



ICONIC BENCHES

## Sittin' Pretty

When crowds fill Rehoboth Beach each summer, weary pedestrians — or those simply content to sit and take in the scenery — are grateful for a spot to rest their bones. And they can thank the city's Streets Department, which keeps the roughly 330 benches that grace sidewalks and the boardwalk in fine shape.

Along with the trademark benches, workers must paint and/or repair 260 bike racks, 30 lifeguard stands, 1,500 single-head meters, 97 multispace meters and hundreds of trash cans that are placed around town when the season starts each year.

After marking benches in need of a facelift, workers haul them off (about 80 remain on the boardwalk year-round) and spend the winter getting them in shape. That involves scraping the old paint and applying a new coat of a marine epoxy that has a built-in primer and can better withstand the elements. "It gets real hard," Streets Superintendent Mike Peterman says of the new coating.

The same paint goes on all the benches, including the straight-back style and the longer swing-backs (the backrest moves so people can face either the boardwalk or the beach), and the

lifeguard stands.

Carpenter Joe Fuller, a 25-year city employee, notes that although the department has experimented with different brands of paint, the pattern for building the benches has remained the same over the years. He and fellow carpenter Don Richard make all the new benches when old ones, which can last about 10 to 15 years, need replacing.

The city experimented with natural wood-stained benches once, but that idea was short-lived. "All hell broke loose," Fuller says of public reaction. To stick with tradition, the benches were repainted glossy white.

Peterman says the benches set Rehoboth apart from other beach towns. People not only like to sit on them when they visit, some even take them home (damaged benches sell for \$80 at the city's annual auction).

"It's just an iconic thing for Rehoboth," he explains. ■

— Ashley Dawson

### NUMBER CRUNCHING

**3:** The length, in minutes, of a new video on climate change in Delaware posted to YouTube by the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. The video briefly outlines such topics as sea level rise and coastal flooding.

You can view it at [youtube.com/user/DelawareDNREC](https://youtube.com/user/DelawareDNREC) and also on our website at [delawarebeachlife.com/our-stories/videos](https://delawarebeachlife.com/our-stories/videos)



**10:** The number of years the Historic Lewes Farmers Market has been operating. An anniversary celebration will be held Saturday, May 2. Visit [historiclewesfarmersmarket.org](https://historiclewesfarmersmarket.org) for details.

**6:** The number of nesting pairs of piping plovers recorded by state officials in Cape Henlopen State Park last year. The tiny plover is one of two migratory coastal birds on the federal list of endangered and threatened species. (For more about the plovers, and other endangered species in coastal Delaware, see page 64.) ■

BOARDWALK BIKING

# Rules for Two-Wheelers

Visitors fond of making their way around Rehoboth Beach on two-wheeled vehicles will have to pay attention to some new enforcement measures this summer, though rules for riding on the boardwalk will generally stay the same in Rehoboth and Bethany Beach.

Despite discussions about banning bikes on the boardwalk or further limiting their use there for safety reasons, city officials in Rehoboth have kept the existing rules intact, though there will be some additional monitoring of riders. **Bicycles are allowed on the boardwalk from 5 to 10 a.m. from May 15 to Sept. 15. In Bethany, bicyclists are allowed on the boardwalk from 6 to 9 a.m. from May 15 to Sept. 30.**

Owners of motorized “step-through”

scooters in Rehoboth, however, must obey a new ordinance this year. **To park in designated scooter-only areas and on nonmetered city streets where parking permits are required, they’ll need a \$40 permit.** They can still leave their scooters in metered spots — with or without a permit — if they pay the meter, but if they are parked illegally (including on sidewalks or in bike racks) they will be fined the same amount as car owners who violate parking regulations; those penalties start at \$30. Permits can be obtained from the Parking Meter Division behind City Hall.

The agreement regarding bike monitoring on the boardwalk came in November, according to City Manager Sharon Lynn. Frank Cole, owner of Atlantic

Cycle, agreed to organize volunteers to patrol the boardwalk and **remind bicyclists they must be courteous and drive under control.**

“They’ll be monitoring speed and behavior and [will] educate the public about bike rules, while our uniformed officers will patrol the boardwalk too, Lynn says. “It’s not a big problem, but there were some concerns, and we thought we needed to address it. This seems like a good solution.”

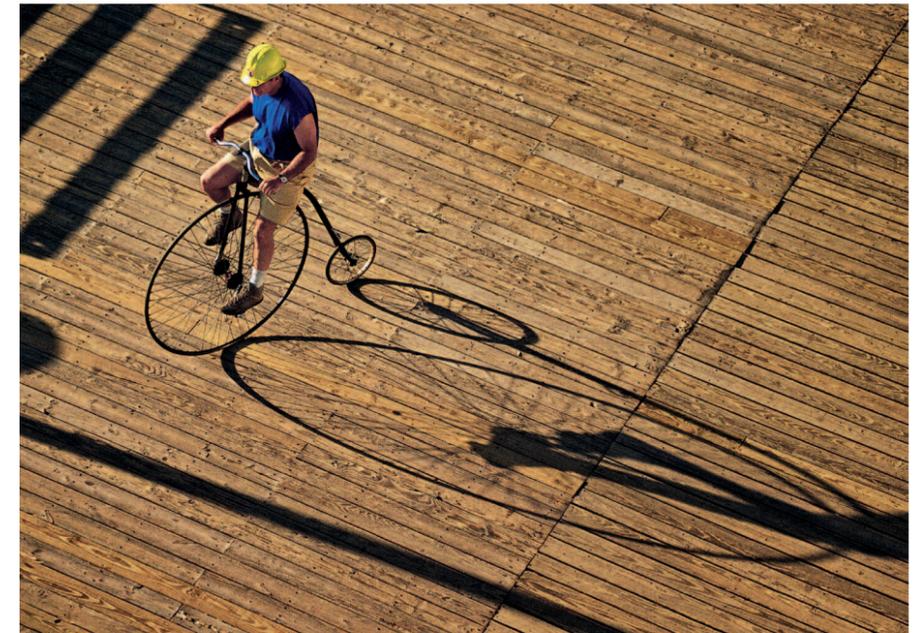
The issue was discussed at a November Board of Commissioners meeting when some residents complained about unsafe practices by bicyclists, and Police Chief Keith Banks noted that two children had been injured in bike-related accidents. Banning bikes and extending the period

for restrictions were discussed, but action was tabled.

Capt. Darin Cathell of the Bethany Beach Police Department says officers regularly patrol the Bethany boardwalk when bicyclists are using it, and there have not been any serious issues. He is more concerned about bike safety on roadways: “Our biggest problem with bike riders is following traffic laws. A bike is a motor vehicle without a motor when it comes to the rules. They should be on the correct side of the road, stop at stop signs and follow all traffic patterns, but they often don’t.”

**Skateboards, inline skates and roller skates are not allowed on either boardwalk.**

— Jim Paterson



The Bethany and Rehoboth Beach boardwalks have long been popular spots for cyclists of all sorts, but both towns have rules regulating the use of two-wheelers in order to keep the boards safe. Starting May 15, boardwalk bicycle use is restricted to morning hours in both towns.

INTERACT WITH US  
**FACEBOOK FEEDBACK**

What’s your favorite local historic site and why?

**Susan M. Elliott:** Dolle’s of course. Ms. Evelyn Thoroughgood told me how her father and brother helped save the taffy machine during the ‘62 nor’easter. An amazing story, not sure Dolle’s would be here today if not for their heroics. They took the roof off and took the taffy machine out of the building. Then stored it in Ms. Evelyn’s father’s gas station.

**Nancy Alexander:** My favorite site is, of course, the Rehoboth Beach Museum, housed in the historic ice house. Stop by!

**Floyd M. Long:** Fort Miles and the surrounding beach and park areas. It’s a very spiritual place for me where I can collect and center myself — never have I left without feeling grateful and at peace. It’s easy for me to see why the natives loved it here — even before fast food and T-shirt shops.

**Jen Marsh Pulcinella:** Cape Henlopen State Park. There’s the history of Fort Miles with all of its intrigue, the classic view of the lighthouse from The Point, and the anecdotes of the river pilots and their courageous actions in guiding ships up and down the Delaware River.

**BEACH LIFE TRIVIA**  
 Last year the Arctic’s snowy owls visited coastal Delaware. Which unusual migratory species was seen in abundance near Milton this year?

ANSWER: Tundra swans, normally counted in the dozens in Delaware, were seen by the hundreds feeding in coastal Sussex farm fields. The long-necked birds are more common in the Chesapeake Bay region and even more so in North Carolina. Wildlife biologists say the swans may have ended up in Sussex County because of weather conditions and food availability.

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## AVIATION HONOREES

# These Flyboys Are Well-Grounded

When Joe Hudson and Allen Chorman were inducted into the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame in 2013, that public honor — which salutes distinction in building the state’s aviation industry — also served another purpose. It shone a spotlight on the two pilots’ mentor-mentee partnership of nearly six decades — a partnership that began in 1956, when Chorman was just a little kid on a bicycle.

Fascinated by the aircraft his mechanic father repaired, Chorman would pedal off to the old Rehoboth Airport at 4:30 in the morning to help wash off the planes’ daily accumulation of oily grit, thus reducing the risk of in-flight fires. Those World War II-era military surplus planes belonged to Joseph R. Hudson Aerial Spraying, just one of many businesses the entrepreneur then owned, or would eventually own, having learned the value of diversification — and resourcefulness — early on. (He also farmed 6,000 acres in the Lewes and Rehoboth areas.)

During the Depression, Hudson and his 11 siblings watched their family farm in Harbeson go bankrupt when the Lewes cannery they supplied with snap peas went belly up. “But there were always jobs,” he recalls now, meaning it wasn’t so bad. To help out, young Joe got a job delivering bottled milk to customers’ doorsteps and, at age 12, lived with the family of another farmer who hired him as a laborer.

That’s the thing about his old friend, explains Chorman: He’s always upbeat and never gives in to frustration. Even when things go wrong, his usual response is to say, “Great day.” That’s not sarcasm, but an expression of gratitude — which is how Chorman himself feels about the almost lifelong guidance Hudson has provided. The older pilot guided him in a career he’s always loved, one that sent him roaring 10 to 75 feet above the ground each day in a crop-duster — and then Hudson one-upped that by selling him his thriving agricultural spraying and mosquito-control business.

After two decades as his mentor’s chief pilot, the Milton resident took ownership of the company in 1987. Over time, he’s greatly expanded its fleet, which now includes 21 planes and one helicopter. Hudson was gratified to see his protege build the business into an operation more than seven times its original size while he himself “came in for a landing” by embracing another venture then taking shape on the ground.

In the mid-1980s, farmers in coastal Delaware experienced a series of lean, drought-ridden years, and many of them jumped at the chance to sell their farms to real estate developers. For Hudson, too, land development meant opportunity. He purchased



In addition to sharing a love for flying, Joe Hudson, above, and Allen Chorman, both hold the honor of being in the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame.



land and created three manufactured-home parks in the area, renting lots to homeowners and selling homes on behalf of several mobile home builders, as well. Then he partnered with another local entrepreneur to purchase and develop land around Red Mill Pond in Lewes. More recently, Hudson has worked with his grandsons to develop the Villages of Five Points residential community near Lewes. In between, he took a fanciful turn and purchased a “flying saucer” home franchise — although its Finnish manufacturer soon went bankrupt. The only remaining memento from that venture is a single house perched off Route 1 at the Eagle Crest-Hudson Airport, adjacent to the Hudson-owned outdoor sports complex. “I rented it to a guy from Chicago,” he says, adding that his tenant was enamored of the idea of living in a “UFO.”

Meanwhile, as development was racing ahead for the past three decades, Chorman was flying over the beautiful land he knew so well and mourning the disappearance of one farm after another. “Some of the best farmland in the state was along the Route 1 corridor,” he says of the expanse, much of which is now buried under shopping malls and residential communities.

Hudson, also a Milton resident, says he sometimes feels sad about the way things have changed, but points out that it didn’t happen in Sussex County alone. “Everywhere there’s water,” he observes, “people want to live near it.”

Chorman would have to agree. And in any case, “without Joe, I wouldn’t be where I am today,” he adds with obvious emotion. On most days, that’s flying the coastal sky at an incomparably scenic low altitude. ■

— Laurel Marshfield

ARTIFACT SPOTLIGHT

# Gimbal Lamp, Circa 1925



This early-20th-century Gimbal lamp was used by mariners, mainly to light the cabins of their ships. The oil lamp, which would have had a glass shade, has a swivel to move with the rocking of the vessel. It is on display at the Milton Historical Society & Museum at 210 Union St. For information, visit [historicmilton.org](http://historicmilton.org) or call 684-1010. ■



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INLAND BAYS AQUACULTURE

# Cultivating Controversy

When the General Assembly approved the Delaware Aquaculture Act in 2013, votes in both the House and the Senate were unanimous. Since then, support in some inland bay communities that could overlook the new commercial shellfish farms has been anything but.

“We expect that the [Army Corps of Engineers] ... will require [the state] to correct the many problems related to its proposed Inland Bays Shellfish Aquaculture Regulations,” concluded a Feb. 23 letter to the Corps by Steve and Sallie Callanen. The Callanens live on Beach Cove, a small body of water on the east side of Indian River Bay near Cedar Neck Road, and the site of one of two proposed shellfish farming locations in the bay.

Their letter, submitted during the month-long public comment session that was part of the Corps’ review of the project, asserted that the state’s approval process “regretfully lacked almost all public input from the hundreds of residents living in the vicinity of Beach Cove and Little Assawoman Bay.” The state has proposed three farming sites in Little Assawoman. All of them are

on the east side of the bay, at least 50 feet offshore but within eyeshot of homes in north Fenwick Island and on the west side of Coastal Highway across from Fenwick Island State Park.

“It concerns me greatly that this program has been undertaken without adequate studies of the impact to navigation, recreational uses, environmental impact, rights of the adjacent property owners, or the health and safety of the bay itself and the bordering properties,” state Sen. Gerald Hocker, who represents the Ocean View area, wrote to the Corps. “This is not to mention the fact that [the state] failed to provide adequate notice to the communities.”

Not true, says David Saveikis, director of the state’s Division of Fish & Wildlife. Workers with his division “thoroughly considered and addressed” most of the topics that Hocker brought up in his letter, he says. It’s true, as Hocker alleged, that they did not investigate the rights of property owners and the safety of bordering properties; however, the aquaculture legislation, which Hocker voted for, did not require that this be done.

As for notifying the public of its plans, the division exceeded what is required by law, Saveikis says: “We issued multiple press releases, posted updated information on our website and advertised and held two public workshops prior to a formal public hearing and comment period.” Maps showing the proposed farm areas “were readily available during the process.”

There may have been maps, but Steve Plotkin, whose vacation/rental home overlooks Beach Cove, argues that at least one of them — showing Indian River Bay — was deliberately misleading: Beach Cove was labeled as Slough’s Gut, one of the cove’s tributaries. “That was just a little too clever,” Plotkin says. “The state deliberately obfuscated so that we weren’t alerted to the issue.”

Again, Saveikis disagrees. It is “absolutely untrue” that the state intentionally misled the public, he

“It concerns me greatly that this program has been undertaken without adequate studies of the impact. Not to mention [the state] failed to provide adequate notice to the communities.”

insists, explaining that Slough’s Gut was originally used to designate the area by the Center for the Inland Bays, which did

“We issued multiple press releases, posted updated information on our website and advertised and held two public workshops prior to a formal public hearing and comment period.”

early work designing an aquaculture plan. In its documents, the state uses brief letter codes to identify all of the farm spots. The designation for Beach Cove is “IR-B.”

Like Callanen and Hocker, Plotkin wrote a letter to the Army Corps of Engineers urging it not to approve the aquaculture program as written. He told the Corps that whatever notice was provided about the public workshops and hearing was inadequate. “This is a tale of legislative disconnect from the community it is meant to serve,” he wrote.

Under the state’s aquaculture program, 442 acres in the three inland bays would be open to commercial shellfish farming. Combined, Rehoboth, Indian River and Little Assawoman bays cover 20,479 acres.

Oysters could be grown in all three bays; clams would be confined to Little Assawoman.

Proponents cite environmental and economic benefits. The former, because shellfish extract organic matter (for sustenance) from the water in which they live, and in so doing remove algae and other water-borne particles too. The latter, because it would bring a new industry to the area.

The farms would be confined to eight Shellfish Aquaculture Development Areas: three, totaling 209 acres, in Rehoboth Bay; two, 115 acres, in Indian River Bay; and three, 118 acres, in Little Assawoman. Each area would be divided into one-acre plots, which would be leased to commercial fishermen.

In a Beach Cove, which covers about 180 acres, the farm would have 24 1-acre plots, taking up about 13 percent of the cove.

The farm sites were selected after con-

sidering several criteria, including fishing and boating navigation areas, public water access, water purity and the existence of native plants and animals. Plotkin calls Beach Cove “obviously a bad choice. Its recreational aspect would be impacted. And the aspect of running a business in the cove is kind of odious. Industrial work doesn’t belong in a residential community. Let them put it on the west side of the Indian River Bay. Nobody would care about it there.”

The Army Corps will determine if the state can be granted a national commercial aquaculture permit. Such a permit would mean that Delaware could give permission for farms in the development areas, as laid out in the permit, without going back to the Corps. The state’s plan was sent to the Army Corps in September and the public comment session was closed in February.

Ed Bonner of the Corps’ regulatory branch in Philadelphia is overseeing the permit process. The Corps received between 300 and 400 comments — an unusually high number, he says.

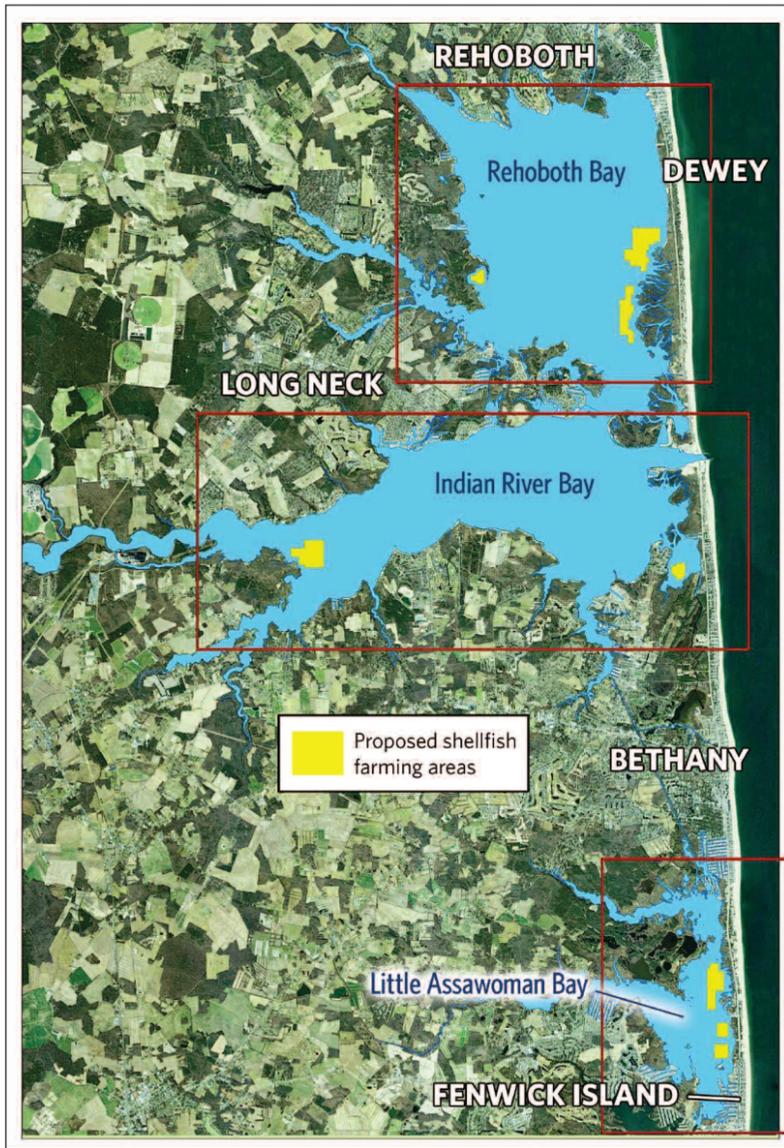
Plan opponents have asked the Corps for a public hearing. Whether that happens will be “based upon the merit of the request as it relates to the Corps’ regulatory program,” Bonner says.

Opponents also don’t want a blanket federal permit for aquaculture in the inland bays. “I want site-by-site applications, so that local communities have a say,” Plotkin says. “There’s no way that they would approve a farm in Beach Cove if 200 residents all turn out at a public meeting, all opposing it.”

Bonner would make no prediction about when the Corps will make a decision. Similarly, Saveikis isn’t making any guesses as to what that decision will be. The Corps could approve the plan with all eight development areas as designed; it could approve just some development areas, or even just some parts of the development areas; or it could reject the whole thing.

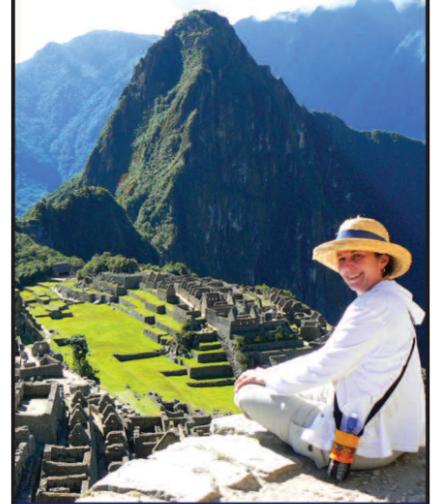
If a Beach Cove shellfish farm is OK’d, Plotkin predicts a long fight ahead: Residents “have funded lawyers with deep pockets to ensure this conflict will be tied up in court for years, if necessary.” ■

— Lynn R. Parks



Map courtesy of DNREC, Division of Fish & Wildlife

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HIDDEN HISTORY

# Fort Miles Is on the Lookout

➤ To arrange a tour of Battery 519, visit [destateparks.com/attractions/fort-miles/](http://destateparks.com/attractions/fort-miles/) and click "hours." If you have info on artifacts that would be of interest to the historical association, call 645-0753 or email [gdwray@hotmail.com](mailto:gdwray@hotmail.com).



**Gary Wray stands with the 16-inch gun barrel and shell that will be assembled at Fort Miles. He's shown through the 18-inch thick proof steel that shows the damage the weapon can cause.**

As a conduit for ships heading to Wilmington, Philadelphia and many industrial sites that could have been enemy targets, Delaware Bay was a dangerous place during World War II. Today, visitors to Cape Henlopen State Park can check out old Fort Miles to learn how our shores were guarded by U.S. Army personnel. There, they scanned the bay and ocean for enemy aircraft or ships, which could have been destroyed by massive guns that fired out over the water, or by hundreds of mines hidden beneath its surface.

To better bring that experience to life, the Fort Miles Historical Association is searching for artifacts to bolster those currently on site, and it would like area residents' help.

"The artifacts we need could be here in Sussex County or in someone's backyard or scrap heap anywhere in the U.S.," says Gary Wray,

the association's president. "If you have anything on our list, we would like to have it."

That wish list includes a "barbette," a six-ton armored shield that protected guns and crews from potential enemy fire (which never came). The association plans to install the barbette over a long-range 6-inch gun that will face out to sea at Herring Point.

It also seeks two 1918 155 mm GPF cannons. One will be placed at the old fort's gun park among several other weapons. The other will be placed on one of the four "Panama mounts" that still exist near the park's bathhouse. These mounts enabled the guns to swivel, and were named for their use in defending the Panama Canal.

Third on the list is an anti-motor-torpedo-boat 90 mm gun (or AMTB for short) that protected against ships and aircraft; it will also be displayed at the gun park.

Many munitions were sold as scrap at the end of the war, making procurement of these weapons difficult today. But the search has already led to three great finds. A refurbished 20 mm Flak 38 anti-aircraft gun — which had been salvaged from a sunken U-boat similar to one that surrendered at Fort Miles in 1945 — is displayed at Battery 519 (now restored as a museum). A 16-inch gun barrel from the *USS Missouri*, weighing 110 tons, will be assembled and placed on its own concrete pad at Battery 519, replicating one of two such guns at Fort Miles during the war. And a 1942 Sperry searchlight found on eBay will eventually be displayed near the old barracks. ■

— Chris Beakey

HISTORY LESSON

*The following story was published in the Philadelphia Inquirer on Aug. 24, 1913.*

## Sussex Autoists Form New Association, 1913

Automobilists from all over Sussex County braved the heavy roads and the soft sand to come to Rehoboth Beach yesterday afternoon to organize the Sussex County Automobile Association. Sirman Marvel of Laurel, a county editor, was elected president; Andrew Marvel, a Georgetown lawyer, secretary; and Sen. L.A. Drexler, a retired businessman of

Bethany Beach was elected treasurer. Speeches about the roads were made by Sen. Drexler, former Secretary of State, Dr. G.R. Layton and Ruby Vale, a prominent Philadelphia lawyer who maintains a residence in Milford. Membership in the new organization is to comprise membership in the State Association and also in the American Association. The work

starts at once to organize every motor car owner in Sussex County into the club.

As an example of the roads now existing in Sussex County, Sen. Drexler and a party of autoists were compelled to attend the meeting by means of a motorboat because of the terrible condition of the roads from Bethany Beach by way of Dagsboro to Rehoboth Beach. ■

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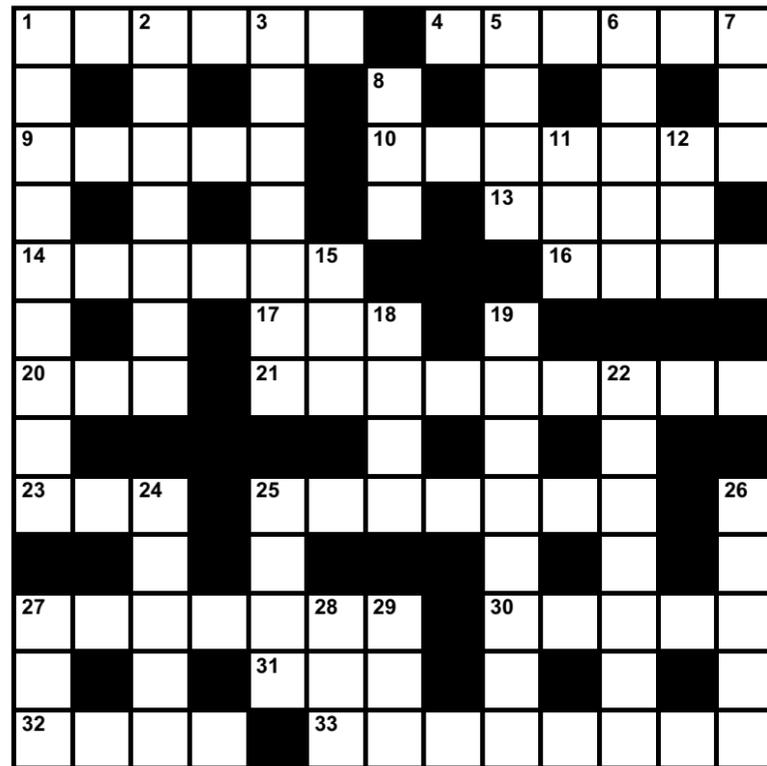
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Beach Briefs

COASTAL CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Delaware beach town that was originally a shipbuilding community
- 4 Light refreshing wind
- 9 First town in Delaware
- 10 Wesley, for one
- 13 Fishing gear
- 14 Traveled on water
- 16 Jazz singer \_\_ James
- 17 Kind of current
- 20 Afternoon hour
- 21 Words to describe a sea urchin
- 23 It could be red or white in Delaware
- 25 "The Call of \_\_\_\_" by Jack London (2 words)
- 27 Delaware beach town bisected by a river
- 30 Pergola, e.g.
- 31 Lot of noise
- 32 Twilight
- 33 Spa services

Down

- 1 Community originally known as Rock Hole
- 2 When starfish are easiest to find (2 words)
- 3 Seafood aphrodisiacs
- 5 Sushi offering
- 6 News subject
- 7 Preceding period
- 8 Very cold
- 11 Stretch out
- 12 Understand
- 15 Quick swim
- 18 Tree with cones
- 19 Delaware beach birds
- 22 State bug of Delaware
- 24 Beach volleyball statistic
- 25 Stepped
- 26 Fish enticers
- 27 Damp ground
- 28 Net holder
- 29 CSI evidence

 **On the Web** For answers to our exclusive crossword puzzle created by Myles Mellor, visit our website at [delawarebeachlife.com/crossword](http://delawarebeachlife.com/crossword).

## NUMBER CRUNCHING

**1,890:** The number of letters and emails received by Sussex County Planning and Zoning opposed to the proposed Overbrook Town Center, a massive shopping complex that developers want to build on farmland near Milton. The project would require a rezoning, which seven letters or emails supported as of a June 2 public hearing. The County Council has yet to rule on the proposed rezoning.

**3,456:** The weight, in pounds, of a 16-foot great white shark being tracked along the East Coast by a nonprofit research organization. The shark, nicknamed Mary Lee, was tagged with a satellite tracking device in September 2012, and has since traveled from the waters off Georgia to those off New York, with a jaunt into the Delaware Bay on May 15 and a ping off Fenwick Island on June 3. Track Mary Lee at [oearch.org](http://oearch.org).

**100:** The height, in feet, of a cell-phone tower to be built near Bethany Beach after the state Superior Court overruled a Sussex County Board of Adjustment rejection of AT&T's application to build the tower near the Sea Pines condominium complex. The tower, opposed by several homeowners groups, has been a controversial topic since 2009. ■

## BEACH ACCESS

# Angling for a Parking Space

On Sunday of Labor Day weekend last year, nearly a thousand vehicles crowded onto the 2.9 miles of Cape Henlopen State Park shoreline that's reserved for surf fishermen.

Each vehicle had on its front bumper a state-issued license plate, dubbed a "surf tag," to indicate that its owner had paid the required fee for permission to drive onto the beach. But whether the state's second requirement—that the vehicles' occupants be actively engaged in surf-fishing—was being fulfilled is anybody's guess. There were so many cars—parked parallel and perpendicular to one another and three, four or even five deep—that deciphering which person went with which car was impossible.

"It looked like a Wal-Mart parking lot," says Wayne Kline, chief of enforcement for Delaware State Parks. "Surf-fishing is supposed to be recreation. Where is the recreation in that?"

That Sunday was the most crowded day of last summer at Cape Henlopen. But on 14 of the season's 15 weekends, the number of parked cars on either Saturday or Sunday exceeded 500. "For a surf-fishing beach, that's too many," Kline says.

This year, things are different. According to a new policy announced in May by State Parks Director Ray Bivens, vehicles (four-wheel- and all-wheel-drive only) on the state's surf-fishing beaches have to be parked side by side in a single line that runs parallel to the shore. Spaces will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

The state has several surf-fishing beaches at all three of its ocean parks: Cape Henlopen, Delaware Seashore and Fenwick Island. The permit to drive a vehicle onto the beach, which isn't allowed on swimming beaches, is intended for convenience: Anglers don't have to carry all their gear to the shore from a distant parking lot. The requirement that anyone who parks a vehicle be actively fishing was put in place to keep the beaches less crowded. "People need a little space to set up to fish," says Rich King, a regular surf fisherman and owner of the website [delaware-surf-fishing.com](http://delaware-surf-fishing.com). "Allowing non-anglers to just go out on the beach and set up to 'play' would be a disaster."



State officials say that stacked parking like this on the state's drive-on beaches hindered surf-fishing and created unmanageable crowds, so this summer they began enforcing single-file parking parallel to the shoreline.

King supports the policy change, calling it a "step forward in helping [officers] create a more relaxed and enjoyable fishing environment." Even so, he adds, the surf-fishing beaches will still be crowded on summer weekends. The day may come, he says, that the state has to go even further and limit the number of vehicles on the beach to ensure that there's enough room for everyone.

The new policy was also welcomed by Delaware Mobile Surf-Fishermen, a surf-fishing advocacy and education group. "We applaud [the state] for listening to the concerns of the sport-fishing community," Bruce West, the organization's president, said in a statement issued after the change was announced.

The new policy isn't simply a matter of making sure that people are abiding by the terms of their surf-fishing license, Kline says. It's also a matter of safety. All those cars on the beach means there are also a lot of people. And unlike on swimming beaches, alcohol is permitted at

surf-fishing sites. "If there was a situation to arise, our officers would definitely be outnumbered," Kline says.

In addition, if there were a vehicle fire—something that, oddly enough, has happened several times in the past—it could quickly spread to other cars. Among anglers trying to get to their vehicles to get them out of the way, "there could be a sense of panic," Kline warns.

While the policy applies to all three of the state parks, the congestion problem has been largely confined to Cape Henlopen. Explains Kline: "It's the first beach that a lot of travelers come to. They don't want to have to fight all the traffic around Rehoboth and Dewey, so they stop there." Fenwick Island has some

congestion—though it is "two or three years away from getting as bad as Cape Henlopen"—but Delaware Seashore has plenty of room.

"We don't want people to not be able to fish," adds Kline. "We are hoping that as people learn about our new policy, they just drive on down to Delaware Seashore."

To start, parks enforcement officers are handing out information cards to people on surf-fishing beaches, advising them of the new policy. As the summer goes on, and as officers are confident that anglers know about the policy, they may start issuing citations. (Violations could bring a fine of \$50 to \$250 for a first offense and \$100 to \$500 for a second.)

King says that he goes fishing nearly every day, year-round. He regrets that there's not more room in Delaware for surf fishermen to spread out. "But Delaware has a limited amount of shoreline," he says. "People need to share this limited resource and respect the rules that are in place." ■

—Lynn R. Parks

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## SKATE PARK

## Diversity, on a Roll

It was a warm, bright June day in 2008 when local skateboarders gathered at Epworth United Methodist Church near Rehoboth Beach. Borrowed and donated skateboarding ramps and rails had been set up in the parking lot, local surf and skate shops manned booths, and the sport's aficionados, anxious to ride without the fear of being shooed away by business owners or police officers, were out in force. It was the first Skate Day that Epworth UMC had seen.

But it wouldn't be the last.

"It was one of the best experiences I had ever had," recalls Susan Selph, who took her son Galen, then 14, to the event that day. "Here was this parking lot full of kids of all ages from all different neighborhoods, and they had a great time together. The energy was amazing. I left feeling really uplifted."

That feeling is part of the reason Selph decided to help when, after more successful Skate Days, Epworth allowed local residents to form a community organization to raise money for a state-of-the-art skate park on the church's grounds. This group, composed primarily of skaters and parents of skaters, set out to raise \$75,000 to build a facility where kids and adults alike could enjoy the sport in a safe environment.

"Kids are going to skate," declares the Milton resident. "To give them a place where they are welcome and safe is huge."

Lewes skater Jake Bamforth agrees. "The beach area really needed somewhere permanent where skaters could go and not worry about getting in trouble," he says.

Last August, the area got such a place when the Epworth Skate Park held its grand opening and dedication.

The fundraising success and the fact that the park gets used nearly every day (weather permitting) is a testament to the support of the beach community. Says Selph: "The church has always been supportive, and people were extremely generous with donations.

Since its dedication, the park has seen increased interest and greater diversity, particularly in terms of age. Five or six years ago, the majority of participants at Skate Days were between 13 and 16. Now "our numbers are usually 50 percent under 18 and 50 percent over," says Selph, noting that the oldest registered skater was 76. But she's also seen a 3-year-old ("so padded up he looked like the Michelin Man").

This diversity, Selph surmises, seems to stem from a simple, collective love of this sport, regardless of demographics. "Skating is noncompetitive, community-building and readily available," she says. "At a time when all of us spend way too much time in front of screens, skateboarding seems to be an



appealing activity to a wide range" of people.

Bamforth, who skates at Epworth about five days a week, thinks part of the park's unique appeal is that it has no government or commercial tie-in.

"Epworth stands out because it's a simple park funded by locals. No one likes a skate park with a fence, a \$5 admission fee and hours between noon and sunset."

While the facility does have rules and video surveillance, the community spirit of the Skate Days has stayed a part of it, and despite its near constant use, there haven't been any incidents to speak of. "We've seen some injuries, but that's going to happen anywhere, in any sport," says Selph.

The Epworth Skate Park is free and open to the public. For more information, visit [eumcrb.org](http://eumcrb.org). ■

**Diego Zane, 14, of Ocean City, Md., pulls a trick called a "frontside lean to disaster" at Epworth United Methodist Church's Skate Day on June 7.**

— Jessica Gordon

### HISTORY LESSON

*The following story was published in The Delaware Republican in Georgetown on Aug. 11, 1865.*

## Encouraging News for Farmers, 1865

It is creditable to the state, and gratifying to its farmers to know, that the production of the wheat crop this year has been recorded by Commissioner of Agriculture at 18 bushel per acre. No other state has reports more than 16 bushel per acre. Less than thirty years ago the average yield was 3 to 4 bushel.

You young farmers need to keep up this ratio of improvement. To help with this it is urged that you clean up, drain the unsightly, under drained marshes, sub-soil and improve by lime and clover, rid them of miasma, mosquitoes and water snakes from lowlands and the copper-heads from the highlands. ■

ON DISPLAY

# GIRL POWER

The Rehoboth Beach Museum's newest exhibit highlights the work of women and the prominent roles they played in the coastal town. "Women of Rehoboth Beach" features paintings by local artists Ethel Leach and Teddie Tubbs, books from writers Anyda Marchant and Muriel Crawford, and items relating to former city mayor Miriam Howard.



Museum Director Nancy Alexander says visitors will learn about Ginger Shaud, left, who bought "Jack's Cafe" with her husband Harry in 1937 and later ran it when he was drafted into World War II. After selling the Dewey Beach cafe, which grew into the

famous Bottle & Cork, the

Shauds eventually began a career in real estate on Rehoboth Avenue.

Visitors also will get to know Helen "Missy" Tikiob, right, who was an active member of All Saints' Church in Rehoboth and superintendent of



its Sunday School. She later became the teacher for the first public kindergarten in the Rehoboth Special School District. For info, call 227-7310 or visit [RehobothBeachMuseum.org](http://RehobothBeachMuseum.org). ■



### BEACH LIFE TRIVIA

What lively, festive event took place every July in the 1980s in the vicinity of Second Street and Wilmington Avenue in Rehoboth?

Answer: The Bastille Day waitress/waitress races organized by Chez La Mer restaurant as a nod to its French theme. The event, honoring the July 14 French national holiday that commemorates the storming of the Bastille prison and the start of the French Revolution in 1789, featured servers from local restaurants competing in a race while carrying a tray with a champagne bottle and two plastic champagne glasses, all of which were filled with water. They walked at a fast pace from Chez La Mer (the current site of Papa Grande's) to Rehoboth Avenue, then to the boardwalk and back up Wilmington Avenue. The Sammy Ferro jazz trio often entertained on the sidewalk during the event. The race drew hundreds of spectators, some of whom joined the racers for a champagne celebration on the open-air deck after the race. Many a waitress had a difficult time working their evening shifts that day.

## SCIENCE AT WORK

## UD's Well-Traveled Robots

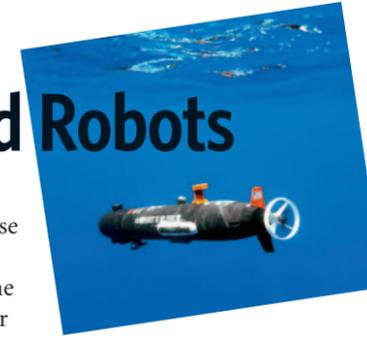
“They’re not the robots you see in a movie, those humanoid things that move around and talk to you,” says Doug Miller, referring to the machines he uses as a University of Delaware associate professor of oceanography. “Robots have different levels of programmability and autonomy. You use robots for things that are dirty, dull or dangerous — things you wouldn’t want to send a person to do or that a person wouldn’t do very well.” They’re used a lot these days, he says, especially in science.

At UD’s College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment in Lewes, a number of research teams are using robotics on projects near and far. Miller, a biologist, joined forces with geologist and engineer Arthur Trembanis (also an associate professor of oceanography) on two current undertakings. “What Art and I are doing locally now is looking at scallop mortality and scallop fishing off the Delaware coast,” he explains. Another project is habitat mapping off Assateague Island “to compare maps and samples taken before Hurricane Sandy.” The work is repetitive and precise — perfect for a robot.

UD researchers are also using their Robotic Discovery Laboratories’ equipment along Delaware’s ocean and bay coast to study the migration and breeding patterns of the endangered Atlantic sturgeon, and to track sand tiger sharks and monitor weather patterns.

Miller refers to these robots as “assets,” and they certainly are expensive ones: They cost “hundreds of thousands of dollars to millions of dollars each. We try to make the most efficient use of our time on the [research] boats, using different vehicles to do different work on the same trip.”

Beyond the activity happening locally, UD scientists are using robots around the world. In the Arctic, a team is studying how marine organisms such as krill, snail and sea jellies survive when sunlight disappears in the winter. At the opposite end of the globe,



another team is investigating how penguins are affected by ocean circulation, plankton distribution and climate change. And in the western Pacific, some 2,000 miles south of

Japan, a team is using robotics to gather data about the coral reefs and currents around Palau.

Data from that region is shared with The BentProp Project to help locate the remains of World War II Americans whose planes were lost at sea. Sonar images in March revealed the wreckage of a U.S. Navy aircraft that had been missing for 70 years. “It means long hours with technical underwater gear and repetitive actions, but it does pay off. ... We hope our work will in some way bring closure to the families of these fallen heroes,” team member Mark Moline, director of the School of Marine Science and Policy, said in the UD campus newspaper.

“You can do a lot with this data,” Miller notes. “Sometimes the [focus] is on one aspect or another, but the data is being used for multiple purposes all the time.”

For more information, visit [ceoe.udel.edu](http://ceoe.udel.edu) or search for UDel Team Habitat Mapping on Facebook. ■

— Mary Ann Benyo

## KNOW YOUR ROBOTS

Doug Miller, associate professor of oceanography at the University of Delaware, describes the types of equipment used in the school’s Robotic Discovery Laboratories:

**ROV:** This Remote-Operated Vehicle is tethered to a research vessel, from which it is operated. The ROV often has a video camera and sometimes an extendable arm to grab objects.

**AUV:** An Autonomous Underwater Vehicle is independent and preprogrammed. Some, called gliders, sink or rise through changes in buoyancy; these vehicles use little energy and can stay in use for months at a time, capturing data such as temperature and salinity as often as once per second. Self-propelled AUVs, on the other hand, use a great deal of energy, which limits its missions to hours in length. They photograph the sea bottom and use sonar to map its contours accurately.

**UAV:** Unmanned Aerial Vehicles are operated by radio control. UD scientists use a quadcopter (commonly called a “drone”) with a camera to map beaches and dune vegetation from the air.

Miller says of all these robotics: “The equipment is amazing. It’s reliable, it’s rugged. You can [ship] it across the planet and open it up and it works. We can send them to Iceland, to Palau, to Antarctica, wherever.” ■



Matt Oliver, right, associate professor in UD’s College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment, used an AUV in Antarctica several years ago. Professors and students with the Robotic Discovery Laboratories use such devices to study subjects from climate change to fish migration.

ARTIFACT SPOTLIGHT

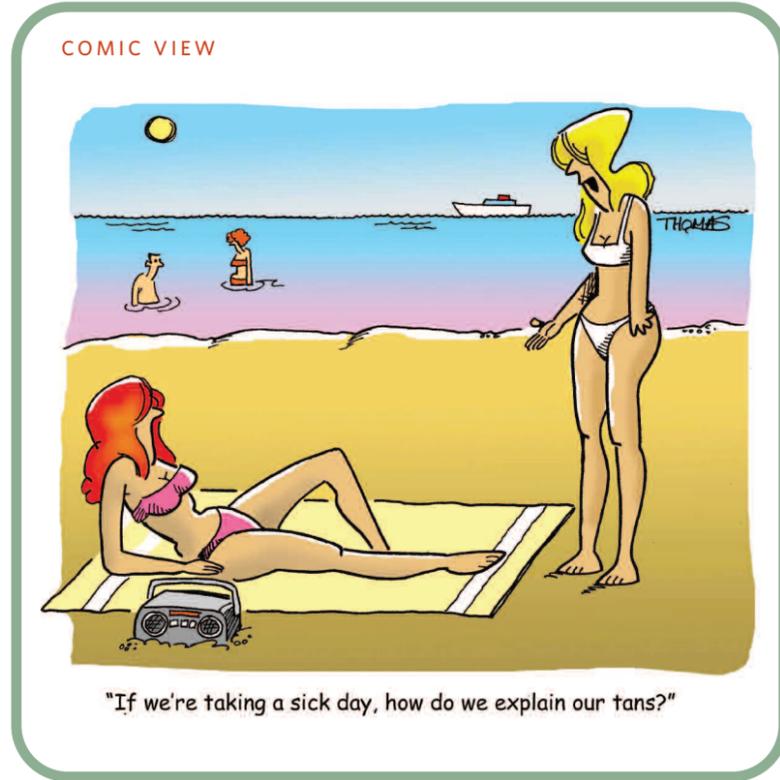
## Eel Pot, Circa Late 1800s

This eel pot was woven with oak splints in the late 1800s by Elwood Wright, whose brother Oscar Wright donated it in 1975 to the Nanticoke Indian Museum near Millsboro. Museum Coordinator Sterling Street says

stone weights and bait would have been placed inside the pot to draw eels, which were eaten and sold. Once the eels swam into the larger end (the smaller end would have been closed), they would have been trapped inside. "[Nanticoke] did a lot of fishing right here in the Indian River [area]," such as Herring Creek, Massey's Landing and Puddle Hole, he says.

The artifact is on display at the museum, located at 27073

John J. Williams Highway (Route 24). For hours, visit [nanticokeindians.org](http://nanticokeindians.org) or call 945-7022. ■



HIGH FLYERS

# Hobbyists Take Wing in Lewes

The runway of short cropped grass lies beyond a sturdy wire fence. A windsock flutters in the morning breeze. Several planes, bright red and yellow, seem to float against the backdrop of the blue sky, while men putter around other aircraft resting on wooden “parking stands.”

Hopkins Field off Route 9 is a far cry from any standard airport. Nonetheless, it’s a bustling place for members of the Lewes R/C Club, who meet there every chance they get to fly model remote-controlled planes. “There are clubs like this all over” the country, says treasurer Bevan Buel. This one has been around for 30-some years.

The planes are very unstable in winds greater than 10 mph, he says, so they are usually flown early in the day, both to beat the summer heat and to avoid the winds that often come up later in the day. The aircraft typically have a 5- or 6-foot wingspan, though the smallest are just 16 or 18 inches. “You need to be able to see them,” Buel explains. “We want to see the plane do what we tell it to. It’s a thrill to put a plane up in the air and move the [control] sticks and see the plane respond. I still remember my first flight” back in 1988.

To fly with the Lewes R/C Club requires membership in the Academy of Model Aeronautics and a pledge to operate within the AMA National Model Aircraft Safety Code. The latter is important considering that most of these planes travel at 35 to 45 mph. The faster ones, however, can hit 80 mph, and Garrett Lydic of Ocean View describes a delta wing plane he built that had a racing engine; it was clocked at 147. “Flying that fast, close enough to the guys to use radar [which measures the speed], was kind of nerve-racking,” he says. “... My thumbs were shaking, my heart was pounding.”

Advanced technology allows pilots to very precisely control the flight surfaces on the wings and tail. “They’re not real easy to fly,” Buel notes. “We offer instruction, but it’s like riding a bicycle. Once you learn, it stays with you.”

The hobby can cost from \$250 to “many thousands” to get start-



**Rich Bardy, above, of Lewes, prepares his Escapade glow engine plane for flight at the Lewes R/C Club airfield near Lewes. John Pulli, right, of Harbeson, readies his remote-controlled Decathlon-type aircraft.**

ed, he says, noting that “there are \$25,000 model airplanes out there.” It takes practice — and guts — to fly something that expensive, as even crashing the least expensive planes is costly. For that reason, practicing on simulators is invaluable, Lydic says.

The North Laurel Elementary School teacher has been flying more affordable models for seven or eight years now. He practices aerobatic maneuvers daily (“I’m trying to learn the most outrageous things you can do with a plane”) and says he enjoys both perfecting these moves on a simulator — which can take months — and then the adrenaline rush of performing them live at the field. He describes the challenges of learning a slow roll, a hover and a torque roll, using the two control sticks on the handheld servo (akin to a computer game joystick) to manipulate the plane’s ailerons (flaps on the wing), elevators (flaps on the tail), rudder and throttle. It’s a lot to keep track of: “You’re moving in four directions at the same time. You can’t think about it. It’s something you have to do on instinct.”

Skills range from beginner to advanced exhibition quality among the 40 active club members, all of whom are men and most of whom are retired. Some are coastal Delaware natives, but most are “transplants who moved to the beach and brought their hobby with them,” Buel says. That describes him too: Eight years ago, he moved to the Lewes area from Cincinnati, where “they have one of best large clubs, but here in Lewes, we have a lot of that same technology and ability.”

World War II paratrooper Oliver Moses has seen model airplane technology change tremendously since his first exposure in the 1930s. The Millsboro-area resident says, “I started when I was in grade school, building rubber-band models, then I went to free flight [not controlled once it’s launched] and U-control [controlled by two lines held by the flyer]. And after the war, I came back and radio started to

**A remote-controlled plane glides over a field near Lewes, where about 40 members of the Lewes R/C Club fly the planes.**



come in.” The biggest change he’s seen over the years is that people no longer build their own planes from scratch. “Half the hobby is gone,” he laments. At 90, Moses still builds his own planes and flies as often as weather permits (usually two or three times a week).

Clearly, there’s an addictive nature to this hobby, which Buel summarizes this way: “Once a flyer, always a flyer.”

For more information, visit the club’s website at [lewesrc.com](http://lewesrc.com). ■

— Mary Ann Benyo



Photographs by Scott Nathan

INTERACT WITH US  
**FACEBOOK FEEDBACK**

**How do you feel about the new “single-file” parking restrictions on state park surfing beaches?**

**Jon Sibert:** I have had to double park on very busy days. As long as there is room to drive by safely, I don’t see a problem with [the previous system]. Perhaps this wouldn’t be an issue if everybody and their brother didn’t catch on. Everyone is retiring to our Lower Slower Delaware.

**Rob Burton:** I don’t have a problem with the way it was. It actually put the people who want to socialize in the same area so that other areas are available to fish!

**Christopher N. Walls:** I’d rather be fishing than partying. If I pull my vehicle on to that beach I’m gonna be fishing the whole time on there, and if you want to party and swim and do whatever else on the beach besides fishing go to another beach where they allow that.

(See page 6 for a story on this topic.)

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NATURE TOURS

# Where the Wild Things Are

Wildlife is abundant in coastal Delaware. Fortunately, so are wildlife tours, which can be taken by foot, car, bike, boat, kayak and even paddleboard.

“This is a tiny little state, but it has some of the best opportunities for seeing shorebirds in the world,” says Bill Stewart. “It’s just a great location for the birds, and then we have incredible public access to them.”

Stewart should know. He’s the director of conservation and community for the American Birding Association and owner of Red Knot Outfitters, which provides birdwatching tours throughout the area. Thanks to the area’s parks, wildlife refuges and other accessible properties, far more than waterfowl and other birds can be seen. Whether through free public tours, private guides or tour companies, nature lovers can view all manner of plants, animals and marine life — including whales — in these natural settings.

In mid-spring, Stewart was most excited about tours along Delaware Bay at Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge and Slaughter Beach, where for two weeks after the first full moon in May thousands of shorebirds

gorge on horseshoe eggs to fuel their trip north to the Arctic region. But he says bird tours in that region are excellent at any time of the year.

Longtime guide Irene Hinke-Sacilotto, whose Osprey Photo Workshops & Tours offers sightseeing treks both internationally and locally, says witnessing the arrival of snow geese in the fall at Prime Hook is one of her clients’ favorites.

Free tours are offered throughout the year by the Delaware Ornithological Society and the Sussex Bird Club. Chris Bennett, a natural resource planner with the Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation and a vice president of the Sussex Bird Club, often organizes these trips, which include bird walks at Prime Hook and kayak trips on Rehoboth Bay. Both groups have a list of ongoing tours on their websites.

Abbott’s Mill Nature Center near Milford, operated by the Delaware Nature Society, hosts some of the society’s summer canoe trips to view a variety of birds, active beaver dams and unusual plants. Tours at Slaughter Beach and on Abbott’s Pond near Milford are available for all ages, and



A kayak tour takes in the scenery in coastal Sussex County, where visitors would find species including the tri-color heron, above right.



one, set for the fall, is billed as a “bio-blitz” in which participants help conduct a wildlife survey.

Throughout the summer, Delaware Seashore State Park offers special guided programs, including ones focused on jellyfish, crabs, clams and squid. A regular kayak trip explores the wildlife in the marshes of Rehoboth Bay.

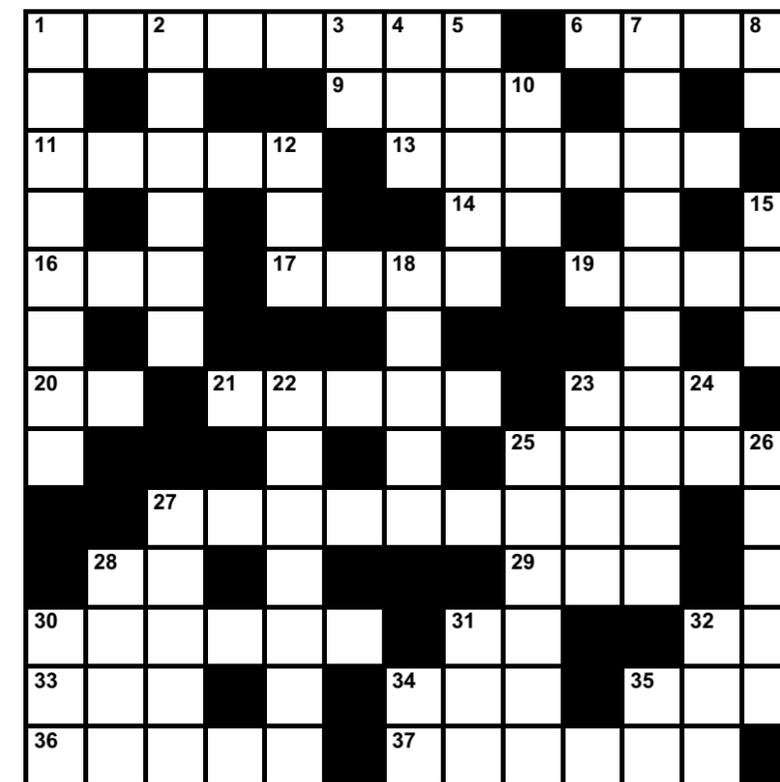
Wildlife photographer Ken Arni, member of the Coastal Camera Club that participates in tours each year, recommends Coastal Kayak in Fenwick Island for the guided outings it sponsors, including moonrise and sunset tours and trips to see herons, osprey and eagles. Also offered are paddleboard eco-tours of the Assawoman Wildlife Area to see birds and plant life.

Other private tour outfits include Quest Fitness and Kayak in Lewes, Eco Bay Kayak in Ocean View and Fisherman’s Wharf in Lewes (which offers whale and dolphin watching). The Cape Water Taxi, with docks in Lewes, Dewey Beach and Long Neck, has 90-minute eco-tours and an osprey banding trip. Tour Lewes sponsors electric bicycle rides that include a nature trip through Cape Henlopen State Park.

And, says Arni, sometimes the best tour guide is no one at all. At Prime Hook, for instance, there are several self-guided car and walking tours one can take through the preserve, which showcases one of the largest saltwater marshes in the mid-Atlantic. ■

— Jim Paterson

COASTAL CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Immaculate and clean, often used to describe Delaware beaches
- 6 Sea color
- 9 Portuguese navigator
- 11 Beach sights
- 13 Indian River Inlet \_\_\_\_
- 14 Old record
- 16 Started a campfire
- 17 Historic homestead near Rehoboth
- 19 Put in stone, perhaps
- 20 Compass point
- 21 Kind of rack found in the kitchen
- 23 Poker winning
- 25 18 holes perhaps
- 27 Goes high over the sea
- 28 British princess
- 29 Bambi's mom
- 30 There's a long network of these water channels in South Bethany
- 31 Twofold
- 32 \_\_ Man (comic book character)
- 33 "Bed in" participant
- 34 Dark brown-gray
- 35 Cove cousin
- 36 Romantic outings
- 37 Young swan

Down

- 1 Stand-up \_\_\_\_
- 2 Deep-seated
- 3 Check, at the door
- 4 Point
- 5 Kind of seal
- 7 Fenwick Island structure
- 8 Electron volt, for short
- 10 Drink a little
- 12 Lawn material
- 15 Boat referred to
- 18 Piers
- 22 Lilac colors
- 23 Water \_\_\_\_
- 24 Town for short
- 25 On a horse
- 26 Delaware beach that is a "sandbar community"
- 27 Wine
- 28 Comic Carvey
- 30 Atlantic fish
- 31 Shopping decision
- 32 Cap, for example
- 34 Many people from this capital come to Delaware
- 35 To stay the same

 **On the Web** For answers to our exclusive crossword puzzle created by Myles Mellor, visit our website at [delawarebeachlife.com/crossword](http://delawarebeachlife.com/crossword).



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