

# Cape May Star and Wave



159TH YEAR NO. 18 CAPE MAY, N.J. SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY WEDNESDAY, May 1, 2013 50¢



## HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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## FINAL SPRING SPORTS TALK EVENT HELD

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David Nahan/Cape May Star and Wave

Above, an Air Tractor airplane from the New Jersey Forest Fire Service drops water on a brush fire that burned up about five acres of marshland near the Cape May-Lewes Ferry Terminal in North Cape May, Saturday. The pilot made three trips to the Cape May County Airport where firefighters from the Erma Volunteer Fire Company refilled the plane's 600-gallon tank. Left, firefighters from the Town Bank Volunteer Fire Company tackle the blaze after it was contained by airdrops. Below left, the Air Tractor making another pass over the burning area. Bottom left, the burning phragmites put off a lot of smoke and an orange flame. The fire was under control in about two hours.



## Forest Fire Service aides local fire companies in dousing blaze

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

**NORTH CAPE MAY** – A pilot and plane from the New Jersey Forest Fire Service helped local firefighters put out a brush fire, early Saturday afternoon, in a marshy area between the Channel Apartments and the Cape May-Lewes Ferry Terminal. The fire burned up about five acres of marshland on DBRA property. The Forest Fire Service sent an aircraft, April 27, that picked up water at the Cape May County Airport and dropped it on the brush fire. The aircraft was being refilled by members of the Erma Volunteer Fire Company. Firefighters from the Town Bank Volunteer Fire Company fought the fire on the scene. The New Jersey Forest Fire Service falls under the Division of Parks and Forestry, which is a division of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

NJDEP spokesman Larry Hajna said the aircraft used to fight the fire in North Cape May flew in from the Downtown Airport, located near the border of Atlantic and Gloucester counties.

"It's called an Air Tractor. It's a single engine, turbo propped plane, and has the capability of dropping up to 600 gallons of water in a trip," Hajna said.

Air Tractors are also used as crop dusters.

According to Hajna, they set up a remote airbase at the Cape May County Airport with the assistance of the Erma Volunteer Fire Company, and the Air Tractor made three water drops on Saturday. He said they drop the water at the head of the fire – the direction the fire is heading. In this case, the fire was traveling in the direction of the terminal. Hajna said the pilot was able to stop the spread of the fire in

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## West Cape May holds Arbor Day seminar

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

**WEST CAPE MAY** – It is well known that a single adult tree produces enough oxygen to supply a family of four, which begs the question of why people are so hasty to cut trees down even when it's not necessary.

In concurrence with Arbor Day, West Cape May's Shade Tree Commission held a tree seminar on Saturday at Borough Hall, welcoming Matt Notch of Top Notch Tree Service. Notch spoke about tree safety, how to secure trees from becoming hazardous in bad weather and how to successfully plant trees and flower gardens.

Notch, a certified arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), spoke about the risk assessment process in determining whether a tree is likely to cause damage to personal property. He said in many municipalities with few or no restrictions on tree removal, he has noticed homeowners having mature trees cut down before hiring a professional to look at the tree and conclude if it hazardous.

"Have an arborist look at the tree and verify that it's ok," Notch said. "People are cutting down 100-year old

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## West Cape May sewer project to go longer

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

**WEST CAPE MAY** – The West Cape May Board of Commissioners have agreed to allow the contractor for the USDA water and sewer improvement project to perform more work than initially planned during the summer months, as long as construction is completed in June.

At the April 10 regular Board of Commissioners meeting, Borough Engineer Ray Roberts said the contractor for the water and sewer improvement project, F.W. Shawl and Sons, Inc., asked to do sewer work on a small portion of Third Avenue and make water system improvements on Stewart Lane and

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## New trees, signs coming to Mall

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

**CAPE MAY** – The city hopes to make some minor aesthetic and safety improvements to the Washington Street Mall area prior to the rush of visitors in late May, according to City Manager Bruce MacLeod.

Following Hurricane Sandy six months ago, there were several small trees in planter boxes throughout the mall area damaged. MacLeod said

one tree completely snapped and needed to be cut down, while two more were in need of replacement.

He said he is currently working landscapers to determine the best type of trees for the planter boxes. MacLeod was not certain what kind of trees would be chosen as of yet, but would likely be of the same variety as the trees being replaced, which he believed to be locust and elm. He said there are three trees in all, with two being

in planter boxes on the mall and the third being on a side street.

### Pedestrian crossing signs

Because of high pedestrian traffic on the mall area, the city typically has pedestrian crossing signs on streets intersecting the Washington Street Mall to keep drivers at slow speeds. There were reports of speeding

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## Oily rags blamed for CM fire

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

**CAPE MAY** – A homeowner who woke up smelling smoke called 911 and was able to avoid a potentially disastrous fire, Cape May Fire Chief Jerry Inderwies said.

Inderwies said the Cape May Fire Department responded to 905 Columbia Ave., early Monday morning, and was able to contain a fire that started by

spontaneous combustion in improperly stored oily rags.

Inderwies said the homeowner had been staining a second floor mahogany deck, and apparently left rags soaked with the stain in a pile on the deck. Inderwies said over night the rags began to create heat and in the morning the owner smelled smoke. Inderwies said the fire resulted in moderate dam

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