

Cape May Star and Wave

161ST YEAR NO. 48 CAPE MAY, N.J. SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2015 75¢



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

Real Estate Resource



LOCAL ARTISTS CREATE DESIGNS FOR BEACH TAGS

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\$8.8M school referendum goes to voters Jan. 26

By BETTY WUND

Special to the Star and Wave

Lower Cape May Regional district plans renovations

ERMA — Stating that the schools belong to the community and are community assets that belong to the taxpayers and need to be maintained, Lower Cape May Regional School District Superintendent Christopher Kobik addressed residents Nov. 16 during an information meeting on a proposed \$8.8 million bond referendum.

Kobik was joined by George Drodzowski, Lower Township Elementary School District superintendent, members of both boards of education and architectural and financial advisers.

Residents may cast their votes on the bond referendum Jan. 26. A PowerPoint presentation outlined details for the approval of financing major school construction projects for both districts with visuals of the plans.

"In 1998, the Abbott family sued the state of New Jersey saying that their child and its education were affected by the physical plant. By 2000 it went all the way to the Supreme Court. The court said 'yes.' The landmark legislation gives needy districts 100 percent (of approved construction projects.) The legislation also provided for districts like

ourselves to get 40 percent minimum of the project costs which are eligible," said Robert Garrison Jr., of Garrison Architects. "Most of the projects we have are eligible for the 40 percent state aid."

Because school budgets have a spending cap of 2 percent, there is little opportunity to accumulate funds for major projects. The projects must be funded by bonds. The district paid off a 1995 bond in 2015 and a 1999 bond in 2014. The new bond debt will be 78 percent of the retired debt. Debt Service Aid of \$1.4 million is offered for this cur-

rent plan.

It is proposed that \$6,367,963 is needed for facility upgrades and repairs to the high school and Richard Teitelman Middle School. This amount includes new construction of an 11,322-square-foot field house at a cost of \$2.8 million. The field house would be a free-standing, pre-engineered metal building with bathrooms and storage that would be used as an indoor multipurpose practice area.

It will be built over the present site of the tennis courts on the LCMR campus. The tennis courts have de-

teriorated and are no longer usable. The township is replacing its tennis courts and will allow the LCMR tennis team to use them. The field house would accommodate two wrestling mats, batting cages and other activities. It could be reconfigured for soccer or band and other school or community activities.

"Our students deserve to have an indoor practice facility to keep them off the streets and away from drugs and alcohol, to get them out of some of the more deplorable conditions in their communities and to be involved in healthy, life-long physical activities. I think the consequences

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Peer leaders get a lesson in avoiding bad choices

By JACK FICHTER

Cape May Star and Wave

WILDWOOD — The message was to set a career goal and go after it, and don't get sidetracked by drugs.

Student leaders from high schools and middle schools from throughout the county gathered Nov. 19 at the Wildwoods Convention Center for Cape Assist's 20th annual Peer Leadership Conference. Cape Assist is a nonprofit substance abuse-prevention and treatment agency.

Students participated in workshops, classes, games and projects designed to empower them to set examples for their peers. The theme of the conference was "Local Success." Classes focused on teaching students how to develop leadership skills and how to start down a successful career path.

"This event gives Cape Assist the forum to teach young people the skills needed to make a difference and influence their peers in a positive way," said Kim Mounce, coordinator of the Cape May County Healthy Community Coalition.

The opening session featured a panel of local successful professionals who fielded questions from the student peer leaders dressed in their school colors from Ocean City to Lower Cape May Regional.

Panelist Mia Chiarella, a chef that has appeared on The Food Network and on ABC's "The Taste," collects gifts for children who spend Christmas in Cooper Hospital as a "Gift from Gia," named for her sister who passed away at the age of 13. Chiarella said appearing on television caused her to step out of her comfort zone. Her father was a chef from the age of 15 and she grew up in the restaurant business.

Panelist Peter Belasco served two years in the Peace Corps as a volunteer in West Africa and help build oyster reefs off Reed's Beach with the American Littoral Society. He holds a master's degree in public administration and works as the youth services administrator for Cape May County. On a question of his biggest regret in life, Belasco said it was not staying in touch with fellow volunteers in the Peace Corps.

Panelist Mario Nocito received a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and served in the Marine Corps for eight years, including during Operation Iraqi Freedom. He is employed as a detective with the State Police. Nocito volunteers with the Love of

See Peer leaders, Page A3



Frank Scott/Special to the CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Cape May flips the switch on Christmas season

Santa Claus arrived Nov. 21 at the Emlen Physick Estate to flip the switch on the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts & Humanities' Christmas tree. Visitors were encouraged to bring nonperishable food items for the Cape May Community Food Bank and Santa took requests from youngsters during his visit. See more photos on A10.

Cape May postmaster offers advice for holiday shipping

By JACK FICHTER

Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Postmaster Peggy Clifford has tips to make shipping holiday packages via the post office quicker and more efficient.

The cutoff date to ship packages domestically is Dec. 19 for first-class mail, Dec. 21 for Priority Mail and Dec. 23 for Priority Mail Express. The cutoff date for mail for the military through Priority Mail Military Service is Dec. 17, with a Dec. 10 cutoff date for first-class letter and cards and a Dec. 3 cutoff date for military zip code 093.

The cutoff date for international mail is Dec. 11 for Priority Mail International, Dec. 15 for Priority Express International and Dec. 21 for Global Express Guaranteed.

Clifford said it is very important when assembling a package for shipping to include the "to" and "from" addresses on a piece of paper inside in case the package is damaged. She noted boxes for Priority Mail are available free at the Post Office but the customer must supply their own packaging tape.

"It has to be packaged before they See Holiday shipping, Page A5



Jack Fichter CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Cape May Postmaster Peggy Clifford shows off a Charlie Brown shipping envelope. Clifford shared tips on getting holiday packages to their destinations on time.

Beachfill prospects on hold in Lower

By JACK FICHTER

Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Lower Township is postponing efforts to obtain beach replenishment along bay beaches until an engineering study connected to a \$250,000 resiliency grant is completed.

The township received the grant for engineering studies. The resiliency grant is designed to support projects that reduce a communities' vulnerability to growing risks from coastal storms, sea level rise, flooding, erosion and strengthening ecosystems that benefit fish and wildlife.

At a Nov. 16 Township Council meeting, Deputy Mayor Norris Clark said residents have expressed concerns with beach erosion from Cox Hall Creek to Miami Avenue in Villas, so the township has been keeping its eyes on any initiative that would bring sand to the beaches. He said the township has been trying to follow the example of Middle Township, which was able to obtain grants for beach

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