

Cape May Star and Wave

161ST YEAR NO. 29 CAPE MAY, N.J. SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2015 75¢



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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CLUELESS? HELP SOLVE MYSTERY IN CAPE MAY

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Cape May loses bid to have monitor removed

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Superior Court Judge J. Christopher Gibson, in a comprehensive opinion issued July 13, denied Cape May's five applications for injunctive relief and a declaratory judgment against county Prosecutor Robert Taylor. Cape May officials appeared before Gibson on May 22, presenting arguments why a monitor appointed by

Taylor should be removed from the city's Police Department.

The city argued the Prosecutor's Office was interfering with its ability to communicate with police administration. Cape May currently has no police chief after City Council voted to demote Robert Sheehan on March 3.

Gibson denied the city's demand a monitor from the Prosecutor's Office be removed. He also denied the city's application to declare the prosecutor

exceeded his lawful authority.

"The court is satisfied that the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office has the ability to determine whether it is necessary to insert itself into an ongoing internal affairs investigation," Gibson ruled.

The internal affairs investigation was in regard to the alleged abuse of compensatory time by police Lt. Chuck Lear.

According to a release from the Prosecutor's Office regarding the

monitor order, the court stated, "It cannot be ignored that the monitor order was put in place in response to the city's breach of the Attorney General Guidelines by disclosing confidential information to the public after being reprimanded by the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office for a similar earlier breach. Any present harm to the city is as a result of its own conduct."

Gibson also ruled: "The Attorney General Guidelines weigh against the

city's likelihood of success whether facts are viewed through the lens of N.J.S.A. § 40A:14-118 or not. Coupled with the city's own complicity in finding itself without a chief and defying the Attorney General Guidelines and directives by the county prosecutor by releasing confidential information via a press release, the court cannot find the city to have met its burden as to the likelihood of success on the

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Jeff Stewart/Special to the CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

The blue and the gray off Cape May

Jeff Stewart, captain of the Cape May Whale Watcher, shot this photo of part of a pod of about 30 bottlenose dolphins July 8 off Cape May.

Four letter carriers join USPS million-mile club

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Imagine driving 1 million miles but never leaving Cape May; and better yet, making all those miles accident-free.

Four Cape May letter carriers — Fred Pilasky, Dean Umscheid, Joe Frech and Stanley Longo — joined the "Million Mile Drivers" July 10 in a brief ceremony in the backroom of Cape May Post Office, minutes before they set out on their routes to ensure their customers received their electricity bills, love letters, requests for money from charities and their weekly edition of the Star and Wave. Cape May Postmaster Peg-

gy Clifford noted driving in our fair city has its challenges, such as vacationers "who don't know where they're going," bicycle riders who don't use hand signals, trolleys and horses and carriages.

"You have to keep one eye on the road and keep one eye on everybody else," she said.

Clifford said letter carriers face many distractions on the road.

"It is an extremely, extremely wonderful milestone that you all have reached, and I am really, really proud of you," she said.

When a letter carrier is involved in a motor vehicle accident, it produces a moun-

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Cape May Postmaster Peggy Clifford stands with Stanley Longo, Fred Pilasky, Joe Frech and Dean Umscheid after they received their plaques for achieving 1 million accident-free miles of delivery service.

Retired judge will oversee Lear hearing on comp time

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council approved the hiring of retired judge Richard Williams on July 7 to act as hearing officer for a disciplinary hearing to be held for alleged comp time abuse by Cape May Police Lt. Chuck Lear.

According to Mayor Edward Mahaney, Williams will be paid a fee of \$250 per hour.

During public comment, former mayor Jerry Gaffney asked if City Manager Bruce MacLeod could have acted as hearing officer.

"Normally it would have been, but in this case it's not possible to use the city manager," Mahaney said.

City Solicitor Tony Monzo said when dealing with police matters, the city has always brought in an independent hearing officer. He said Williams did not have the authority to make a final decision but

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Lower dog ban unlikely to take effect this year

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

LOWER TOWNSHIP — Villas resident Helen Thompson was able to obtain an injunction to stop the implementation of a new Lower Township ordinance until July 9 that would have kept dogs off township-owned beaches from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. during the summer season.

Thompson and township officials returned to court July 10.

Township Solicitor David Stefankiewicz said Judge Allen J. Littlefield continued the injunction, which prevents the township from putting the ordinance into effect. The injunction was continued pending a final hearing, which will not take place until at least 120 days, he said.

"Essentially Lower Township has two options, continue with the lawsuit and hope ultimately the ordinance is validated or go back to the drawing board and start the re-enactment process," Stefankiewicz said.

He said from the township's perspective,

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