

Maritime museum restoring wooden USCG lifeboat

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House of the week

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168th YEAR NO. 26 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, JULY 6, 2022 \$1.00

Owner hangs onto stolen car as it speeds away

Teen suspect arrested, faces multiple felony charges upon extradition

NORTH CAPE MAY — Authorities say a 19-year-old East Orange man stole a car and fled the scene at more than 90 mph as its owner clung perilously to the roof.

Woodrow Gibson, who faces multiple felony charges in Lower Township, was arrested on unrelated charges in Bensalem, Pa., and was being held in the Bucks County Correctional Facility pending extradition.

According to a police report, at about 10:45 p.m. June 20, officers from the Lower Township Police Department observed a Ford Edge

leaving the parking lot of the Wawa convenience store northbound on Bayshore Road at a high rate of speed with a man on top of the vehicle. Shortly after, another vehicle left the parking lot appearing to give chase to the Ford.

Officer Kevin Boyle Jr. pursued the vehicle with lights and siren activated. Officers following the speeding vehicles located them at the intersection of Bayshore and Fishing Creek roads, where they observed the second vehicle attempting to block the first vehicle.

The driver of the Ford, with the

pedestrian still on top, then rammed into the second vehicle and resumed flight, authorities said.

While pursuing the fleeing vehicle from the scene of the crash, officers were informed of multiple 911 calls regarding a vehicle stolen from the convenience store.

Authorities said patrol units initiated pursuit, observing the Ford driving at speeds in excess of 90 mph with the pedestrian still atop the vehicle. Officers observed the driver of the stolen vehicle attempting to launch the man from the vehicle by aggressively swerv-

ing across both lanes of traffic. The vehicle turned right at Fulling Mill Road, thereby throwing the man from his vehicle.

Patrol units immediately terminated pursuit of the vehicle to render medical assistance to the man who had been thrown from the automobile. He later was identified as the owner of the stolen vehicle. A description of the driver was provided. The vehicle was observed by other patrol officers leaving Lower Township north on the Garden State Parkway.

Gibson was charged on a warrant

with carjacking, robbery, aggravated assault, eluding, aggravated assault while eluding police, aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, theft of means of conveyance, theft of moveable property and assault by auto.

The victim's vehicle was later located in Camden and returned. Authorities did not identify him nor provide his medical condition.

Lower Township police recommend motorists not leave vehicles running unattended and always lock them when parked. Key fobs should never be left unattended in vehicles.

Chapman retires as leader of LTMUA

Agency invested \$54 million with him at the helm

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — The Lower Township Municipal Utilities Authority (MUA) has a new executive director and major projects planned to bring sewer service to Erma, water to Del Haven and replace water mains in North Cape May.

Lower Township Council honored Mike Chapman, outgoing executive director, on the occasion of his retirement.

At a June 22 meeting, Mayor Frank Sippel said the MUA probably had the best water and sewer rates in the state. He noted Chapman endeavored to keep costs down for the MUA's customers.

Sippel said under Chapman's direction, the MUA invested \$54 million in capital improvements throughout the township.

The Erma vacuum sewer project has a cost of \$28 million which builds out the sewer system to the maximum allowance by the state Department of Environmental Protection. Expanding water service to Del Haven is a \$10 million project. Chapman said the expansion would not raise rates for Lower Township customers although rates in Del Haven will be higher.

He said the township had a very valuable infrastructure.

"It's kind of like to spare tire on your car, you don't really think about it until you really need it," he said. "We have miles and miles of pipe underground and pump stations and a lot of physical assets that can just sit there quietly under the ground and deteriorate and you really don't know about it until it's too late."

With a great staff and board of directors, a num-

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Cape May celebrates Independence Day

Cape May held its annual Independence Day parade July 2 featuring decorated golf carts, string bands and floats. Participants included Uptown String band, above. Below, the U.S. Coast Guard marches in formation. Bottom left, the Bower family. Bottom right, Fralinger String Band.



Tourism Utility surplus to fund capital projects

City expected to raise millions more after room tax rate hike

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — With the city's occupancy tax increasing last year from 2 percent to 3 percent and the inclusion of room tax from Airbnb rentals, the city's Tourism Utility was in a position to take in millions of dollars. City Council recently passed an ordinance allowing the city to use those extra funds for capital projects.

The Tourism Utility pays for the management and operation of Convention Hall as well as activities and events through the city's Department of Tourism, Civic Affairs and Recreation. This allows the city to account and budget for all tourism, civic affairs and recreation items.

At a June 21 City Council meeting, city solicitor Chris GillinSchwartz said when the city takes in \$1 million in occupancy tax, any money above that is automatically placed in

the Tourism Utility account. He said the city was dealing with an outdated code provision.

Mayor Zack Mullock said placing too much money in the Tourism Utility would go beyond making it solvent.

"The thought was giving the CFO and the city manager and City Council through the approval process the power to use it for capital expenditures," he said.

Without amending the enabling ordinance, the Tourism Utility stood to receive a substantial amount which was not intent when the ordinance was enacted, GillinSchwartz said.

Mullock said he wanted the extra revenue from the Tourism Utility to pay for capital projects such as constructing a new police station and upgrading the water desalination plant.

Deputy City Manager

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Sheehan: Stop bonding for items with short life

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Deputy Mayor Stacy Sheehan questioned using bonds to purchase items that could be included in the annual municipal budget.

During a meeting June 24, City Council approved a bond for \$445,000 for Beach Utility improvements. The bond included \$375,000 for various improvements to the beachfront, Promenade buildings and grounds. Sheehan said new restrooms were not built even though council approved money last year for that purpose. "As a council, we should

be planning for certain projects and putting these projects into a priority," she said.

Sheehan complained the city promises to improve public restrooms each year but does nothing.

Mayor Zack Mullock said Councilwoman Lorraine Baldwin met with an architect for improvements to the city-owned building next to Convention Hall for creation of public restrooms. After completion, portable restrooms on Beach Avenue would be removed.

The mayor said it is very difficult to obtain an

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NAILED IT. Rusty Nail

The Rusty Nail is back! Our famed surfer bar and restaurant is back open for the 2022 season. Stop by for breakfast, lunch and dinner—as well as delicious cocktails and the coldest draft beer in Cape May (as verified by Exit Zero Magazine).

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