



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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VOLUNTEERS CLEANING UP CEMETERY

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City finally introduces temporary seating fee

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council introduced an ordinance Feb. 22 to regulate temporary outdoor seating at bars, restaurants and hotels and to charge a fee for each of the seats.

Councilwoman Bea Pessagno said the city was seeking to find a fair and equitable way to regulate outdoor seating and charge appropriate fees. An outdoor seating committee met from June 2016 through the fall to iron out details, she said.

"We spent time even trying to find what is a table, what is an outdoor seat, if food is served, if a meal is served, what constitutes that," Pessagno said.

Council's final vote is scheduled for April. She said if the public is not pleased or seeks amendments to the ordinance, changes could be made with final passage of the ordinance in May. City solicitor Frank Corrado said the ordinance must be referred to the city's Planning Board for review since it makes amendments to land use ordinances.

The ordinance defines "dining tables" as any surface from which individuals eat with a minimum height of 30 inches and a minimum surface diameter of 36 inches.

See **Temporary seat fee**, Page A7

Meier plan for parking hits hurdle

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Due to the city accepting grant money to purchase the former Vance's Bar property on Lafayette Street, it is not possible to have a temporary summer parking lot on the site of a staging area for equipment being used for the JCP&L manufactured gas plant remediation site.

At a Feb. 7 City Council meeting, Deputy Mayor Shaine Meier suggested a temporary parking lot for the summer season be created on a gravel parking area JCP&L would leave behind when it completes environmental remediation of the former gas plant site by Memorial Day. He said the only possible location for temporary parking would be the location of the former Wise-Anderson Park.

"We don't have a curb cut in that location anymore," Meier said at a Feb. 21 council meeting. "The curb cut at the JCP&L remediation site is currently on the Vance's property."

He said his hope was to use some of the gravel currently on the JCP&L site where heavy equipment and construction trailers are located. Meier said he met with JCP&L representatives who indicated they could not leave the gravel and must restore the soil and plant grass on the site due to state regulations.

In the past, Lafayette Street Park property has been used for grass parking for the Dragon Boat Festival and Mid-Atlantic Center

See **Parking plan**, Page A7



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Members of the West Cape May Elementary School Garden Club turn over the soil in raised garden boxes outside the school Feb. 22 under the direction of teacher Cindy Bal-dacchini.

West Cape May students learn how garden grows

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — After school on Thursdays for more than a decade, students in the West Cape May Elementary School Garden Club have gathered to learn about plants, the environment and spend time digging in the dirt under the guidance of teacher Cindy Bal-dacchini.

On Feb. 22, Doug Marandino, an owner of Cape May Honey Farm, explained the importance of bees and offered the students a taste of several varieties of honey. He said all of his hives are located in West Cape May and produce wild flower honey.

This time of year is a quiet time for bees, but with last Thursday's 62-degree temperature, the insects were out looking for flowers, he said.

"They're bringing in pollen; there's no nectar yet," Marandino said.

He said the pollen would stimulate the queen bee to begin laying eggs. By the beginning of April, the bees will start making honey and honey boxes will be added to the hives, Marandino said.

He offered spoon-size samples of herb honey, wild flower honey and dandelion honey to the students.

"A lot of people want to take dandelions out of their yards, they want to spray chemicals on the grass and pull out the dandelions, but the dandelions are one of the first flowers



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Cape May Honey Farm owner Doug Marandino squeezes out samples of his natural honey at West Cape May Elementary School.

'Anything we can do to help them because they are really struggling right now and they need all the help we can give them. They are very important to our food supply.'

—Doug Marandino, Cape May Honey Farm

that flower in spring," Marandino said. "It's a very important food source for honey bees."

Students described the taste of various wild honeys as "sweet," "sugary," "really good" and "bumpy."

He stressed the importance of providing habitat

in yards for bees by providing food and nesting areas and not spraying chemicals on lawns and gardens.

"Anything we can do to help them because they are really struggling right now and they need all the help we can give them," Marandino said. "They are very important for our food supply."

He said good plantings for honeybees include chives and rosemary.

Pollination, he explained, occurs when pollen grains are moved between two flowers of the same species by wind or animals. Marandino said pollination results in the production of healthy fruit.

"Almost 90 percent of all flowering plants rely

See **Pollinators**, A3

Probation for lawyer Dwyer for wire fraud

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAMDEN — According to the office of U.S. Attorney Paul Fishman, Louis Dwyer, a Cape May County attorney specializing in land use issues, was sentenced to one year of probation and 100 hours of community service Feb. 21 in United States District Court, District of New Jersey.

Sentencing had been delayed for one year. In 2015, Dwyer pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud.

A June 15, 2012, letter from Fishman and Assistant U.S. Attorney R. Stephen Stigall to Dwyer's attorney, Edwin J. Jacobs, outlined the plea agreement. According to the agreement, the U.S. Attorney's Office accepted a guilty plea from Dwyer to "an information which charges the defendant with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, contrary to 18 U.S.C. 1343, and money laundering, contrary to 18 U.S.C. 1957 in violation of 18 U.S.C. 371."

The plea agreement noted if Dwyer entered a guilty plea and was sentenced on the charge and otherwise fully complied with all the terms of the agreement, "this office will not initiate any further criminal charges against Louis C. Dwyer for his role in the conspiracy to devise a scheme and artifice to defraud various lenders in connection with mortgage loans issued to finance the

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Township may declare airport area in need of redevelopment

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Lower Township Council passed a resolution directing the Planning Board to determine whether the county airport is "area in need of redevelopment."

Such a designation could put tax incentives in place to attract new industry to the airport, which is owned by the county and managed by the Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA).

"The airport has been historically an underutilized asset," county legal counsel James B. Arsenault said during a Feb. 22 council meeting. "The county is hoping with its partnership with DRBA and Lower Township to revitalize it into a tremendous source of pride both for the local community, for the county and for the region."

Arsenault said a number of proposals have been made over the years for the "highest and best use" of the airport. He said the airport has a small but committed aviation use along with county government services, some private industry and the opening of a multi-tenant building that will hopefully attract high-tech engineering to complement the aviation uses and "inject some sorely needed jobs into the local and county economy."

"Because this has taken a while to development, the county has worked with several partners including the South Jersey Economic Development District, the

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