



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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POINT WOMAN WROTE THE BOOK ON MONARCHS

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Borough to pay Willow Creek \$550,000

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave
and BETTY WUND
Special to the Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — The borough must pay Willow Creek Winery owner Barbara Wilde \$550,000 in a settlement of a federal civil rights case, plus an additional \$10,000 to settle an open public records act case, according to Wilde's attorney, Colin Bell.

He said the borough has agreed to dismiss an appeal in the appel-

late division.

"They sued the winery to try to stop them from doing weddings after the law changed that specifically said you could do weddings," Bell said. "They agreed to dismiss that."

Bell said the borough also agreed to dismiss a complaint it filed against the winery with the county Agricultural Development Board.

"They agreed not to file any further actions alleging that the winery can't host weddings or special occasion events," he

said. "As with any settlement, it states no party admits liability or wrongdoing."

He said the public can be the judge of that, noting the size of the settlement is almost a quarter of the \$2.3 million annual municipal budget of West Cape May.

Bell said Wilde felt vindicated by the settlement. He said the winery is an employer and large taxpayer in West Cape May. The settlement resolves all pending litigation between the borough and Wilde other than a tax appeal, Bell said.

The borough must pay half of the settlement in 30 days, with the remainder due by the end of July, he said. A trial date had been set for Sept. 27 had the case proceeded, Bell added.

The borough announced after a closed session at its May 25 meeting that the lawsuit had been settled. The lawsuit was mediated by retired New Jersey Superior Court Judge Michael Winkelstein.

The closed session also resulted in the addition of four resolutions that were approved by the board.

Mayor Pam Kaithern abstained when the vote was taken for each resolution.

The first was to authorize the settlement. The second provides for an emergency appropriation of \$300,000 to provide the funding for the litigation settlement. The third makes application to the local finance board for its approval of bonds. Finally, the fourth is to provide for issuance of bonds to finance the cost of the mediation. The final approval of these resolutions will take place after a public hearing June 22.

PARCC test failure will not prevent graduation

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

ERMA — Failure to pass the state's Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) will not prevent any Lower Cape May Regional High School seniors from graduating this month.

During a Board of Education meeting May 26, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Joe Castellucci said the state, at the last minute, instituted an appeals process.

He said LCMRHS Principal Larry Ziemba, Supervisor of Academic Achievement Zachary Palombo and a number of county teachers came up with a system to allow students who failed the PARCC test to graduate.

"Our numbers of students that needed that process were relatively low compared

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Lower curtails hours for dogs on its beaches

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Dogs are banned from the beaches of North Cape May and Lower Township from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Labor Day.

Service animals are not included in the ban. On Aug. 3, Lower Township Council voted 3-2 to approve the restrictions. At the time, Councilman David Perry said that while campaigning in Ward Two the previous year, residents asked for better conditions on the beach during peak hours.

"I am definitely in favor of getting this ordinance passed so we can have a beach in Lower Township that is for everyone, not just a select group but everyone, for families, for pet owners, for everyone," he said in August.

According to a Lower Township news release, leashed animals are permitted any time of day during the off-season. The ordinance not only protects residents who

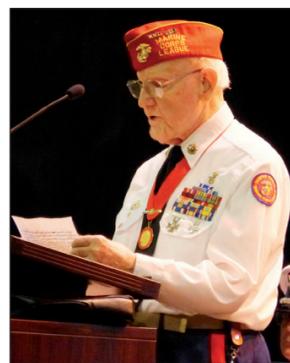
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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Remembering our fallen heroes

Dignitaries, veterans and audience members salute as the Coast Guard Training Center Cape May Color Guard presents the colors during a Memorial Day service Monday at Convention Hall. Below left, Assemblyman Robert Andrzejczak; center, Capt. Todd Prestidge; right, veteran John Seubert.



City not revealing Sheehan decision

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Hearing Officer Richard Williams, a retired Superior Court-Appellate Division judge, has released his decision on the disciplinary hearing for former police chief Capt. Robert Sheehan, but the results have not been released to the public. Sheehan faced up to a three-week suspension without pay, with the city having the option of following or ignoring the judge's decision.

Cape May City Manager Bruce MacLeod said he did not have an answer as to whether the judge's decision was public information. He said it was a personnel matter and normally disciplinary decisions are not open for review.

Final arguments were presented May 11 in the third and final session of a disciplinary hearing for Sheehan.

At issue was that Sheehan qualified on the gun range in 2009 at the county Police Academy twice in that year but the qualifications were not separated by a three-month gap, thus disqualifying him from carrying a firearm by state Attorney General guidelines.

At the final session, former police chief Diane Sorantino testified there was a period of time in 2009 when there was a significant shortage of ammuni-

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Board takes issue with Beach Shack parking, seating

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Two three-hour meetings was not enough time to present all expert witnesses and testimony from neighbors concerning a proposed major renovation of the Beach Shack Motel at 205 Beach Ave.

Attorney Stephen R. Nehmad, representing Cape Coachman Realty LLC and principle Curtis Bashaw, returned to the city's Planning Board on May

24 seeking preliminary site plan approval for substantial upgrades to the motel. It was the second meeting on the topic. Additional testimony is to be heard beginning at 7 p.m. June 28.

Nehmad said the applicant is proposing a multimillion-dollar facelift of the motel, including the addition of 13 rooms for a total of 79 rooms. At the request of the city's Fire Chief, plans were modified to widen entrances and exits on the rear of the property along Heritage

Lane, he said.

Mayor Edward Mahaney, a member of the Planning Board, asked the proposed width of the entrance and exit to the motel off Beach Avenue. David Shropshire, traffic consultant for Cape Coachman Realty LLC, said the entrance and exit would be 20 feet wide. He confirmed the east entrance on Heritage Lane was proposed to be widened from 18 feet to 24 feet at the request of the fire chief.

Mahaney said the Beach

Shack has a high occupancy rate and offers breakfast and lunch at the Rusty Nail restaurant, which could cause parking conflicts.

"You may get beachgoers competing with restaurantgoers plus people trying to park at the Beach Shack, which has a very high occupancy rate in the peak of the summer," he said.

Shropshire said 10 p.m. was the peak hour of parking use for the motel. Mahaney said the

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