



## INSIDE



### SPORTS

Lady Tigers best another highly rated team, **A14**

Lou Rodia: The 'big one' that got away, **A14**

Fishing report: limit catches of bass, **A14**

### CAPE MAY

Update on Convention Hall, **A5**

Decision on vending locations, **A5**

### WEATHER ALMANAC BY WAYNE ROOP

FEBRUARY (Normals: 43°/29°, 2.88")			
	High	Low	Precip.
19	48	29°	.03"
20	37°	25°	
21	42°	28°	
22	46	31°	.11"
23	39°	28°	
24	37°	23°	
25	43°	18°	

### Spring forward Sunday

Set your clock an hour ahead for daylight saving

## Budget cut would be nearly \$250,000

Cape May Mayor Mahaney suggests budget, proposed tax rate increase cuts

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - On Tuesday Mayor Edward Mahaney suggested cutting about \$250,000 from the \$15 million 2009 municipal budget and cutting the proposed tax rate increase by nearly a penny.

Mahaney referred to a three-page executive summary he drafted with the help of Councilwoman Terri Swain, saying he was proposing to cut

\$248,775 from this year's budget. Part of the reason, he said, was to offset the increase in water/sewer facilities charges and sewer rates, which will cost homeowners about 25 percent more. He said the proposed 2.1-cent tax increase could be cut to 1.13 cents.

"That means the owners of a \$500,000 property would see their taxes go up \$56.50 in 2009," Mahaney said. "Under a 2.1-cent increase they would have gone up \$105."

Mahaney said the majority of the savings would come in the area of salaries and wages through attrition, freezing wages in some positions, and management of employees. Mahaney said his proposal was to not fill four full-time positions and one part-time position that would be vacated by June 30.

Mahaney said he recommended increasing the funding for the grants coordinator to \$29,000, but part of the salary is paid for through administra-

tive fees contained in the grants.

"That's exactly the rationale for the increase," Mahaney said, responding to a question by Councilman David Kurkowski.

He said the city needed to spend more money on applying for grants and low-interest loans.

He said he would confer with the police chief regarding the need for three full-time detectives and a full-

Please see Budget, page A2

## DWI citation for off-duty Lower cop

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

NORTH CAPE MAY - An off-duty Lower Township police officer was charged with driving while intoxicated after he allegedly sideswiped a New Jersey Transit bus on Townbank Road.

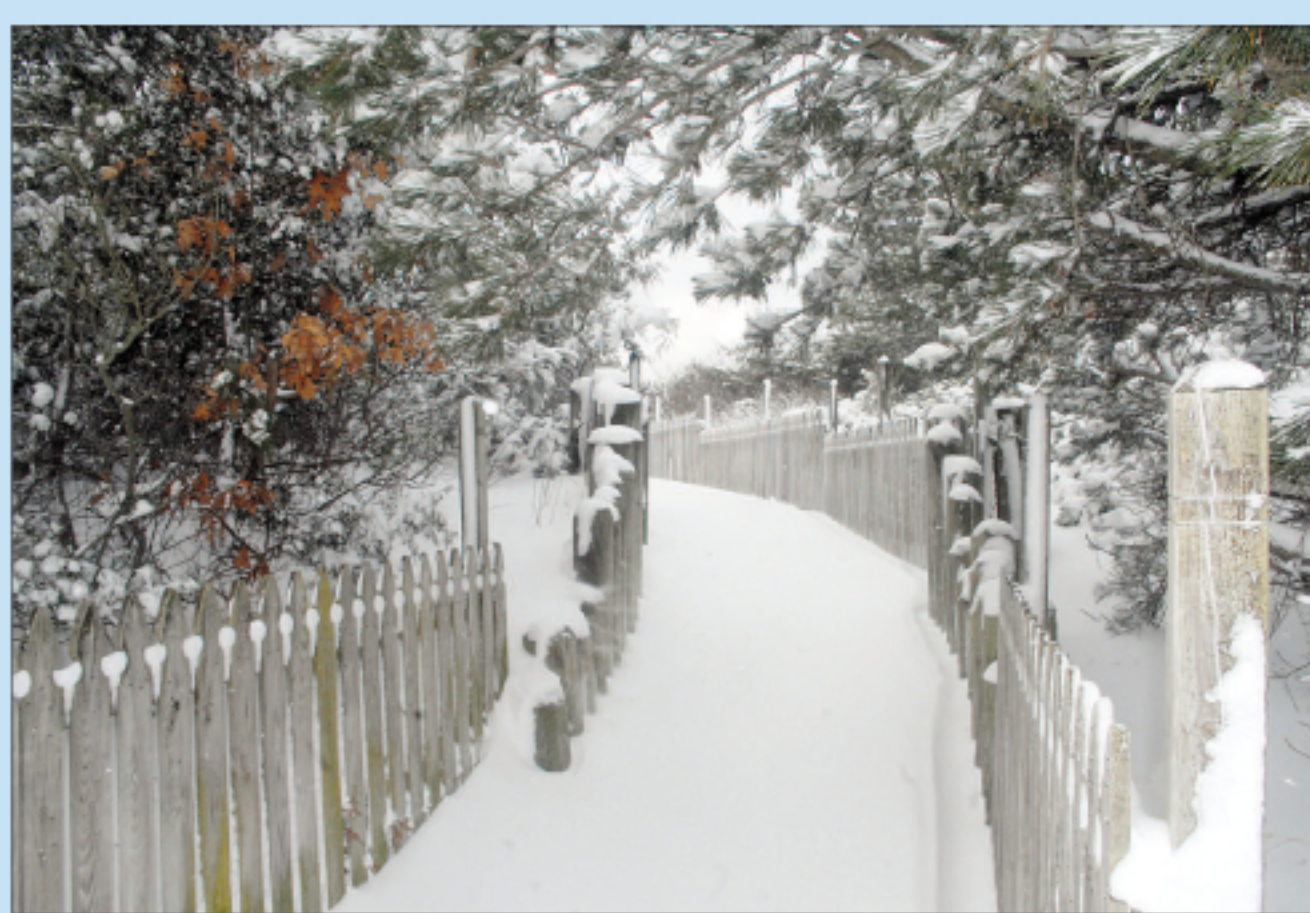
Police received a report of a motor vehicle accident around 1:40 a.m., Feb. 28, involving the bus and a gray pickup truck. The bus driver said he was traveling west on Townbank Road approaching Bayshore when a gray Dodge pickup truck traveling the other direction swerved into his lane and sideswiped the rear of the bus.

Police said neither of the two passengers on the bus at the time of the accident were injured.

Lower Township police conducted an intensive search of the area looking for the vehicle, and around 5:30 a.m., Sgt. John Chew noticed fresh scrape marks on Crawford Road. Chew followed the scrape marks, which led to a Crawford Road residence of a Lower Township police officer, where he located a gray Dodge pickup truck with heavy front-end damage. Lower Township Police Chief Edward Donohue said the Crawford Road residence was the home of Det. Robert Smith, but at the time Smith apparently had no knowledge of the vehicle being left there.

Police said officers determined the truck was registered to Lower Township Police Officer Doug Whitten, 44, a 14-year veteran of the Lower Township Police Department.

Please see DWI, page A2



Christopher South/Cape May Star and Wave

### A blanket of white

Up to 10 inches of snow piled up throughout the region Sunday night into Monday, bringing March in like a lion for 2009. Above, the snow makes everything look better, even a naturally scenic walkway to the St. Peter's Beach. Left is St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Cape May Point. Below left, a city truck clears snow from the Washington Street Mall. Below, snow gilds a pine bough. Bottom, waves crash on the Cove jetty.



## High tech parking meters could increase revenues in Cape May

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - Councilman David Kurkowski said new high tech parking meters that zero out when a car pulls out of a spot could bring in extra revenue for

The company would install 700 meters - one for every two metered parking spaces.

"This is preferable to one per block," Kurkowski said.

He said the meters would handle coins, all denominations of bills, and credit cards. Kurkowski said the meters can also be linked to a cell phone and the charge would appear on the customer's phone bill.

The user would also be given the option of paying by the hour or for the duration of their stay in that space. Kurkowski said a camera in the meter would take a photo of the car and a hockey puck sized sensor would tell

if the car pulled out of the space. "If someone pulls out it senses the space is empty and zeroes out the meter," he said.

Instead of finding time on a meter, each driver would have to start at zero.

Kurkowski said there are also provisions for parking violations. He said the city could program

Please see Meters, page A2

*'(People parking) can avoid a ticket and revenue to the city stays the same.'*

-Councilman David Kurkowski

the city, which is hard-pressed for new sources of revenue.

Kurkowski gave city council a presentation on Photo Violation Technology's proposal to install high tech parking meters to the city in exchange for a piece of the parking pie.

According to Kurkowski, Photo Violation Technology has offered to replace all the city's parking meters with their high tech meter.

## Some Villas homeowners could start getting gas as early as this year

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

LOWER TOWNSHIP - Some of the approximately 450 homeowners in Villas who have shown an interest in being South Jersey Gas customers, the conversion from liquid propane (LPG) to natural gas, could come as early as this year, as South Jersey Gas begins installing gas lines in that section of Lower Township.

Todd Gordon, sales manager with South Jersey Gas, appeared at Monday's township council meeting to update the governing body on plans to extend gas service in the township.

Representatives announced their plans in September 2008 and have spent much of the time in between then and now trying to sell residents on connecting to natural gas. Gordon said there is an informational meeting scheduled

for March 14 at 7 p.m. in the township meeting room, and the company hopes to begin construction this month. He said so far about 450 homeowners have shown an interest and they would be getting additional applications out to people. Gordon said the gas company would continue to market in the neighborhoods, and he thanked township and county officials for their support.

Gordon also said there was help

from the state to cover the cost of the conversion.

Councilman Thomas Conrad said he has heard from a number of Bayside Village residents who are anxious to get gas.

"Our development will be based on interest," Gordon said. "That will help us decide how we extend out from Bayshore Road."

Deputy Mayor Kevin Lare asked how the gas company would decide

where and when it would extend the lateral lines down side streets. Gordon said, again, it would be determined by interest, saying the most concentrated areas of interest would get service first. Asked about streets where a single user might want service, Gordon said if it meets the cost benefit analysis they would run a line to that home.

Please see Villas gas, page A2