

Berlin Community News

Volume 26, Issue 4
Summer, 2015

Mayor & Council of Berlin, MD

Berlin Establishes Beat the Peak Program

Voluntary program saves customers money

The Town of Berlin Electric Utility launched a Beat the Peak program on June 1, 2015, to reduce energy consumption and costs, announced Mayor Gee Williams.

“Beat the Peak” is a voluntary energy conservation program that encourages limited energy usage, especially during peak times. The program saves the Electric Utility and its customers money,” said Mayor Williams. “With a little extra effort, everyone will be better off,” he added.

“Peak times are when our electric utility is purchasing wholesale power at the highest prices. By cutting back on the amount of wholesale power purchased during these peak, high-priced periods, we can reduce our total wholesale power costs,” said Town Administrator Laura Allen. “Reductions in wholesale power costs are passed through to the customers in the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA)” she added.

The demand for electricity in the summer months is highest during extremely hot temperatures; typically, the peak period is from 2 PM – 6 PM Demand in the winter months is greatest during extreme cold temperatures, especially between the peak periods of 7 AM - 10 AM and 7 PM - 10 PM

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Summer Events

June

June 27 - Movie Downtown

Jefferson Street. The Arts & Entertainment Committee presents the final outdoor movie showing of the season. BYO Chair and a picnic dinner and enjoy “Runaway Bride” right where it was filmed.

July

July 10 - 2nd Friday Art Stroll, 5 - 8 PM

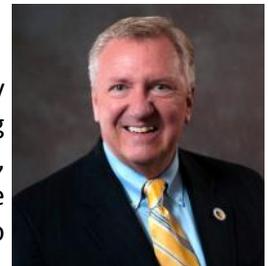
Come stroll the streets and businesses of downtown Berlin from 5 – 8 PM to check out the featured artists and musicians.

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Mayor’s Column

BERLIN, ACTIVE AND ALIVE ON MANY FRONTS

No one who is informed can say that the Town of Berlin is resting on its laurels. On many fronts, working together, we are accomplishing goals we dared to dream, not so long ago.



Mayor Gee Williams

In just the past six months we completed a very successful and inspiring series of strategic planning sessions that identified both immediate and longer-term goals for our community. The process identified multiple, but not necessarily mutually exclusive, challenges.

These challenges...which I prefer to think of as opportunities....will enable us to continue to make Berlin even more economically vibrant, environmentally responsible and artistically alive, while using our collective common sense to preserve our most precious asset...our quality of life.

Berlin, like other exceptional “living communities”

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Mayor's Column (Continued from page 1)

that are experiencing success in the early 21st Century, is undergoing unprecedented change in all manner of things. A common thread of thought that was apparent during the town's strategic planning sessions are the greatly rising expectations of citizens in the quality and quantity of existing and desired new public services provided by the Town.

One of the most rewarding and reassuring aspects of so many individuals providing their direct input about their hopes, dreams and aspirations for our town's future is a widely shared set of "community values" that were common to all strategic sessions, all ages, and all neighborhoods. The report summarizes these community values as Berlin seeing itself as a welcoming, innovative, can-do model small town that values its history, traditions and diversity.

We are a community that embraces tolerance and inclusiveness with five widely held values:

- To remain committed to working together to define and shape our future.
- To be both economically sustainable and environmentally progressive.
- To aspire to be artistically alive and eternally young.
- To embrace our people-friendly, fun-filled traditions and events.
- To preserve a quality of life that makes Berlin a place to live for a lifetime.

These values are not for the insular and insecure. They reflect the optimism and can-do attitude of a dynamic group of citizens who seek to balance preserving our quality of life while prospering and changing, not to just survive, but to succeed, in a world of ever-increasing complexity and change.

During the immediate months and years ahead, it is the commitment of your Mayor and Council to continue along the path, started many years ago, that has brought us growing prosperity, goodwill and a unique feeling of being part of a greater "family of Berlin."

This is Berlin's time and with it brings the responsibility of working together to forge a future that ensures our community continues to build on all the cool ways we are working to make our town a special place for all residents, workers and a growing numbers of guests.

Let us all commit to exploring our opportunities together, knowing that every possibility will not be a good fit for the greater good of Berlin, while pledging to respect the viewpoints of others as we build a future based on what we know are already widely held community values. We should never feel the need to apologize for our desire and dedication in the ongoing quest to be a unique small town in 21st Century America.

With this in mind, I wish to share with you a timeless quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson - a man of letters known for championing self-reliance—that I believe is particularly appropriate for this time in our town's history.

"Do not go where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

Someday, quite possibly, this may be commonly known as...The Berlin Way.



Beat the Peak (Continued from page 1)

"We should know about 24 hours in advance of an upcoming peak. We'll use a combination of the CodeRED system, press releases, our website and social media to get the word out along with a request to reduce energy consumption," stated Ms. Allen.

"It is in everyone's interest to use energy resources wisely," stated Electric Utility Director Tim Lawrence. "We encourage our customers to examine their energy use and take steps to conserve on a regular basis. At times of peak electricity use, it's even more important to conserve," he added.

"As a community-owned electric system, it is important that we work together to keep our electric rates as low as possible," said Mayor Williams. "Our customers have the opportunity to make a difference in their system and their electric charges by conserving energy during peak periods. These small steps can really add up," he added.

For more information about the Beat the Peak Program, please see page 3.



How to Make “Beat the Peak” Work for You

There are several easy steps Berlin electric customers can take to reduce their energy usage during peak times:

- turn off lights that are not needed;
- unplug small appliances and electric chargers (especially those with small lights);
- set the thermostat as high in the summer and as low in the winter as comfortable;
- turn off televisions, computers, radios, and other electronic devices if not being used;
- do laundry and other household chores requiring electricity during non-peak hours.

Additionally, there are many simple things that can be done to save on energy costs at any time. Most of the tips below are particularly useful for the summer months, but many can apply in any season:

- Run the dishwasher early in the morning or late at night. Adjust your dishwasher so the dishes dry without heat.
- Set your thermostat to 78 degrees or higher, and use a fan to circulate the cool air. Cooling costs are typically 60 percent of your total utility bill. For every degree you set the thermostat below 78 degrees, you use two to five percent more electricity.
- Turn off ceiling fans where rooms are unoccupied.
- Turn off lights in any room you’re not using, or consider installing timers, photo cells or occupancy sensors.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) which are up to four times more energy efficient, but provide the same light levels. They also last much longer.
- Humidity is a factor. Take baths or showers and wash dishes early in the morning or in the evening. Take more showers than baths because bathing uses the most hot water in the average household. Use an outside clothesline to avoid adding humidity from your clothes dryer. Replace old or worn out exhaust fans with humidity sensing units.

- Avoid using the stove or oven on hot days. Use the microwave or grill outdoors.
- Don’t keep your refrigerator or freezer too cold. Remember to clean the coils on your refrigerator.
- Insulate. Check to make sure insulation levels are appropriate in your attic, exterior and basement walls, ceilings, floors and crawl spaces.
- Check for and caulk any holes or cracks around your walls, ceilings, windows, doors, light and plumbing fixtures, switches, and electrical outlets than can leak air into or out of your home. Use non-expanding foam insulation around doors and windows.
- Upgrade leaky windows. It may be time to replace them with energy-efficient models or to boost their efficiency with weather-stripping.
- Clear outdoor air conditioning units and heat pumps of debris and shrubbery so they can work more efficiently.

How Will You Know It’s Time to “Beat the Peak”?

About 24 hours before the peak time, the Town will send out a Beat the Peak alert to local radio and TV stations, post on our Face Book page, tweet the information, and send out a general CodeRED alert such as this:

“This is a Town of Berlin Beat the Peak alert. Due to extreme warm weather in our area, the Berlin Electric Department is asking all of its customers to voluntarily conserve or limit energy usage between the hours of 3 PM to 7 PM tomorrow, __date__.”

If the peak occurs during hours when there is usually no one at home, steps can be taken before leaving for the day, such as closing window shades, unplugging items, turning off unnecessary lights, etc. There are also many commercially available energy-saving devices that assist with controlling the times when lights come on/turn off, or when heating/cooling units cycle.

Town Holidays and Refuse Collection Schedule

Because Town offices will be closed on the following holidays, trash/recycling pickup will be re-scheduled as follows:

Friday, July 3. Independence Day. There will be no recycling collection. If your normal trash day is Friday, collection will be on Monday, July 6.

Monday, September 7. Labor Day. There will be no recycling collection.

REMINDER: Trash/recycling must be at the curb by 6 AM; items placed later may not be collected. It is acceptable to place items the night before.

Summer Events (Continued from page 1)

July 12 - Concert on the Lawn, 6 PM

“Chester River Runoff” in concert. Free. See more, page 7.

July 17 - Bathtub Races, 6 - 9 PM

Bathtubs racing down Berlin’s Main Street! Come check out the friendly but competitive evening of fun from 6 PM – 9 PM as local businesses and sponsors turn ordinary “tubs” into rolling racetubs and vie for the Winner Takes All Bathtub Award. Admission, parking and good times are free! Sponsored by the Berlin Chamber of Commerce.

August

August 1 - Peach Festival, 11 AM-4 - PM

Berlin’s annual community festival featuring everything PEACH! Pie-eating and pie-baking contests, craft demonstrations, exhibits, games, vendors of handcrafted items and food and music. Located on the lawn of the Calvin B. Taylor House Museum from 11 AM – 4 PM, and sponsored by the Berlin Heritage Foundation. Rain date is Sunday, August 2nd. See more, page 7

August 9 - Concert on the Lawn, 6 PM

“Bryan Russo and the Tragic Figures”. Free. See more, page 7.

August 14 - Little Miss & Mr. Peach Pageant, 6 PM and 2ND Friday Art Stroll, 5 PM - 8 PM

Berlin’s 6th annual Little Miss & Mr. Berlin Peach takes place on the porch of the Atlantic Hotel at 6 PM.



Bryan Russo and the Tragic Figures will perform at the Taylor Museum on August 9th. Admission is free.

Boys and girls must be ages 4-7 and reside in Worcester County. Registration up to 5:30 PM day of pageant. For more information, contact Lisa Hall at 443-614-6135. Sponsored by Berlin Main Street.

Stroll along downtown Berlin and check out the featured artists and musicians during the 2nd Friday Art Stroll sponsored by the Berlin Arts and Entertainment District.

September

September 5 - Shakespeare on Main Street, 7:30 PM

The Brown Box Theatre returns to Berlin to perform “The Taming of The Shrew”. Performance will be located at the corner of Pitts and Main Street and begin at 7:30 PM Audience is encouraged to bring their lawn chairs. Sponsored by Berlin Main Street.

September 13 - Concert on the Lawn, 6 PM

“Swamp Donkey”. Free. See more, page 7.



Coast Kids Visit Berlin Waste Water Treatment Plant

Coast Kids families recently gathered for a tour of the Town of Berlin's Waste Water Treatment Plant to learn about what happens to our household water after the drain...or the flush.

The first station, where all sewage is combined, was definitely harsh for the olfactory senses. But the audience was surprised that after the second treatment step, the wastewater was actually not very smelly at all. Coast Kids families learned how inorganic solids are filtered out, and how the perfect mix of bacteria break down the organic waste. These bacteria are fast workers, who speed up the treatment process tremendously. However, they need just the right conditions to work properly. The end product of the state of the art treatment plant in Berlin is a nutrient rich powder, which could be used as fertilizer, and quite clean water, which is pumped and sprayed onto two forested spray irrigation sites. Therefore no household wastewater from Berlin ever enters the coastal bays.

At this eye-opening event, Coast Kids families not only appreciated the effectiveness of modern technology, they also thought of ways to save water in their households, such as showering instead of bathing, installing flush control in toilets, taking a bath only once a week or less(!), or using leftover ice cubes to water house plants. Special thanks goes out to Director Jane Kreiter and all of the staff at the Waste Water Treatment Plant who made this trip such an excellent learning experience.



Water Resources/Public Works Director Jane Kreiter shows the end result of solids treated at the Berlin Wastewater

MUNICIPAL & COUNTY PROPERTY TAX RATES - RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

(All Comparisons: FY 12 thru FY 16)

LOCATION	7/1/2011	7/1/2012	7/1/2013	7/1/2014	7/1/2015	Change from FY 12	
Berlin	0.73	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	-	-0.05
Crisfield	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.87	0.87	+	0.17
Fruitland	0.80	0.80	0.96	0.96	0.96	+	0.16
Pocomoke (owner occupied)	0.75	0.82	0.82	0.9285	0.9285	+	0.18
Princess Anne	0.954	1.124	1.1137	1.1509	1.1509	+	0.1969
Salisbury	0.819	0.819	0.884	0.937	0.937	+	0.118
Snow Hill	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	N/C	0.00
Ocean City	0.395	0.459	0.472	0.4704	0.478	+	0.083
Wicomico County	0.769	0.8404	0.9086	0.9516	0.9516	+	0.1826
Worcester County	0.70	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.835	+	0.14

(All Real Estate Property Tax Rates Based on \$100 per Assessed Valuation)

ACT Partners with Stephen Decatur Middle School for Service Project in Berlin

ACT teamed up with Stephen Decatur Middle School (SDMS) for a service learning project in the Town of Berlin in May. This marked the second year of ACT's partnership with SDMS and a major increase in the scope of the project.

Last year, ACT helped a student-led effort to plan and construct a rain garden on the grounds of SDMS. The teachers and students enjoyed the project and asked if ACT would be willing to partner on an even bigger project this year....of course we said YES!

This year, over 90 students participated in a day of service throughout the Town of Berlin. They planted native perennials, cleaned streams, planted aquatic vegetation, and re-mulched the playground equipment at Stephen Decatur Park.

Everyone involved had a blast and we can't wait for next year's project. Special thanks goes out to the Town of Berlin for their help in making the event such a success, especially Water Resources/Public Works Director Jane Kreiter.

For more information about the Assateague Coastal Trust, please visit their website at www.actforbays.org.



SDMS Students help plant vegetation in the Submerged Gravel Wetlands on Flower Street.



Keeping Citizens Informed

Uses The CodeRED® system is used to send important notifications to residents and businesses in the Town.

Join Our Database To make sure you receive notifications, please register at www.berlinmd.gov and click on the CodeRED logo in the upper corner. You can select to receive messages by phone, email, or text, or any combination. TTY communication for the hearing-impaired is also available.

Privacy Your contact information remains private and will only be used for community notifications.

Need assistance? Please call Town Hall at 410-641-2770 and we will be glad to help you get signed up.



Heritage Foundation News

by Debora Spieier



Love to Bake? Enter a Pie in the 7th Annual Berlin Peach Festival Pie-Baking Contest!

The Berlin Heritage Foundation is looking for bakers to enter the peach pie-baking contest at its seventh annual Berlin Peach Festival on Saturday, August 1, on the grounds of the Calvin B. Taylor House Museum, 208 North Main Street. First-, second- and third-place prizes will be awarded by a panel of judges with experience in the food and beverage industry.

A maximum of 13 entries will be accepted and you must sign up in advance. The registration deadline is July 29. Pies must be delivered on the day of the festival no later than 11:30 AM, and include a list of ingredients. Worcester County Health Department rules stipulate that pies with perishable ingredients such as custard, ice cream or whipped cream may not be entered. For more information or to sign up, contact Susan Taylor at 410-641-1019 or email at taylorhousemuseum@verizon.net.

New Groups Scheduled for Concerts on the Lawn

For those of you new to this, these Sunday night concerts are held the second Sunday of each month, June through September, from 6:00 to 7:00 PM. Concerts are free and are held on the museum's side lawn. Just bring a chair and a picnic, but please remember that no alcoholic beverages are permitted on Town property.

Each year we try to introduce new groups to the series and this year we are happy to welcome a new group for each concert. "Such Fools" performed at our first con-

cert on June 14, sponsored by Taylor Bank. "Chester River Runoff" will be here on July 12, co-sponsored by the Town of Berlin. "Brian Russo & The Tragic Figures" will perform on August 9, and "Swamp Donkey" will play at the final concert this season on September 13.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our 2015 sponsors, Taylor Bank and the Town of Berlin. This is an excellent community outreach for our local businesses. Please contact the museum if you would like to sponsor one of the two remaining concerts this season. Sponsorships are available for \$400.00. Sponsors are announced in event publicity and at each concert. Attendance is usually 150-200 per concert, so it's a great, cost-effective way to advertise in the community.

Please mark your calendar now and join us for these free concerts on the lawn for 2015.



RECYCLING DURING TOWN EVENTS

Several years ago 6 recycle containers for use in community events were donated by local business women Robin Tomaselli owner of Bake Deserts Café and Helen Wiley coordinator of The Church Mouse Thrift Shop. The containers were set up for 3 to accept cans and 3 plastic water bottles. The openings were sized to just slightly larger than the intended items. This helps to prevent unwanted items going in. The recycle containers are available for use at all downtown events.

Subscribe to the Berlin Community News

The *Berlin Community News* is available online, via email, or postal mail. If you would like to have the newsletter delivered directly to you, either in paper or electronic form, please let us know! Call 410-641-4314, or email info@berlinmd.gov.

You do not have to be a Berlin resident to subscribe.

Town Meetings' Schedule

All meetings are held at Town Hall, 10 William Street.

Meeting schedule subject to change.

Council Meetings- 2nd & 4th Mondays at 7 PM

Parks Commission—1st Tuesdays at 5:30 PM

Historic District Commission – 1st Wednesdays at 5:30 PM

Board of Appeals – 1st Wednesdays at 6:30 PM (as needed)

Planning Commission – 2nd Wednesdays at 6 PM

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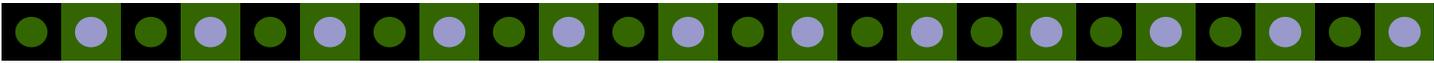
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