

City department heads form quality-of-life group

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave
CAPE MAY — City department heads will begin meeting monthly as a quality-of-life group to discuss issues raised by City Council and the public.
At an Aug. 20 City Council meeting, City Manager Paul Dietrich said the group could pinpoint is-

ssues and address which city departments needed to focus on some of the quality-of-life issues. He said he would report to council on a routine basis on what the group was discussing and how it was progressing.
Councilwoman Maureen McDade praised the idea of a quality-of-life group. She said Dietrich and Deputy City Manager Justin Riggs

have been helpful with issues she presented to them.
During public comment, resident Jules Rauch said he endorsed the group because the city has had a significant change in the past few years.
"The numbers of people coming, the duration of their stay and how the economics are changing," he said.
Rauch provided council with a photo of the sidewalk in front of Delaney's Irish Pub on the Washington Street Mall in relation to placement of tables and chairs. He said the city required a 5-foot open sidewalk for pedestrians.

He said the pedestrian space was not being provided at Delaney's which forced people to walk into the street.
"We've allowed an expansion of sidewalk dining in areas that frankly, in my view, is not permitted," Rauch said.
Trucks parking as close as possible to the site of their deliveries means trucks stop wherever they find it convenient, he said.
"We see the delivery trucks, we see the lawn people, park wherever they chose in which every direction they want, they don't put out any safety devices," he said.

Mayor Zack Mullock encouraged residents to call police for issues of blocked sidewalks and streets by trucks.
Former councilwoman Stacy Sheehan said the city provided loading zones on some streets, but the trucks did not always use them.
Deputy City Manager Justin Riggs said when a code enforcement issue is being investigated, there may also be a fire inspection component or a construction office issue. He said a coordinated effort of city departments in the committee could include code enforcement, police,

fire inspection and the construction office.
Municipal Taxation and Revenue Advisory Committee Chairman Dennis Crowley said all the issues that will be discussed by the quality-of-life group were in the city's master plan.
"So maybe, council ought to have a town hall (meeting) which just discusses whether or not that master plan means anything," he said.
Mullock said most master plans following the COVID pandemic are very different. He said real estate values had changed dramatically.

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WHERE HISTORY AND THE ENVIRONMENT MEET

ELTC, Science Center to host gala fundraiser

CAPE MAY — On Sept. 14, East Lynne Theater Company and Cape May Point Science Center are scheduled to host the inaugural daVinci Gala — A Celebration of Arts and Sciences.

The joint fundraiser, which is open to the public and will benefit both nonprofit organizations, will honor Cape May resident Christina Clemans, a long-time preservationist — particularly when it comes to Cape May — as well as supporter of numerous area nonprofits.

The gala will be held outdoors on the lawn of the Science Center and will include silent and live auctions, themed cocktails, food by The Chalfonte Hotel, monarch butterfly tagging and plein air painting dem-

onstrations, a showcase of Les Paul guitars and performances by musicians and singers.

"Since the beginning of time, arts and sciences have naturally been associated and, during the Renaissance, Leonardo daVinci studied and worked on both intensely. Obviously, everyone is familiar with his art, but it's science and nature that proved to be his biggest inspiration and touched everything he did," ELTC board President Susan Tischler said. "This is why we are so excited and extremely proud to co-host the first-ever daVinci Gala with the Cape May Point Science Center."
Clemans, who along with her late husband Dave Clemans, has been a major

donor to both East Lynne and the Science Center. Additionally, the couple was instrumental in saving Cape May's historic Allen AME Church from demolition after it suffered a damaging fire.
Last year, Christina Clemans presented a check to East Lynne Theater Company that officially launched their \$1.2 million capital campaign to establish a new playhouse at the church, which will be called The Clemans Theater at Allen AME Church.

"Chris Clemans was the obvious choice for our inaugural honoree," said Bob Mullock, president of Cape May Point Science Center. "She and Dave have done so much for our community. Look around Cape May to-

day and whatever you see, whether it has to do with the arts or sciences or, of course, preservation, it's because of the Clemanses."

Performances will include the headliner, New York cabaret performer Marnie Klar accompanied by Amy Hufana; Chaste Treasure, a female singing duo performing sassy songs, modern parodies and frolicking drinking tunes; and Cape May jam band Howard Street Ramble.

The gala is scheduled for 5 to 8 p.m. Silent auction items can be found in advance of the event at Zeffy.com.

Visit eastlynnetheater.org or capemaypointsciencecenter.org for more information or to purchase tickets, which are \$175 per person.

Other Side

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ee. Legions of Cape May men and boys, including my friend Jodi, had fished aboard Skilligolee, so I was in search of this vessel's lineage.

It turns out that he had indeed crafted a model of the ship, but that model resides in a museum in New Bedford, Mass. Why it resides in Massachusetts and not Cape May is a whole other story, but he showed me photographs of the vessel and the model that he had

crafted. "Skilligolee," he explained, is a native word that means "white swordfish." The vessel started out as a two-masted "down-easter" schooner with a long pulpit projecting from the bow where a harpooner would be positioned when pursuing swordfish.

Built in 1938 at Story Shipyard in Essex, Conn., along classic schooner lines, she measured 86 feet in length which caused her to hog, or flex, in heavy seas. She also had a deep, 12-foot draft and a spoon-shaped bow, traits that he faithfully recreated in his model.

During World War II, pleasure fishing was disallowed since only vessels that were actively involved in subsistence fishing were permitted to go offshore.

Consequently, Skilligolee's forward mast was replaced with an "A" frame rig, thus making her a ketch. Reclassified as a dragger, she harvested porgies, mackerel, clams and scallops.

After the war, on June 5, 1946, while outbound from

Gloucester enroute to the Grand Banks late at night in heavy fog, Skilligolee collided with another fishing vessel, the Gertrude Parker.

Gertrude Parker, along with the 85,000 pounds of fish she was carrying, was a total loss. Although damaged, Skilligolee did manage to rescue the Parker's crew. After being repaired, she was put up for sale.

It was Joe Cohen, Barry and Danny Cohen's father, who ended up in possession of the vessel since its previous owner had used Skilligolee as collateral in one of Joe's business deals.

Thus Cohen found himself in the fishing business, and Skilligolee became the first vessel in the Atlantic Capes Fisheries fleet.

When I showed Barry a photo of Whalen's model of the Skilligolee, he exclaimed, "That's it!"

During the early 1960s, Albert Johnson purchased Skilligolee from Cohen and crewed it with his brother and a succession of his six sons, along with a collection of other local boys, includ-

ing Jodi and his brother, John. One of those Johnson brothers, Leif, laughed when I asked him about his own first experience fishing aboard the "Skilly."

"There is no romance, when it comes to fishing," Leif Johnson said. "There's nothing romantic about 30-foot seas, despite what television programs like 'Deadliest Catch' try to portray. There were no amenities on board. The head (bathroom) was a five-gallon bucket, and the eight bunks were jammed into the fore-castle that stank of diesel fuel, sweat, puke and fish. We cooked on a cast iron stove that used bunker fuel and we worked at a cutting table illuminated by jury-rigged lights. What passed for electronics were World War II Navy surplus and we didn't even know what an autopilot was."

He said life aboard the Skilligolee was spartan at best.

"Still, a lot of guys learned how to fish aboard the Skilly and many went on to own their own boats. She was a classic," he said.

Sadly, Albert Johnson, Joe Cohen and even Danny Cohen, along with so many others who helped define Cape May's seafaring and fishing traditions are no longer with us.

Unfortunately, neither are the vessels. The Skilligolee evidently ended up behind the Ship-N-Shore on Montgomery Avenue in Wildwood, where it was allowed to molder and rot away, but the legacy and heritage of that storied vessel and the crews who manned her survive in the memories of those who remain, and in the carefully crafted handiwork of craftsmen such as Whalen.

Mark Allen is a retired lieutenant colonel with 27 years' flying experience with the U.S. Marines and Air Force National Guard. The Other Side radio show is broadcast at 1 p.m. Fridays on WCFA-101.5 FM

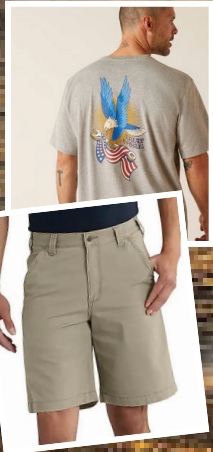
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