected, the County creates gentle slope drainage swales wherever possible; uses seed and matting to stabilize new drainage; does not cut trees or remove stumps, except when necessary to improve road drainage or for safety reasons; and mows only 5 times per year.

## Aren't "Clean" Ditches the Best Way to Assure Drainage?

Removing vegetation and exposing soil does not improve ditch drainage, and can pollute downstream waters with additional sediment and clog drainage.



Bare soil in this ditch will erode and contribute to pollution downstream.  
*Photo by Bruce Nichols, NRCS*



Sediment traps and protective buffers improve water quality downstream.  
*Photo by Bruce Nichols, NRCS*



A wide, shallow drainage area can reduce erosion and control sediments.  
*Photo by Bruce Nichols, NRCS*



Adjacent property owners can reduce pollution by avoiding over-mowing, fertilizing or placing stone, wood or cement in the R.O.W.  
*Photo by Bruce Nichols, NRCS*

## Should There be Water Standing in the Ditch?

The open drainage system is suited to our coastal, rural landscape. It also helps protect water quality by slowing the movement of stormwater and providing some settling of sediment and uptake of pollutants before it reaches creeks or bays. Unlike dense urban areas, Worcester County does not use closed pipe systems to convey stormwater. Closed pipe systems are expensive and they can cause costly damage to water quality.

## What Design and Management Techniques Both Protect Water Quality & Provide Adequate Drainage?

- **Shallow, wet ditches remove nutrients and settle out sediments better than deep, narrow ditches.**
- **Stable, vegetated ditch sides prevent erosion.**
- **Small pools, if it is possible to provide them, trap sediment.**
- **Ditching should be avoided in areas where the road R-O-W consists of tidal marsh, because roadside drainage will usually not be improved while sediment pollution will increase.**
- **Should trees be removed from a road R-O-W, stumps should be left in place to prevent erosion and retain stability unless drainage is impeded.**
- **Grass buffers adjacent to a ditch/drainage area help reduce erosion, therefore reducing the need for maintenance.**

## But What About Mosquitoes?

Unfortunately, mosquitoes are part of life on the coast. Because mosquitoes sometimes carry diseases that affect humans, there are certain actions and precautions both government and you can take to minimize human exposure. Mosquitoes breed best in standing water without natural predators. The best example of this situation is a container left about that fills with rainwater. Draining County roadside ditches will have no significant effect on local mosquito populations if wetlands or salt marsh is nearby. Ditches that drain within 30 hours of a storm event will not breed mosquitoes. Some ditches provide some habitat for mosquito predators, such as fish, which can minimize the mosquito population.

## How Can Citizens Contribute to Road Safety & Water Quality?

Landowners adjacent to road R-O-Ws can work with the County to ensure that both public safety and the environment are protected. Recognizing the purpose of the roadside drainage system and qualities of effective, environmentally friendly drainage is the first step. Adjacent landowners should **NOT** do the following activities in a road R-O-W and ditch:

- **Scrape or excessively mow, exposing bare soil, as this can contribute to erosion and sediment pollution.**
- **Fertilize or apply herbicides, as this may pollute water.**
- **Place any materials in the R-O-W including: yard debris such as grass clippings or leaves, landscaping such as trees or rocks, or pavement as this may impede road drainage.**

Landowners who are interested in working with the county to install practices that enhance water quality associated with roadside drainage may contact the Department of Comprehensive Planning at 410-632-5651.

For more info or to report a problem with road drainage, please contact Worcester County Dept. of Public Works, Roads Division, 410-632-2244.

## Message from PUBLIC WORKS



**Eddie Wells**  
Director

Many homeowners and residents in the Pines spend the early part of spring weeding, planting, and generally tidying up their yards and gardens.

For those looking to dispose of yard waste, the Public Works Yard will be open from Monday, April 29 through Saturday, June 1 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Please note that we will be closed on Sundays, as well as on Monday, May 27 in observance of Memorial Day.

Remember, we can only accept yard debris during this time,

so please leave the plastic bags at home. To access the yard, you'll need the new sticker for the 2024 season, which will be available at the Public Works office.

After June 1, we'll adjust our schedule for the summer months. Starting then, the yard will be open on Wednesdays.

As always, we encourage you to call in advance to let us know you're coming. Your cooperation helps us better serve you and maintain a smooth operation.



**Nobie Violante**  
Deputy Director

## Message from MARINAS & WATER SPORTS



**Ron Fisher**  
Dock Master

As we eagerly anticipate the opening of the Ocean Pines Marina on May 1, there are a few important reminders and updates to keep in mind as we prepare for another boating season.

First, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all our returning members and newcomers alike. The Marina isn't just a place to dock your boat; it's a

vibrant community of boating enthusiasts coming together to enjoy the beauty of the waterways.

**Parking Regulations:** We would like to remind everyone that, effective immediately, vehicles without parking permits will be subject to towing from the Marina Parking Lot. We understand the importance of parking availability for our valued members and guests, and enforcing this policy ensures fairness and accessibility for all. Should your vehicle be towed, you can retrieve it 24/7 at Racetrack Towing on Rt. 50 by calling 410-641-5262. Please be aware that the retrieval cost for towing is \$385.

**Marina Amenities:** The Ocean Pines Marina offers a wide array of amenities to enhance your boating experience. From

### Important updates and amenities

slip rentals to fuel sales and everything in between, we strive to provide convenience and quality service to our community. Here's a quick rundown of what we offer:

- Slip rentals for boats up to 44 feet in length
- Pump-out station
- Water and electric hookups
- Boat ramp for easy access to the water
- Fish cleaning station
- Non-ethanol fuel sales onsite
- Boating supplies and apparel
- Bait, tackle, ice, snacks, ice cream, and cold drinks available
- Free boat tie-up for two hours at the t-docks ONLY while at the restaurant, when available
- Limited vehicle parking for slip holders only

Additionally, don't forget to take advantage of the adjacent pools - Yacht Club Pool and Mumford's Landing Pool - for a refreshing dip after a day on the water.

For more information and to explore our facilities further, visit our website at [www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/marinas-water-sports](http://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/marinas-water-sports) or give us a call at 410-641-7447.

***We look forward to seeing you all on the water soon. Happy Boating!***

### Marine Activities Advisory Committee seeks suggestions from residents

The Marine Activities Advisory Committee (MAAC) is once again gathering comments and suggestions from the Ocean Pines community on what marine projects and issues you feel should be addressed this year and beyond. The committee will review, sort, and prioritize the comments and concerns and send recommendations to the Board of Directors on behalf of the MAAC.

For those who don't know, the MAAC serves as an advisory group to the Ocean Pines Board, and as liaison to some government agencies, including the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and to volunteer groups (such as Maryland Coastal Bays Program and Assateague Coastal Trust). In addition, the MAAC disseminates information on water and marine safety regulations, launching of boats, dredging, bulkheads, and questions or

issues involving Ocean Pines boat ramps and parking areas. The MAAC also works with local groups and other committees within Ocean Pines to raise awareness of key issues and various programs affecting our waterways.

The committee is planning several educational articles throughout the year to share with the community through This Week in the Pines, and plans to be at the Farmer's Market for a few spring and summer Saturdays in the Community Corner. Members will have information on the oyster restoration project, and will partner with volunteer organizations on displays and educational materials - to share how you can safely use and protect our beautiful water resources in Ocean Pines and beyond.

If you have suggestions, questions, or comments for the MAAC, **please send them to Karen Steinberger at [ksteinberger5261@gmail.com](mailto:ksteinberger5261@gmail.com).**



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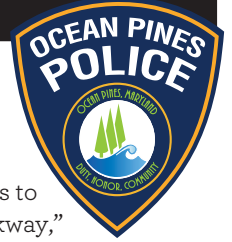
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**Tim Robinson**  
Chief of Police

## OPA Police, GM continue focus on safety

Ocean Pines has traditionally been “a very safe place, and we want to keep it like that,” Police Chief Tim Robinson said at a Board meeting in February.

Robinson said he and General Manager John Viola have been looking at new ways to keep the

community.

“We are currently looking at new things to add warning signs, especially on the Parkway,” Robinson said.

On a related note, Viola said a workgroup will create a set of standards for signage on OPA-owned property. He said Robinson will lead the effort.

“We’re going to list them by categories, see what is regulatory with the county [and state and federal government] ... and which ones are ours, so we can be more consistent and streamlined,” he said.

Viola said once that work is done, the team will present a recommendation to the Board.

Also in the works, Robinson said Ocean Pines Police will conduct “significant speed surveys” during the next several months.

“Some of them will be done remotely with remote equipment, and some of them are going to be done with live officers,” he said. “Everybody, please obey the speed limit.”

For more information on Ocean Pines Police, including hiring opportunities, visit [www.oceanpinespolice.com](http://www.oceanpinespolice.com).



community safe.

Viola said recent safety improvements include crosswalks along Manklin Creek Road and the Camelot Walking Trail, and speed bumps at the Ocean Pines Racquet Center. The Maryland Department of Transportation also installed a safety crosswalk at Manklin and Racetrack Road.

Robinson said he and Viola worked with the Worcester County Bike and Pedestrian Safety Coalition led by Patti Stevens on those improvements. He said he, Viola, and Public Works Director Eddie Wells have also looked at signage improvements in the

## OPPD announces new website

The Ocean Pines Police Department in March announced the launch of a brand-new website, [oceanpinespolice.com](http://oceanpinespolice.com).

The new site features an extensive FAQ on issues ranging from traffic rules and regulations, to noise complaints and how to make an anonymous tip.

There is also a contact field for nonemergency issues, a staff directory, and information about employment opportunities.

The starting salary for entry level Ocean Pines Police officers, after field training, is now \$63,500.

Police Chief Tim Robinson said funding for the website came from

the Police Accountability, Community and Transparency Grant received last fall through the Governor’s Office of Crime Control and Prevention.

He said a local vendor, Salt Water Media of Berlin, created the site.

“We are just excited about the modernization of our webpage,” Robinson said. “The new site will allow us to get info out to our community quickly, and provide us with a mechanism for the community to contact us easily in a convenient format for any nonemergency issues.”



## In fond remembrance



Betsy Rayne Ruark, 74, of Willards passed away on Feb. 21 at her home surrounded by her loving family.

Ruark was a beloved employee who served the Ocean Pines Community for 32 years, working as a police dispatcher from 1982 to 2014. Her service and professionalism during her long tenure are still appreciated to this day by members of the Ocean Pines Police Department.

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**Joe Enste**  
OPVFD President

The Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department is reminding residents to make their house numbers visible for firefighters and other emergency responders. This is especially important during a fire or a medical emergency, when seconds count.

“It’s important for firefighters to be able to quickly identify the address of a burning building,” Lt. Joe Enste, OPVFD president and

public information officer, said. “If the numbers are not visible, it can delay our response and make it more difficult to put out the fire or save a life.”

House numbers are also a requirement of Ocean Pines Association Architectural Review Committee guidelines.

Per section 500.2.A., “The street address house number shall be posted to be visible from the street. It may be displayed on the front of the house or on a sign in the front yard (Note: The house number is not the same as the lot and section number and can be obtained from the CPI Department office). House

## Help first responders help you

numbers shall not be less than four (4) inches or no greater than eight (8) inches in height, a contrasting color, and visible from the street.”

While there are several ways to make house numbers visible, the fire department offers a fundraising opportunity to purchase a reflective 911 address sign. Each sign is constructed of aluminum, with green and white reflective material

and numbers that measures 6 by 18 inches. Signs with mounting posts cost \$60 (which includes free installation) or \$48 for just the sign.

It is important to remember to not plant shrubs or trees that will block the view of house numbers from the street.

“By making your address visible, you can help ensure that emergency responders can get to your home quickly and safely,” Enste said. “This could save your life or the life of a loved one.”

Download an order form at [www.opvfd.com](http://www.opvfd.com) or call 410-641-8272 for more information.



**Joey Widgeon**  
Fire Chief





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**Debbie Donahue**  
Director of  
Recreation & Parks

## Spring is back and our programs are better than ever

Spring is back and we're diving headfirst into a variety of exciting events and activities! After planning since December, we're thrilled to offer tons of fun for everyone this year. Grab a copy of our *Spring/Summer Activity Guide* at the Ocean Pines Community Center to explore our full schedule of events and activities.

This year we will once again host **Family Fun Night** at the Yacht Club Pool, **Concerts in the Park** at White Horse Park, and **July 4th events** such as the **Freedom 5K**, the **Independence Day Celebration** and amazing **fireworks** over the South Gate Pond.

Come join our new **Disc Golf League at Bainbridge Park**. Starting in April, the cost is \$35 per player and matches are Fridays at 5:30 p.m.

Also, don't miss our **Spring Bike Ride Day**, Saturday, May 11 at 3 p.m., starting and ending from the Golf Club. Registration is free, but we need a head count for safety reasons, so please register in advance.

We have multiple **craft classes** planned for the summer as well as **Surf Camp** and **Body Board Camp**. Let's not forget the **Maryland Coastal Bay Day** event on May 19 at White Horse Park, which includes boat rides on the St. Martin River, hands-on activities, environmental exhibitors and more.

The very popular **Ocean Pines Farmers & Artisans Market** in White Horse Park continues to provide many great opportunities to pick up some fresh produce, from-scratch food, jewelry, clothing, handmade items, and many other products. The market also features a Community Corner for non-profit organizations and a Kids' Market Zone with lots of fun things for our smaller market visitors.

The **Pine'eer Artisan Gift Shop**, also in White Horse Park, is open on Saturdays and Sundays throughout the summer. All products in the store are made by members of the club. The shop is the best place to pick up something awesome for

that person who has everything. The Pine'eer Craft Club will also host craft fairs on Aug. 3 and Nov. 2. Mark your calendar for these two special events featuring multiple vendors and an amazing assortment of products.

The **Ocean Pines Racquet Center** will host a pickleball event on July 13 with proceeds going to Believe in Tomorrow, a local nonprofit that provides hospital and respite housing services to critically ill children and their families. Come out and support a great cause!

Visit the Recreation and Parks Department at the Community Center any time to pick up flyers, rent a room for a special party, check out the fun things going on in Ocean Pines, or just to say "hi."

The Community Center is open 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Friday and 10 a.m.- 8 p.m. on Saturdays. If you're interested in **renting a room**, give us a call - we have three rooms, along with a kitchen, that I'm sure can fit all your rental needs. We also offer birthday party specials that include a **gym and party room**. Call 410-641-7052 for pricing, or to inquire about registering for any of our events or classes.

For more summer fun info, visit the Ocean Pines website, follow us on Facebook, or stop by the Community Center.

*I look forward to sunshine, fun and seeing all your bright faces!*

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This event will help us continue to provide free after school programs to kids in our community, free family art day, support our art program for those with addiction and in recovery, and keep our doors open for monthly gallery exhibits, classes and so much more!

This is an Art League of Ocean City event. All proceeds will benefit the Arts in our community.



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## Bay Day returns, May 19 in Ocean Pines

The fifth annual Bay Day event returns to White Horse Park in Ocean Pines on Sunday, May 19 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Bay Day is a collaborative conservation effort between the Maryland Coastal Bays Program and Ocean Pines Association and is aimed to help improve the health of the waterways that shoulder the residential shores of Ocean Pines. This free, family-friendly event caters to all age groups through hands-on activities, boat tours, live music, food trucks, live animal exhibits, and more.

“The Maryland Coastal Bays Program relies on our communities to help us protect the resources and ecology of our Coastal Bays,” MCBP Executive Director Kevin Smith said. “Events like Bay Day are important to communicate relevant and current environmental information to interested citizens and provide a basis of support to help keep our waterways clean and beautiful.”

The event this year will feature more than 30 conservation partners, including the Phillips Wharf FishMobile, Ocean Pines Anglers, UMES 4-H STEM, Chincoteague Bay Field Station, Assateague Coastal Trust, Protectors of the St. Martin River, and many more. The first 200 attendees will receive a canvas bag, hand-painted by students from Worcester County Public Schools.

“People should feel welcome to come and stay all day,” MCBP Education Coordinator Liz Wist said. “They can learn from environmental organizations, take a boat tour on the St. Martin River, pick up a native plant, and participate in the interactive exhibits.”

The recycling station will also be back this year. Community members can bring their alkaline batteries, old phones and more to drop off for recycling. Go Green OC will collect compost.

For more information on the compost and recycling program, and for weekly Bay Day updates, visit the “Bay Day in Ocean Pines” event on Facebook.



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**Sun., April 21**      8 a.m.-4 p.m.

*\*also includes online pre-class work*

**Must attend all session times and dates for full certification!**





**Michelle Hitchens**

*Aquatics Director*

## Spring into fun with Ocean Pines Aquatics

As we say goodbye to winter and eagerly anticipate the warmth of spring, it's time to unveil the exciting lineup waiting for you at Ocean Pines Aquatics. With four pools in Ocean Pines and one located in Ocean City, there's no shortage of aquatic adventures to embark upon this season.

At the Sports Core Pool, you can enjoy invigorating swims and family friend events year-round. But the real magic happens outdoors, where the sunshine kisses the water and creates an irresistible allure for people of all ages. Food and drinks are served at the Yacht Club and Beach Club pools, and the Swim and Racquet Club and Mumfords Landing pools are popular with children and families. All our pools are always open to the public.

Our outdoor pools will open their gates on May 25, ushering in a season of sun-soaked memories and refreshing dips. And what better way to celebrate family bonding than our Family Splash Nights on July 6, Aug. 3, and Aug. 31, from 5-8 p.m.? It's the perfect recipe for laughter, fun, and cherished moments with your loved ones.

Looking to unwind after a long day? Dive into relaxation with our Twilight Swims, offering the ultimate evening escape

during the last hour of regular pool hours.

Consult the spring/summer Activity Guide for times and prices, and treat yourself to a tranquil aquatic retreat under the starry sky.

For those looking to make a splash in their career, mark your calendars for the Lifeguard Certification class on April 19-21. Classes are free for those gearing up to work with us during the upcoming summer season – an invaluable opportunity to gain essential skills while enjoying the perks of poolside employment.

Residents and visitors can also take advantage of our diverse range of classes and lessons throughout the spring and summer, catering to people of all ages and skill levels.

Offerings include watercycle and trampoline workouts, underwater weight training and aerobics, and Total Body Fitness classes that combine cardio, kickboxing, dance and Tabata.

You can also host private parties at the Sports Core Pool during normal business hours, plus our exclusive Swim and Racquet Night parties. Call us today to book your event and create memories that will last a lifetime.

For more information on our offerings and events, visit [www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/aquatics](http://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/aquatics) or consult the Activity Guide, also available on the website.

**Join us and let Ocean Pines Association Aquatics be your ultimate destination for aquatic fun this spring and beyond!**

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#### **WATER VOLLEYBALL**

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This total-body cardio workout combines hydrocycles & trampolines. **Please show up 10 min. prior to class time to set up your station. Water shoes must be worn & can be purchased at Sports Core Pool if you do not have your own.**

**FRIDAYS • 9:00am–9:40am**

## Hitchens promoted to Aquatics Director

Ocean Pines Association General Manager John Viola in February announced that Aquatics Manager Michelle Hitchens would be promoted to Aquatics Director.

Hitchens has more than a decade of experience in the Aquatics Department. She was promoted to Aquatics Manager in September 2023, reporting to Senior Executive Office Manager Linda Martin.

As a director, she will report directly to General Manager John Viola.

“Michelle has taken on a leadership role in the Aquatics Department and stepped up accordingly,” Viola said. “Credit to her, and credit to Linda for helping to develop her skillset as a director.”

Martin mentored Hitchens over the last five months, helping with budget development and financial accounting, among other things.

“Michelle has been a dedicated Aquatics employee for

many years, and we’re excited to see her take on this new role,” Martin said.

Hitchens said she is looking forward to new challenges and new opportunities in her expanded role.

“I am very thankful and excited for everything between the position and what we are trying to bring to the Aquatic Department,” she said. “We want everything to run as smoothly as possible, so everyone has a fun and relaxing time at the pools.”

Viola said Hitchens stepped up in September and was looking for more responsibility, and Ocean Pines had a need in Aquatics.

“Michelle has earned this and, as I structure the organization to meet the needs of the coming year, I hope to be able to make a few more announcements like this down the road,” he said. “Please join me in wishing Michelle continued success.”



**SWIMMIN WIMMIN: DEEP WATER & men!**

**WHEN: MON / WED / FRI, 8:00am-8:50am**

**APR 1 – MAY 10**  
**MAY 13 – JUN 21**  
**JUN 24 – AUG 2**

**AUG 5 – SEP 13** 8/19-8/30 at Swim & Racquet Club

**SWIMMIN WIMMIN: SHALLOW WATER & men!**

**WHEN: MON / WED / FRI, 8:00am-8:50am**

**APR 1 – MAY 10**  
**MAY 13 – JUN 21**  
**JUN 24 – AUG 2**

**AUG 5 – SEP 13** 8/19-8/30 at Swim & Racquet Club

**FEE:** Swim Member \$55 (drop-in \$6); OP Resident \$65 (drop-in \$7); Non-Resident \$81 (drop-in \$8)

**TOTAL BODY FITNESS I**

**WHEN: MON / WED / FRI, 10:00am-10:45am**

**APR 23 – MAY 30**

**WHEN: MON / WED, 10:00am-10:45am**

**JUN 24 – JUL 31**

**TOTAL BODY FITNESS II**

**WHEN: TUE / THU, 9:00am-9:45am**

**APR 23 – MAY 30**

**JUN 18 – JUL 30** No Class 7/4

**SEP 3 – OCT 10**

**FEE:** (18-class session): Swim Member \$88; OP Resident \$100; Non-Resident \$120; (12-class session): Swim Member \$59; OP Resident \$66; Non-Resident \$80; **Drop-in:** Swim Member \$6; OP Resident \$7; Non-Resident \$8

**HYDRORIDER WATER CYCLING**

**WHEN: MON / WED, 9:00am-9:40am**

**APR 22 – MAY 29**

**JUN 10 – JUL 17** No Class 7/4

**JUL 29 – SEP 18** No Class 8/19-8/30

**WHEN: TUE / THU, 9:00am-9:45am**

**APR 23 – MAY 30**

**JUN 11 – JUL 18** No Class 7/4

**JUL 30 – SEP 5** No Class 8/19-8/30

**SEP 17 – OCT 24**

**WHEN: TUE / THU, 10:00am-10:45am**

**APR 23 – MAY 30**

**JUN 17 – JUL 24** No Class 7/4

**AUG 5 – SEP 25** No Class 8/19-9/2

**FEE:** Swim Member \$90 (drop-in \$9); OP Resident \$95 (drop-in \$11); Non-Resident \$100 (drop-in \$13)



**EARLYBIRD LAP SWIM**

**WHEN: MON-FRI, 6:00am-7:50am**

**APR 29 – JUN 7**

**JUN 10 – JUL 19**

**JUL 22 – AUG 30** 8/19-8/30 at Swim & Racquet Club

**FEE:** Swim Member, free OP Resident \$65 (drop-in \$8); Non-Resident \$78 (drop-in \$8) **Pay lifeguard on duty.**

**SHAPE UPS**

**WHEN: TUE / THU, 8:00am-8:50am**

**MAR 26 – MAY 2**

**MAY 14 – JUN 20**

**JUL 2 – AUG 8**

**FEE:** Swim Member \$40 (drop-in \$6); OP Resident \$50 (drop-in \$7); Non-Resident \$65 (drop-in \$8)

**WET WORKS I: DEEP WATER**

**WHEN: MON / WED / FRI, 9:30am-10:20am**

**thru MAY 3**

**MAY 13 – JUN 21**

**JUL 1 – AUG 9** No Class 8/19-8/30

**WET WORKS II: SHALLOW WATER**

**WHEN: TUE / THU, 9:30am-10:20am**

**thru MAY 2**

**MAY 14 – JUN 20**

**JUL 2 – AUG 8** No Class 8/19-8/30

**FEE:** *Wet Works I:* Swim Member \$60; OP Resident \$70; Non-Resident \$86; *Wet Works II:* Swim Member \$44; OP Resident \$54; Non-Resident \$61; **Drop-in:** Swim Member \$6; OP Resident \$7; Non-Resident \$8

**CREAKY JOINTS I**

**WHEN: MON / WED / FRI, 11:00am-11:50am**

**MAR 25 – MAY 3**

**MAY 13 – JUN 21**

**JUL 1 – AUG 9** No Class 8/19-8/30

**CREAKY JOINTS II**

**WHEN: TUE / THU, 11:00am-11:50am**

**MAR 26 – MAY 2**

**MAY 14 – JUN 20**

**JUL 2 – AUG 8** No Class 8/19-8/30

**FEE:** *Creaky Joints I:* Swim Member \$60; OP Resident \$70; Non-Resident \$86; *Creaky Joints II:* Swim Member \$44; OP Resident \$54; Non-Resident \$61; **Drop-in:** Swim Member \$6; OP Resident \$7; Non-Resident \$8

**AQUA YOGA**

**WHEN: WED / FRI, 8:00am-8:45am**

**thru MAY 3**

**MAY 15 – JUN 21**

**JUL 3 – AUG 9** No Class 8/19-9/2

**FEE:** Swim Member \$60 (drop-in \$6); OP Resident \$70 (drop-in \$7); Non-Resident \$86 (drop-in \$8)

**AQUA BOOTCAMP**

**WHEN: MON / WED / FRI, 6:00pm-6:45pm**

**thru MAY 3**

**MAY 13 – JUN 21**

**JUL 1 – AUG 9** No Class 8/19-8/30

**FEE:** Swim Member \$60 (drop-in \$6); OP Resident \$70 (drop-in \$7); Non-Resident \$86 (drop-in \$8)

## Underkoffler named new Racquet Sports Director



**Tim Johnson**  
Racquet Sports  
Director

Ocean Pines Association General Manager John Viola in March announced that Terry Underkoffler had been named Director of Racquet Sports.

Underkoffler had been involved in Ocean Pines Racquet Sports for roughly a decade.

He was named Tennis Director in 2020 and split his time between Ocean Pines and Worcester Preparatory School, where he coached the sport. Underkoffler is a United States Tennis Association-licensed teacher and has been teaching and coaching since 1977.

As the department head of Ocean Pines Racquet Sports, he will report directly to General Manager John Viola.

"Terry answered the call when the GM and Ocean Pines had a need," Viola said. "He's a team player with the necessary skills, and we felt he was the ideal person to help

bring us to the next level."

Viola said Underkoffler would continue to have help from Membership Supervisor Ruth Ann Meyer (finance and front-desk), Deputy Public Works Director Nobie Violante (facility maintenance), and Recreation and Parks Director Debbie Donahue (events).

Underkoffler said he's excited for the new opportunity.

"I've put a lot of my heart into the Racquet Center, between teaching and coaching, and playing there for almost 10 years," he said. "I love the variety that the Racquet Center provides and the kind of instruction that we have. I think it's just going to grow and it's only going to get better."

Underkoffler said a particular strength of the center is that it has many different sports geared toward all ages and skill levels.

"My vision is that we're looked at as a premiere destination for pickleball, tennis, platform tennis, Timeless Tennis and Spec Tennis, and all kinds of recreation that families can enjoy," he said.




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This class will be offered from **9-10 a.m.** on the following days: **June 3-5, June 17-19, July 1-3, July 22-24, and August 19-21!**

### TENNIS RUSH AND CRUSH: Doubles Tactics Clinic

This fast-paced, exciting, and challenging class will test the skills and, perhaps, the stamina of those participating. It will begin with a warm-up session comprised of drills focused on forehands, backhands, volleys, and overheads. The class will then be divided into teams of two. One team will defend and

the other teams will attack. The instructor will hit a ground stroke to a member of the attacking team to begin the first point. If the attacking team wins that point, the team members will move to the net to receive another feed from the instructor, which will be a volley. If the attacking team wins that points, the next feed from the instructor will be an overhead, which begins the third point. If the attacking team wins all three points, they become the defending team, and the losing twosome moves to the attacking side. If an attacking team loses any point they are automatically eliminated and the next team jumps in immediately to start their attack.

Rush and Crush is a great way to develop your skills and to get some exercise. However, the class needs at least **6 to 8 participants** for each session.

This class will be offered from **9-10 a.m.** on the following days: **May 17, May 20, June 7, June 21, July 5, July 26, August 9, and August 23.**

### TENNIS DROP-IN

Just show up! Everyone is welcome. The attendant at check-in will direct you. Rates are \$11 for residents and \$16 for non-residents. Inquire for info on groups that play on a regular basis.



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**Bob Beckelman**  
*Director of Golf*

## Here's to birdies, eagles and memories

As we usher in the spring season at Ocean Pines Golf Club, I'd like to share some exciting updates and initiatives with you all.

First and foremost, I want to express my gratitude to all our members for their continued support and dedication to our course. Your passion for the game and commitment to our club are truly gratifying.

With that said, I am excited to announce some adjustments to our membership rates that will not only benefit our course, but also enhance the overall golfing experience.

You may have noticed a slight increase in some of our membership fees. While this may seem like a change, it's important to understand that these adjustments are crucial for the sustainability and improvement of our facilities. The additional revenue generated from these increases will directly support our four-year irrigation program, a much-needed enhancement that will significantly benefit the condition of our course and the enjoyment of our players.

In addition to these necessary adjustments, we are lowering some membership rates to attract new members and grow our golfing community. We recognize that accessibility and affordability are key factors in welcoming new players to our course, and we are committed to making the Ocean Pines Golf Club a welcoming destination for golfers of all levels.

Here are the new golf membership rates:

- **Individual homeowner/resident: \$1,700 (+\$100)**
- **Family homeowner/resident: \$2,625 (+\$125)**
- **Individual nonresident: \$1,800 (+\$100)**
- **Family nonresident: \$2,700 (no change)**

We are also excited to offer reduced afternoon rates for our

members:

- **Individual homeowner/resident: \$1,000 (-\$50)**
- **Family homeowner/resident: \$1,700 (-\$50)**
- **Individual nonresident: \$1,150 (no change)**
- **Family nonresident: \$1,750 (no change)**

We are continuing with our popular yearly golf cart packages with no change in rate.

Furthermore, I am pleased to share that we have exciting capital projects in the pipeline, including the implementation of a new irrigation system. With equipment dating back many decades, it's time for a much-needed upgrade to ensure the long-term health and vitality of our course. Phase one of this project will focus on key areas such as the pump station, fairways one and nine, and the driving range, with work scheduled to start in November and conclude by March 2025. Our plan is to not have any interruption to 18-hole play, with our 19th hole coming into use when new equipment is being installed.

As we embark on these improvements, let's not forget the rich history and legacy of the Ocean Pines Golf Club. Designed by the legendary Robert Trent Jones, Sr. in 1972, our 18-hole championship course has been a beacon for golfers seeking unparalleled beauty and challenge. With bent grass greens and fairways, as well as a host of recent accolades including being named one of the Top 25 Most Improved U.S. Golf Courses by Golf Advisor, there's never been a better time to rediscover the magic of Ocean Pines.

Whether you're a longtime member or a newcomer to our course, I invite you to join us this spring for a round of golf unlike any other. With our commitment to excellence, dedication to sustainability, and passion for the game, Ocean Pines Golf Club is poised to deliver an unforgettable experience for golfers of all ages and abilities.

Here's to a fantastic spring season filled with birdies, eagles, and memories that will last a lifetime.



### Reminder about 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 info on the Ocean Pines Golf Club, visit [oceanpinesgolf.org](http://oceanpinesgolf.org).



## The challenges and benefits



**Justin Hartshorne**  
Golf Course Superintendent

With the arrival of spring, it's important to be mindful of the challenges and benefits that come with maintaining our golf course. One crucial aspect of course maintenance that's often discussed by players is aeration, and particularly the aeration of greens.

My staff and I are tasked with a delicate balancing act – ensuring the health of our turf while minimizing disruptions to your gameplay.

Aerification plays a vital role in this process by relieving soil compaction caused by foot traffic, allowing for proper oxygenation and water penetration to nourish the roots of our grass. While the benefits are clear, we understand that greens aeration can sometimes be met with resistance from players because of the impact on play.

Typically, we aim to aerify greens twice a year. The healing process for aeration holes varies, but usually lasts between two to two-and-a-half weeks. Effective communication with our members is crucial during this time to manage expectations and minimize disruptions. Look to

[oceanpinesgolf.org](http://oceanpinesgolf.org) for regular updates.

Despite the inconveniences, aeration is considered a necessary practice for maintaining healthy turfgrass. We employ various techniques to manage aeration plugs, such as reusing them for turf restoration, or pulverizing them to minimize visual impact.

As we progress through the spring season, it's also good to be mindful of common course conditions that may affect your gameplay. We are constantly working on upkeep of the fairways, greens, and rough, and golfers should always rely on course markings.

In wet and muddy conditions, golfers may be allowed to use preferred lies, but it's important to adhere to the recommended relief area size. Additionally, the setup of temporary greens and tees may impact gameplay, but remember that the same rules apply regardless of their arrangement.

As always, we appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we work to maintain the excellence of Ocean Pines Golf Club. Here's to a fantastic spring season filled with memorable rounds and improved course conditions.

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## Docent training, upcoming Veterans Memorial Foundation events

*Flags for Heroes deadline May 11; Memorial Day Ceremony May 27*

The Worcester County Veterans Memorial at Ocean Pines is looking for a few good docents to help with educational programs.

The Veterans Memorial Foundation each year sponsors field trips to the memorial for all fifth-grade students in Worcester County.

Students learn about the history of the American flag, and how to properly fold and display it. While touring the memorial grounds, they will learn about the different branches of the U.S. Military and a brief history of U.S. armed conflicts.

“Our Educational programs begin May 10, with a field trip to the memorial from Most Blessed Sacrament School. It’s the first of many field trips by fifth grade students in Worcester County. Before the month is over, more than 650 students will have been met by docents and learned the stories of veterans and their sacrifices for our freedom,” Veterans Memorial Foundation President Marie Gilmore said.

Docents who assist with those trips don’t have to be veterans or teachers – they just need a desire to engage students in a fun and interesting way.

“Please consider becoming a docent,” Gilmore said. “It’s a great way to give back to the community and help connect local school children to our wonderful veterans memorial.”

Docent training is scheduled on Wednesday, April 24 at 3 p.m. at the memorial. For more information on volunteering, call Susan Pantone at 410-430 1040 or Don McMullen

at 443-388-2941.

Coming up, the Veterans Memorial Foundation and Ocean City/Berlin Rotary Club will co-sponsor the return of “Flags for Heroes” from May 18 to July 4.

During that period, a display of flags will proudly fly in Veterans Memorial Park along Route 589 to honor heroes.

“A ‘hero’ is defined by anyone who has made a difference in your life. Living or deceased, veteran, teacher, doctor, parent, or child,” Gilmore said.

Individuals and local businesses can be part of this tribute by sponsoring a flag for just \$50. The sponsor’s name and their hero’s name will be identified on each flag on a medallion. Medallions may be removed at any time by the sponsor.

Proceeds from this project will benefit education outreach projects.

The cutoff date to sponsor a flag is May 11. Forms are available on Veterans Memorial Foundation website, WoCoVets.org.

Additionally, the annual Memorial Day ceremony returns to Veterans Memorial Park on May 27, starting at 11 a.m.

The event each year draws thousands of people and features music, demonstrations, and public speakers honoring U.S. Military men and women who gave their lives in service.

“Memorial Day honors all who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our county,” Gilmore said. “This year’s ceremony, as those before it, will honor the brave men and women who served our country and lost their lives in doing so.”

Public parking will be available at Veterans Memorial Park on Route 589 and Cathell Road in Ocean Pines. Limited seating will be available during the Memorial Day ceremony and guests are encouraged to bring chairs.

For more information on the Worcester County Veterans Memorial Foundation, please visit WoCoVets.org or [www.facebook.com/WorcesterCountyVeteransMemorial](http://www.facebook.com/WorcesterCountyVeteransMemorial).







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## COMMUNITY STORIES

### Arbor Day ceremony, April 11 in Ocean Pines

*Garden Club will also host Mother's Day flower sale*

The Ocean Pines Garden Club will host its annual Arbor Day Memorial Ceremony on Thursday, April 11 at 10:30 a.m. at Pintail Park in Ocean Pines.

The club will plant a tree in the park to honor friends and family members who passed away in 2023.

The ceremony will also include the Pine Tones choral group, bagpiper Mike Castoro, dignitary declarations, and poetry and historical readings. All are welcome.

In case of rain, the ceremony will be held in the Assateague Room of the Ocean Pines Community Center on 235 Ocean Parkway.

Additionally, the Garden Club will hold its annual Mother's

Day flower arrangement sale at the Ocean Pines Farmers Market on Saturday, May 11 in White Horse Park.

Club members create very affordable, small-to-medium-size flower arrangements perfect for a Mother's Day celebration.

For more information on the Ocean Pines Garden Club, contact Gail Philippi at [gailphilippi@gmail.com](mailto:gailphilippi@gmail.com).



### Second Jenkins Point town hall held

Maryland Coastal Bays Program hosted a second public meeting on the Jenkins Point Restoration Project on Jan. 29 in the Clubhouse Meeting Room.

Video of the meeting is available at [www.youtube.com/@OceanPinesAssociation1](http://www.youtube.com/@OceanPinesAssociation1).

Representatives from MCBP briefly went over the project and answered questions from the audience for roughly an hour. MCBP Executive Director Kevin Smith spoke on the project's background and next steps, and Chris Becraft from Underwood & Associates discussed the design approach and objectives.

Jenkins Point is on the Isle of Wight Bay, just offshore of

the Ocean Pines Yacht Club. The area has seen significant erosion, reducing the resilience of the fragmented peninsula and the adjacent mainland community infrastructure, including the Yacht Club, the Osprey Point condominium community and the Pines Point residential community and marina to the increasing effects of climate change.

MCBP received a grant in 2022 from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to fund the design and permitting phase of the restoration project. Construction of the project will require additional funding.

For additional comments or correspondence on the project, contact Smith at [ksmith@mdcoastalbays.org](mailto:ksmith@mdcoastalbays.org).

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## 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 April 1-30, to benefit the Worcester County Veterans Memorial at Ocean Pines Foundation.

With this offer, new members receive The Club Card Membership for 12-months for \$20, or The Club+ Card Membership, which receives 5¢ off per gallon at BJ's Gas every day and 2% back in rewards on most BJ's purchases, for \$60 with BJ's Easy Renewal.

Existing members can purchase a 12-month renewal for The Club Card Membership for \$50, or a 12-month renewal for The Club+ Card Membership for \$100.

In addition to offering special membership discounts, BJ's will donate \$10 for each completed new BJ's membership 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. Phones are open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST.

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 April 30. 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.

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 fall 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.



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- Grocery Service
- Organizing & Decluttering



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