



House of the week

Real Estate Resource



What to do if quarantined for weeks?

Page B1



Robert Turkavage



Amy Kennedy



Will Cunningham

Democrats make case for CD-2

Guns, health care, abortion, wages among the topics

By ERIC AVEDISSIAN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — There was more agreement than sparring as Democratic candidates for the Second Congressional District outlined their positions at a public forum last week.

The Middle Township Democratic Club sponsored the March 4 candidates forum held at the Old Cape May Court House.

Candidates answered questions from moderators Jim Quinn, Lenora Boninfante and Carol Sabo for two hours on topics ranging from the economy to the environment, tourism and their presumptive Republican opponent, U.S. Rep. Jeff Van Drew.

Van Drew was elected to Congress in 2018 as a Democrat but switched parties and became a Republican last December. In media interviews, Van Drew said his opposition to the impeachment of President Donald Trump and the pressure he received from a local Democratic chairman to vote for impeachment were the reasons for his party switch.

Democratic leaders in the district called Van Drew a traitor and vowed to reclaim the seat in November.

Candidates at the forum included Brigantine resident Robert Turkavage, a former FBI agent; Amy Kennedy, also of Brigantine and a former teacher; Longport resident



John Francis



Brigid Callahan Harrison

Brigid Callahan Harrison, a political science professor; John Francis, an environmentalist and West Cape May commissioner; and Will Cunningham, chief investigator of the House Oversight Committee and Vineland resident. Candidate Ashley Bennett, an Atlantic County freeholder and Egg Harbor Township resident, was not present and later dropped out of the race.

Cunningham said it was important for Democrats to acknowledge Van Drew's "betrayal" to their party.

"This man represented us for 15 years in Trenton before he ever set foot in D.C.," Cunningham said. "I overcame a lot of hardship in Cumberland County. Poorest county in the state with the highest teenage birth rate. I am a product of those statistics, but I'm also a reflection of this region's potential," Cunningham said.

After witnessing the aftermath of a two-tanker collision in San Francisco Bay, Francis vowed never to ride in an automobile and began walking regularly. He earned three college degrees including a Ph.D. in land management and wrote legislation on oil spill management for the U.S. Coast Guard.

"I know how to listen to people, people with different ideas. I think it's a skill that I have and I'd like to take that to Congress and be your representative," Francis said.

Harrison taught political science

and law at Montclair State University for the past two decades and is a frequent commentator and provides political analysis to news outlets.

"This race is about the future of our country, because that's what Van Drew put it out to be. This was a mandate. I also think in our district what we have seen is a lack of representation for the better part of 25 years," Harrison said. "Overall we've experienced an incredible period of neglect. I hope through strong leadership I will be the person to change that."

Kennedy is the wife of former U.S. Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-RI). She is the educational director of The Kennedy Forum and spent more than a decade working in New Jersey and Pennsylvania public schools. She was born in Atlantic City and grew up in Pleasantville and Absecon.

"My whole family is still in this area and I hope that's the opportunity that we can expect for our children, that they, too, can stay in this area because it's viable as a place to live, that we put the infrastructure in place to protect it and that there's enough opportunity here so they can stay and work and earn a living and raise their own families," Kennedy said. "What we want to move away from is the hatred and the divisiveness that we've seen so far."

See Democrats, page A3

Health officials: Don't panic, but take precautions

Six presumptive cases in N.J.

By KRISTEN KELLEHER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COUNTY — A new strain of coronavirus, COVID-19, has possibly infected as many as six people in New Jersey.

As of Sunday, March 8, six presumptive positive cases had been reported in the Garden State, including one person from southern New Jersey.

On Sunday, Gov. Phil Murphy announced that a man in his 30s was being hospitalized in Bergen County and a man in his 70s was being hospitalized in Passaic County.

Three other individuals were being treated for the coronavirus in Bergen County, including a woman in her 30s, a man in his 30s and a man in his 50s.

A presumptive positive case means a sample tested positive at a state lab and has been sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for

confirmation.

As of Sunday, there were six presumptive positive cases, 31 negative cases and 27 people under investigation in New Jersey, officials said.

Local public health officials are urging residents to take precautions, such as washing hands regularly, to prevent the spread of the new strain.

According to the New Jersey Department of Health website, COVID-19 is a respiratory infection caused by a new strain of the virus that began in December 2019 in the area of Wuhan, China.

The earlier cases of COVID-19 are linked to a seafood and animal market.

The virus spreads largely from person-to-person contact, from people who are in close contact with each other or through respiratory droplets that are produced when an infected

Coronavirus, Page A5

Taxpayers group backs combined facility downtown

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The Taxpayers Association of Cape May has issued a statement of support for the city to construct a combined police and fire stations on the current site of the city's firehouse.

A special meeting of the group's board of directors was held March 7 to develop a consensus on the construction of a new public safety building that has been delayed by negative votes of Councilman Zack Mullock and Councilwoman Stacy Sheehan to approve a bond for the project.

Three members of council — Mayor Chuck Lear, Deputy Mayor Patricia Hendricks and Councilman Shaine Meier — support the project, but four council members must vote "yes" to approve the bond.

The statement: "The Cape May Taxpayers Association strongly supports the objective of building new facilities for both the fire and police departments. As of today, it appears there is only one feasible location for this

combined facility. We feel the taxpayers will be supportive if all costs are projected including soft costs to accurately project the net tax cost to Cape May citizens. To achieve this objective, City Council will need a compromise on details of the single location to move forward. If council is unable to achieve such compromise, we support a binding referendum for the taxpayers to take necessary action."

"We've come to the understanding that it's the only location, you've got to put them both together," Taxpayers Association Vice President Bill Seeger said. "If you come up with some additional details, you're going to make us all feel better about proceeding."

Taxpayers Association board of directors member Thomas Atherton asked Police Chief Tony Marino and Fire Chief Alex Coulter if they agreed the two departments should share a building.

Both confirmed that was their choice.

Coulter said the current firehouse location is not

See Taxpayers, Page A2

Donohue leaves bench to return to political arena

By ERIC AVEDISSIAN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Michael Donohue is a political animal.

A lifelong Republican, he served as Cape May County GOP chairman, ran for state Assembly twice and enjoys a good political scum, arguing conservative policy and talking points.

But once he became a Superior Court judge, he had to publicly abandon his political activities for nearly four years.

"As a judge you have to give up to a great extent your right to free speech, your right to freedom of association, which I thought I can do," Donohue said. "I did a lot in politics and the law before I went on the bench. As time went by it got harder instead of easier to forfeit those rights."

Not being allowed to publicly comment on political matters bothered him.

"I underestimated how much I would miss it all and how much I would miss the larger world," Donohue said. "There's a whole

world that as a judge you're really not allowed to be a part of. I found it very isolating. It was like monastic. You're kind of cloistered away in this secured area of the courthouse. In the outside world you're really extraordinarily limited who you can associate with publicly. You can't have any voice publicly."

Donohue said his family noticed that he grew unhappy over time.

"I missed it all. I missed being in the arena. I missed my friends," Donohue said. On March 4, Donohue

announced he would be stepping down from the bench, re-entering private law practice and continuing living a political life.

For Donohue, the decision to resign his judgeship came after soul-searching and reflection.

"I described it (politics) as my first love and I missed it a lot more than I thought I would," Donohue said.

He said his epiphany came after last Thanksgiving when he spoke with his former law firm partner.

See Donohue, Page A8

Beach Plum
FARM • MARKET • KITCHEN

