

# Cape May Star and Wave



155th YEAR NO. 1 CAPE MAY, N.J. SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 2009 50¢



## INSIDE



### SPORTS

Lower Cape May Regional boys win title at Boardwalk Classic, A14

### COMMUNITY

A Kiwanian Christmas, A4

Happy New Year from the Star and Wave!

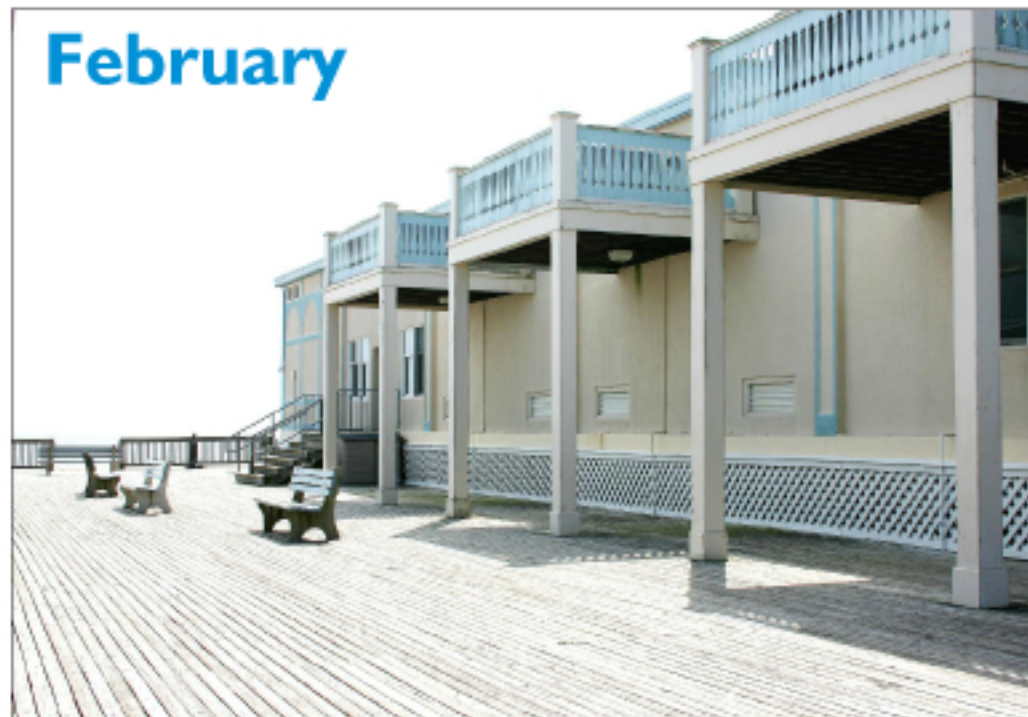
#### DEC./JAN. TIDE TABLE

	HIGH	LOW		
	am	pm	am	pm
12/31	10:04	10:28	3:29	4:20
1/1	10:39	11:08	4:10	4:53
1/2	11:18	11:54	4:56	5:32
1/3		12:04	5:50	6:16
1/4	12:46	12:58	6:53	7:06
1/5	1:46	2:02	8:01	8:03
1/6	2:50	3:12	9:11	9:04
1/7	3:54	4:21	10:18	10:06
1st Quarter			1:04	
Full Moon			1:10	
Last Quarter			1:17	
New Moon			1:26	



Clockwise from top left, LCMR senior Victoria Wermuth breaks the 1,000 point basketball barrier; plans for a new Convention Hall commence; protestors rally for the feral cat populations outside City Hall.

## February



## A look back at 2008

Editor's Note: This is the first part of the Cape May Star and Wave's "Look Back at 2008."

basket to score her 1,000 and 1,001st career points.

### JANUARY

**'Werm' breaks 1,000-point barrier**  
MILLVILLE - With 999 points to her credit, Lower Cape May's Victoria Wermuth stole the ball against Millville and scored a lay-up to make her the latest member of the exclusive 1,000-Club. Wermuth went into the Millville game, Jan. 3, needing 18 points to have 1,000 career points. Late in the third quarter she stole the ball and went unopposed to the

**Discussion of 'Harborfest' spawns plan to remove derelict boats**  
CAPE MAY - A meeting of a committee formed to develop a festival tied to Cape May Harbor resulted in tentative plans to remove several of the derelict boats now floundering in the harbor. SeaTow/Northstar Marine owner Phil Risko offered to remove two and perhaps three derelict boats from the harbor.

Please see 2008, Page A7

## Planning board approves relief for Franks

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - The Cape May Planning Board approved variances which will allow Frank Investments to redevelop the Beach Theatre into six, three-bedroom condos. Franks sought and obtained preliminary site plan approval from the Planning Board, and will begin seeking the necessary state and local permits required for construction/rehabilitation project. Franks was granted a demolition permit to tear down the theater, and now needs permits to build the six residential units and rehabilitate the existing retail space on Beach Avenue.

At the beginning of the meeting, board solicitor George Neidig said testimony was closed at the Dec. 9 meeting, and no more testimony or evidence would be considered. At that time, Neidig recommended holding off on a vote until Dec. 23 so attorneys could present final written arguments and so the board professionals could sort out the numerous waivers being sought. Neidig said he was apprised of a letter from an "environmental expert" making comments about the application. A second letter was sent to board engineer Craig Hurlless. Neidig said letter should not be considered as evidence, and the board voted to accept the solicitor's recommenda-

tion. In addition, board member Meryl Nelson recused herself as a result of a conversation with Bernie Haas, publisher of Cape May Magazine. Nelson said she approached Haas suggesting he run an article about her art show. Nelson said she was not aware Haas was a member of the Beach Theatre Foundation, and was not offering her vote in exchange for publicity. Nelson said she decided to step down from the board for the Franks application rather than give the appearance of a tainted vote. Attorneys for the applicant and objector - the Environmental Preservation and American Heritage

Institute - presented arguments pertaining to whether Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS) trumped local zoning, or vice versa. The issue was related to stacked parking, which is prohibited by local zoning at all commercial establishments other than Cape May's three Victorian Hotels. Franks Investments' attorney Steven Nehmad argued that the residential component of the project was separate from the commercial portion. The RSIS supports the notion of parking inside a garage with a space for parking outside the garage. Hurlless said it was his opinion that the uses were separate and the RSIS definition applied to the residential

portion. "It's clearly a mixed use, and I believe the parking spaces are separate and distinct...there is no mixing of residential and commercial parking," Hurlless said. The applicant indicated each of the six units would be assigned a parking garage and one space immediately outside the garage. Hurlless said it has been the policy of planning and zoning boards to consider garages and driveways as parking spaces. The plan allowed for 14 additional spaces for commercial use. The board voted 6-1 to accept Hurlless' opinion. The board voted unanimously to grant a variance for insufficient setbacks on the

## Community speaks out about 2008

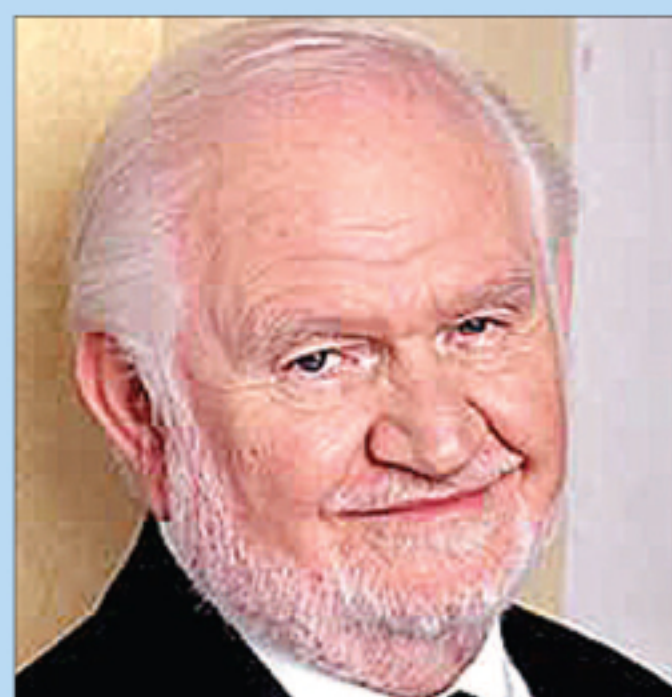
By JOHN K. ALVAREZ  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - After a full 52 weeks, 2008 is finally drawing to a close. Luckily this was a leap year - we certainly needed the extra day to handle all the events the year had to offer. From the declining economy to declining gas prices, there were several more surprises in 2008 than just the Eagles making the playoffs or the Bank Street Wawa closing. And, when given the chance, television news shows will feature politicians or celebrities giving their opinions on or how we should view the past year. Yet, when you randomly ask people who live or work in the Cape May area, you may be surprised at the responses heard. An example of this came from Bernadette Kaschner who works at A Place on Earth on the Washington Street Mall. Though several people chose the election of Barack Obama as the story of the year, to Kaschner, the biggest story nationally was

the fraud committed by Bernard Madoff. "I don't think people realize it now," Kaschner said, "but I think he's just the tip of the iceberg. When I was in L.A., visiting my daughter, everyday it was front page news in the papers. So many people in the entertainment industry and charities had lost so much money." Dorothy Young, owner of the gift shop Dorothy's in the Carpenter's Lane Mall agrees with Kaschner about the Madoff scandal being the most important story, even over the presidential election. However, it was the local election last July which she thought was the most important story to Cape May. "It made a big change around here," Young said. "We needed a change as far as people running this town. I think I see improvement already." "The year was pretty good for me. Nothing really to complain about except maybe for getting hit by car in January," said Lucas Mitchum, a 16 year-old sophomore at Lower Cape May Regional High

School. When asked what was story of the year, Mitchum said, "Definitely, election 08. Currently, the economy decline." His sister, Tessy Mitchum, a junior at the College of Art and Design at the University of Arts, home on vacation, had a different outlook at year. "Nationally, it was Obama and the Phillies winning because both times I was in center city Philadelphia. The eruption of the city was pretty awesome. Locally, last summer, when Anne Hathaway visited Cape May. When I was working (at the Inkwell) everyone who came in kept saying 'Anne Hathaway is here.'" Some residents feel that there are other stories which had a stronger impact locally. While sitting in the back room of West Cape May's Artists Cooperative Gallery, co-founder Janet Payne exclaimed, "The Artist Co-Op opening and it's success is the local story of the year." Payne was sewing children's hats for charity, along with Paige Cunningham, artists

Jodi Swope and Mary Stewart, Chief Outreach Officer for the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts. All agreed with Payne's announcement with Stewart adding, "Followed closely by the revitalization of the Washington Street Mall and Convention Hall." "Actually I think there were two major stories, the mall and Convention Hall," said Harry Bellangy, a retired resident who ran for city council last May. When asked what story or event wasn't talked about enough over the past twelve months, Bellangy said, "I don't think the decline in business was covered at all. We did have a decline across the board. Cape May may be getting stale. The organizations that offer the major tours are offering the same thing again and again by just putting a different name on the tour and hoping somebody shows up for it." Bellangy wasn't the only one with an opinion on what wasn't covered enough in Cape May. Jodi Swope



### Saying goodbye to a friend

A Memorial Service for actor Robert Prosky will be held Saturday, Jan. 3 at 11 a.m. at the Church of the Advent on Franklin and Washington Streets. A special tribute and celebration of Prosky's life and work is also being planned by Cape May Film Society and Cape May Stage. This will occur sometime in the spring and will benefit The Actor's Fund. Any questions, call the Film Society Office at 884-6700.

Please see Residents, Page A2

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