Lower

Continued from page A1

Lare said. "The concept is more of a liaison to report back to council."

Lare said he was fine with Donohue making a report to council on the matter.

"Now that an interest has been expressed, I'd be happy to go look at this again," Donohue said.

Donohue said committees have no decision-making ability, and any recommendations would have to be approved by the entire five-member council.

Lare said the idea was carried out recently, when communicating with the Lower Township Municipal Utilities Authority. Beck said that was done on an ad hoc basis, basically through a phone call during a closed session.

During public comment, resident Joe Winters said he was under the impression the township manager was in charge of the operations of the township and didn't understand what was being proposed. Douglass explained that it was an attempt to improve communication between council and the departments.

"Can't the departments talk to the manager?" he said.

The department heads meet weekly with the township manager.

Lare declined to address Winters' question on Monday, saying, "I'll wait for the solicitor's report."

Resident Lois Grimes voiced concern about what council was considering.

"Too many cooks spoil the broth," she said.

In other business, Diane Martin of Andrielle Avenue, again expressed her concern over Outdoor Wood Boilers (OWB). One neighbor uses an OWB to heat water for his home, and neighbors recently complained to council about the smoke and its odor. Beck said the matter had been referred to the Planning Board for their review. Voll said the matter was on the Planning Board agenda, and the board was aware of the neighbors' concerns.

Martin said she was aware of some recommendations regarding an ordinance regulating OWBs, such as requiring 20 acres of land and 1,000-foot setbacks from property lines. "What we would really like is an outright ban," she said.

Neighbors have complained that the smoke from the OWBs is very acrid and forces them to close their windows to keep out the smoke.

Rescue

Continued from page A1

with "any formal lifeguard duties." Although they are primarily there to clean up and stow equipment for the off-season, they still respond to an emergency if needed.

"Our providing lifeguards is geared toward the summer season," MacLeod said. "They were fortunate the lifeguards were nearby to assist them and handle the rescue."

MacLeod said there are still emergency responders for the beaches during the off-season. He said the fire and police departments are on call, as well as lifeguards who live locally. Many Cape May lifeguards are not local and leave after the summer months when their duties are complete. According to Randolph, there are still 10 year round lifeguards on the island with pagers, who will respond when an emergency occurs, much like volunteer firemen. He said because there are beach goers and surfers pretty much all year, there is a definite need for lifeguards in the off-season as well.

"There are still people that go out in the fall and before the Beach Patrol is back on duty in May," he said. "That's why we invented this system, because we have had problems and emergencies in the past."

Despite lifeguards being in the vicinity, they are not patrolling the beachfront, and victims will have to depend on an alert passerby to report their trouble. The two female swimmers from last week were lucky enough to have a witness who called for help. Now that the beach patrol is off duty until May, they hope visitors and residents will be extra careful when going out on the beach to surf, swim or fish. Randolph said the rescue last week was well executed and was very proud of his staff for responding so quickly and making the saves.

"The cooperation between the police, fire department and us was well coordinated," he said. "Glad we were able to get them out safely."

Crop

Continued from page A1

saturated the soil and washed out some pumpkin patches. Of additional concern are the colder temperatures that followed. An early frost could also be decimating to the already weather-ravaged pumpkin crop.

Areas to the south do not seem to be as hard-hit. The Virginia Department of Agriculture said the 2011 crop should be good.

An Illinois news source said the local crop could be small due to the lack of rain.

Rea said he believes the area needs to have sunny weather for the pumpkin crop to survive. The worst thing? More rain.

Rea said he hopes to have nice pumpkins available during his Harvest Fair (see the Community Events listings starting on page A4), which is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 15. He said kids enjoy the hayrides and other activities, but they also get a big thrill out of picking out their own pumpkin. As for the type of pumpkins kids go for, the bigger the better.

"The kids like the big ones," Rea said.

Jenny Carleo, County Agricultural and Resource Management Agent with the Rutgers Copperative Extension-Cape May County, said the county has experienced crop losses from the hurricane.

"And hard driving rain, which brings different kinds of bacteria," she said. "The farmers who are on top of it, spraying with fungicide, are doing better."

Carleo said generally pumpkins don't do well in very wet weather. Carleo said she can't predict the amount of loss Cape May County will have, but it's not as bad as the northeast.

"LeGates farm has a nice crop," she said. "But the later it gets in the year, the harder it will be to find them."

Carleo said there are quite a few farms in the county that grow pumpkins, many being sold at roadside stands. She said many of them rely on pumpkin sales for late season income.

Special to the Cape May Star and Wave

4-H honors Freeholder Sheets

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE – "Friend of 4-H Award" presented to Cape May County Freeholder Ralph E. Sheets Jr. by 4-H members at the County Administration Building during the Freeholders' Meeting on Sept. 27. Pictured in photo, left to right, are: Luke Karavan, 12, of Linwood, from the Cyber Explorers Club; Abby Thompson, 13, of Green Creek, from the Barnyard Buddies Club; Hunter Riggins, 11, of Woodbine, from the Wranglers club; Freeholder Ralph E. Sheets Jr.; Rebecca Thompson, 15, of Green Creek, from the Barnyard Buddies Club; Tessa Wozunk, 13, of Cape May Court House, from the Golden Bits Club and Linda Horner, Rutgers Cooperative Extension – 4-H Youth Development Program Associate

Alarm

Continued from page A1

West Cape May VFC serves in cooperation with the Town Bank Fire Company. Corrado said he would be concerned if the borough passed an ordinance requiring residents to pay fees for excessive false alarms and Lower Township did not pass a similar ordinance. Borough Clerk Elaine Wallace said she would find out if Lower Township had an ordinance in place already.

Deputy Mayor Peter Burke said he thought if the ordinance was passed in West Cape May, it should apply to the Lower Township residents the borough fire company services. Burke said at a previous West Cape May meeting, the VFC answered 13 calls in that area south of the canal in 2010.

Corrado said West Cape May could not make a Lower Township resident appear in its municipal court, so the borough would be unable to make the ordinance apply to those residents.

Director of Public Safety, Commissioner Ramsey Geyer, said the VFC was not interested in charging fees for emergency calls of any kind. He said whether the emergency is real or a false alarm, they are there to respond and do their jobs.

"Their general attitude is they're here to serve the public," Geyer said.

Corrado said the main goal of the ordinance was to make sure residents and especially business owners have fire alarms that are functioning correctly.

Retires

Continued from page A1

advertised with the Baltimore Sun newspaper and was a good friend of the publisher.

Eventually, Maher was offered a job there and ended up spending 33 years in the advertising department at the Baltimore Sun, mostly in real estate advertising. He said when the Chicago Tribune acquired it; the company was never the same and he decided to retire early at the age of 62.

Maher and his wife of 59 years, Joanne, had been vacationing in Cape May for some time and after he retired, the two purchased a condo on Yacht Avenue. According to Maher, they moved to the island permanently in 1989, and never plan to leave.

After moving here, Joanne opened up a jewelry store on Carpenter's Lane called "Crystal Persuasion," which left Maher looking for something to occupy his time with.

"I had this extra flow of energy," he said. "I wanted something to do."

For a while, he was with the Literacy Volunteers of America, tutoring kids at the old Stockton College, and still keeps in touch with one of his former students.

When he first came to Cape May, Maher began volunteering as a walking tour guide for MAC and continued for about 15 years. He said eventually, his knees began to bother him and had to give it up.

Of all his volunteer positions, he feels he accomplished the most with his 20 years on the Shade Tree Commission. He said he has always had a love for nature and trees, and that was what drew him into the commission. Maher said the abundance of trees in Cape May was one of the aspects that he and his wife fell in love with.

"You don't see this many trees in your average shore town or city," he said. "Trees around here are so important to the atmosphere, the city and the people in it."

Maher said the biggest project he was involved in with the Shade Tree Commission was the Harborfront Park Property project. He said the commission wanted to plant trees there because there were hardly any. However, many residents came forward and said they didn't want trees planted, because it would impede their view of the waterfront. Eventually the commission fought long and hard enough to add greenery to the barren park.

He just retired from the commission a couple of weeks ago, due to some health issues and not having as much energy as he used to. Maher said because of this, his traveling days are over and plans to stay put in Cape May. He's been all over Europe with his wife and the entire East Coast with his family, so he feels he has seen enough anyway. He has two of his eight children living nearby in Cape May, while the others are spread out along the coast from Maine to Tennessee. He said they will all be visiting and calling on a regular basis, so there is no need for him to travel.

Maher said he plans to simply relax and live out the rest of his days in Cape May, reading his beloved mystery novels and history books while spending time with Joanne. He said he will still attend commission meetings in Cape May now and again, just to stay in the loop and offer his opinion, but his volunteer hours have finally come to an end. Over the past 25 years, he has developed a unbreakable connection with Cape May and is happy with the time he has put in volunteering.

"It's good to help people, the town and community and I really enjoyed doing it," he said. "This is the kind of town where people open doors for me when they see me walking with my cane. That says a lot about a place."

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