



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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BLUEBERRIES AMONG PLANTS NATIVE TO AREA

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Cape May, county declared a Coast Guard Community

Three-day celebration marks relationship

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The U.S. Coast Guard's top official, Commandant Adm. Paul Zukunft, presented a proclamation May 8 declaring Cape May and Cape May County as a Coast Guard Community.

The event led off three days of activities highlighting the relationship between the Coast Guard and community.

Prior to the official ceremony on the parade field of Training Center Cape May, Zukunft said the Coast Guard's history in Cape May dated back to 1791 when a revenue cutter arrived in Cape May Harbor.

"This is the launching pad, our training center in Cape May, where our recruits come from all 50 states," he said. "Their families come here for the graduations and they see this beautiful seaport by the sea on the Atlantic."

Zukunft said what the community does for the recruits is why the recruits stay in the Coast Guard, "the first impression is an enduring one."

U.S. Rep. Frank LoBiondo said the event was a chance to thank the Coast Guard for the incredible job they have done over the years. He noted a misguided official in the Department of Transportation made a recommendation to close the training center in Cape May about 20 years ago.

"Not only have we been able to stay, but we really flourished," said LoBiondo.

Zukunft noted families in the county open their homes to recruits at Thanksgiving and Christmas. He said those stationed in Cape May are an integral part of the community, in particular, coaching sports

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Paul Zukunft, right, shakes hands with County Freeholder Director Gerald Thornton during a May 8 ceremony at Training Center Cape May proclaiming the city of Cape May and the county a Coast Guard Community. Cape May Mayor Edward Mahaney is at left. See more photos on B9.

JCP&L to detail remediation of Lafayette Street

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Jersey Central Power and Light (JCP&L) will visit the city Planning Board's June 9 meeting for a "courtesy review" of remediation on fields adjacent to the dog park and Cape May City Elementary School.

From 1853 to 1937, the property housed a coal-gasification plant that provided Cape May with gas for heating, cooking and lighting. In the process, benzene, naphthalene and other chemicals were left underground.

According to City Solicitor Tony Monzo, the review will not cover the remediation from an environmental standpoint but from a traffic flow and logistical standpoint. In keeping with an access agreement with the city, JCP&L will notify residents living with 200 feet of the work area, he said.

Monzo said the hearing before the Planning Board would give residents an opportunity to express their concerns about the project. Remediation work will begin sometime between the end of the summer tourist season and early fall, he said.

The project is expected to last one year, Monzo said.

Mayor Edward Mahaney said he would like to see representatives from both the city's police and fire depart-

ments attend the meeting.

One year ago, a geophysical investigation of the former manufactured gas plant (MGP) site on Lafayette Street may have turned up evidence of an additional underground storage tank.

Through a number of mergers, JCP&L inherited the site that includes the former Vance's Bar property, the city's dog park and property on the corner of St. Johns and Lafayette streets. JCP&L has been designing a remediation plan that requires the approval of the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

According to a fact sheet prepared by JCP&L, the utility is working in cooperation with and under the direction of the state DEP and under the oversight of a licensed site-remediation professional (LSRP). The LSRP is conducting environmental investigative and remedial activities at the site and at adjacent off-site properties to address soil and groundwater impacted from the former gas plant.

Since 1985, JCP&L has been conducting environmental investigations at the site in cooperation with the DEP. In addition, JCP&L has implemented several remedial actions consisting of the removal of MGP-impacted

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Prosecutor's Office completes internal affairs investigation

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Cape May County Prosecutor Robert Taylor issued a news release May 8 stating his office has concluded the investigation into all outstanding internal affairs matters in the city of Cape May.

"Prosecutor Taylor has notified all interested parties of the investigative finding and conclusions," said the release.

While the report has not been made public, former Cape May Police Sergeant Rusty Chew said he received a letter from Taylor stating the prosecutor made the determination that a complaint of alleged overtime abuse by Cape May Police Lt. Chuck Lear was unfounded.

"He's just notifying me as the complainant as to what the conclusion of his investigation is," said Chew.

He and other Cape May po-

lice officers made the original complaint of Lear's alleged overtime abuse.

When reached by phone, Taylor said he could not release the findings of the investigation due to state Attorney General's Office confidentiality regulations.

A press release from the attorney for Cape May Police Capt. Robert Sheehan, who was demoted by City Council March 3, followed in the evening of May 8: "Statement of Sciarra & Catrambone, LLC on behalf of Robert Sheehan Jr. As part of his duties as head of the police department, Robert Sheehan has reviewed the prosecutor's report. To the degree his consent is required, he waives all confidentiality rights with regard to the investigation into his conduct and welcomes the report's release. The people of this city need to see exactly how horrendously

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Kim Royster/Special to the CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE
Members of the public took tours of U.S. Coast Guard Cutters Finback and Ibis during the May 9 festival. Above, the crowds were treated to Coast Guard rescue demonstrations.





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