

Cape May Star and Wave

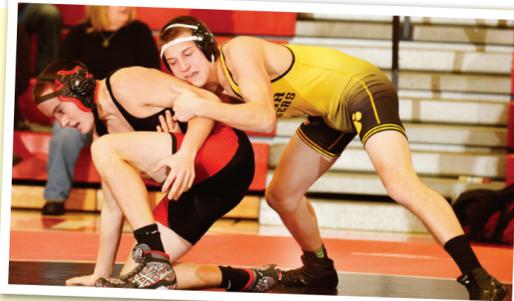


160TH YEAR NO. 2 CAPE MAY, N.J. SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY WEDNESDAY, January 8, 2014 50¢



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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LOWER WRESTLES IN QUAD MEET AT OCEAN CITY

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Reports call Cape May plan a disaster for township

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

LOWER TOWNSHIP – Terrence Crowley told Lower Township Council, in his view and the view of Mel Wynn of Wynn Consulting, it would be devastating if Cape May were to leave the Lower Cape May Regional School District.

Crowley, who was hired by Lower Township to prepare a study for the county superintendent of education, said none of the four alternatives proposed in Cape May's feasibility study were acceptable to Lower Township.

"In all good conscience, and for the food of the municipalities and students, no alternative can be approved in any form whatsoever," Crowley wrote in the Conclusions section of his report.

Crowley, speaking at Monday's Lower Township Council meeting, said the township had received copies of the reports, which he described as "pretty much finalized." He said he would be going over the reports again for typos and other minor changes.

Crowley said from 2000 to 2010, the student population

at Lower Cape May Regional has declined by 11.6 percent. He said as the student population declined, the Board of Education had to utilize resources more carefully. He said while his report was not strictly financial, it did contain some financial elements.

Crowley said if the amount of the tax levy carried in one municipality decreases in one municipality in the regional school district, it must increase in another municipality.

"The impact of any of the four alternatives would fall directly on Lower Township,"

Crowley said.

Estimates are that under the changes proposed by Cape May, its school tax levy would be reduced by \$5 million. Crowley said in studying the impact, they looked at what the result would be if only half that amount were taken away.

"If you reduced the budget by \$2.5 million, 35 positions would have to be taken away," he said.

Crowley said with just half the proposed reduction were to be implemented, the LCMR school district would not be able to offer the pro-

grams they do. He said they would only be able to offer minimum educational programs at best, and the education they received would not prepare them for college, the military or other fields after graduation.

According to Crowley, because the quality of schools is one thing people consider when they buy homes in a community, real estate values would decline.

"My personal view is that (the dissolution of the regional school district) would be devastating for the school, the students and the commu-

nity," he said.

Wynn Consulting LLC, which handled more of the financial elements of the study also said:

"In my (Mel Wynn's) opinion, there are no educational reasons why any of the constituent municipalities of the Lower Cape May Regional School District should withdraw from the regional school district or the Lower Cape May Regional School District should be dissolved. The motivation for Cape May City to pursue its planned escape

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Mahaney gives State of the City address on Jan. 1, '14

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – During his state of the city speech, Mayor Ed Mahaney said he and the rest of council have maintained their plan and commitment for sustainability by obtaining \$8.4 million in grants and rebates over the last three years for city initiatives. These initiatives include public improvements as well as environmental and energy conservation projects.

"That was with just a \$15 million current fund budget," Mahaney said. "And the \$8.4 million in grants and rebates doesn't include Convention Hall."

Mahaney noted Cape May's achievement of the Silver Certification for Convention Hall through the statewide Sustainable New Jersey program. He said within the first quarter of 2014, the city will install a wind turbine for clean energy and educational purposes at the Cape May Elementary School with its Sustainable New Jersey Wal-Mart grant.

Mahaney said he and council also continue their efforts to promote and maintain open space in the city. Cape May has been awarded \$1.6 million in Green Acres and Blue Acres grant funding from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to acquire property on Lafayette Street for the Open Space Recreation Area. He said on Dec. 6, the city submitted an application to the state Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) hoping to obtain \$1.5 million in grant funding to implement the first phase of the park project. The project was conceptually planned by students of the Temple University School of Environmental Design, a partnership established during the 2009 through 2011 academic years.

Mahaney said the city is still engaged in acquiring and preserving 78-acres of wetlands in east Cape May as a wildlife sanctuary. A private developer, East Cape May Associates, continues its efforts to build

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Christopher South/Cape May Star and Wave

Nice job, Mother Nature

Above, a fountain on the Washington Street Mall in Cape May was decorated with evergreens for the holiday season. Mother Nature then added her own touch, blanketing the area with at least six inches of snow. See more photos on page A10.

Underway for Thanksgiving, the Dependable home for Christmas

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – After being at sea for Thanksgiving, the 80 Coast Guardsmen aboard Cutter Dependable let out a sigh of relief following a 29-day patrol, arriving in Cape May two days before Christmas.

Lt. j.g. Bryan Andrews, who served as the Damage Control Assistant and Public Affairs Officer aboard the Dependable, said Coasties did all they could to keep their holiday spirits high.

"We had a decoration contest, which was fun. The guys hung up lights, signs, stuff like that. We tried to be as festive as possible and get everyone in the holiday spirit," Andrews said. "We spent

Thanksgiving on patrol, so we were definitely very happy that we could pull in before Christmas so the crew could spend it with their families."

He said although they spent Thanksgiving away from home, the entire crew enjoyed a turkey dinner together with all the traditional holiday cuisine, such as stuffing and cranberry sauce. Andrews said although this patrol was shorter compared to others he has been on, it was still hard for many crewmembers being at sea during Thanksgiving.

"You can tell when you're getting close to the end of the patrol, people are excited to come home and see their families and spend time with their kids," he said.

He said the Dependable



Cain Chamberlin/Cape May Star and Wave

The Coast Guard Cutter Dependable is docked next to its sister ship, the Vigorous, after returning from a 29-day cruise.

pulled into Training Center Cape May (TRACEN) on Dec. 23 right alongside its sister ship, Cutter Vigorous, which arrived home after Halloween. Andrews said it's

not often that both ships are ported at once.

Andrews said the 45-year old Dependable recently patrolled the mid-Atlantic waters from New York to areas just north of the Carolinas. He said the Dependable made just one stop during the 29-day patrol, in Portsmouth, Va., at the Coast Guard's Atlantic Area Command.

"The patrol went pretty well. We did over 20 boardings. That was our primary mission," Andrews said.

He said the boardings were all performed on commercial and recreational fishing vessels within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which extends from three nautical miles offshore to 200 nautical miles.

"We're just going on board to see if they're following regulations for commercial fishing, as well as safety regulations," Andrews said. "We found a handful of violations, but they weren't necessarily fishing violations – maybe just safety and equipment related violations."

Petty Officer First Class Nick Ameen said the Coast Guard is on the lookout for illegal poaching of Atlantic striped bass in the EEZ. Ameen and Petty Officer Third Class Cynthia Oldham of U.S. Coast Guard Station Atlantic City oversee about 20 different units in the region, the Dependable being on of them. Ameen, Oldham and Andrews gave the Star and

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COMMENTARY.....A8 ENTERTAINMENT.....B6 COMMUNITY.....A4 OBITUARIES.....A6 SEA & DO.....B1 TIDES.....A3