

# Cape May Star and Wave



160TH YEAR NO. 5 CAPE MAY, N.J. SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY WEDNESDAY, January 29, 2014 50¢



## HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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## Canadian chopper pilot serving with U.S. Coast Guard

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

ATLANTIC CITY – Capt. Jeff Powell can most closely compare his service as a U.S. Coast Guard pilot to that of a college student studying abroad.

Obviously, the responsibilities and demands of being a rescue helicopter pilot are much higher than a traveling college student, but Powell makes this comparison based on where he was before serving with the Coast Guard.

Powell, an Ontario, Canada native, has been a pilot for the Royal Canadian Air Force for 12 years, stationed in Newfoundland. He volunteered for a military personnel exchange program and was assigned to the U.S. Coast Guard in July 2012.

"It was just for a change. Something different," Powell said.

Lt. Matt Kroll, pilot and public affairs officer at USCG Air Station Atlantic City, said the exchange program works fleet wide. He said the United States, Australia, Great Britain and Canada are all involved in the program, which gives pilots the opportunity to fly in different countries and take on other missions.

"It's just a relationship we have between other, foreign militaries," Kroll said.

"We all take on similar missions, but they can give us insight into different ways of performing those missions. (Powell) comes down here and gives us a few things, like cold weather – he'll brief us on how they fly in cold weather in Canada and he'll learn how we fly down here. Then he'll go back to Canada and show them what he's learned and what might work better for them."

After training at the USCG Aviation Training Center in Mobile, Ala., Powell was stationed at Air Station Atlantic City. While in the Royal Air Force, he flew a CH-149 Cormorant helicopter for land and sea rescue missions. When he began his assignment with the U.S. Coast Guard, Powell had to learn how to fly the MH-65 Dolphin, a smaller, more agile chopper used primarily for search and rescue sea missions.

He said the most significant difference between the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Coast Guard is the type of rescue missions.

"Although we do the same overall mission, in Canada our mandate is both land and sea," Powell said. "The range we cover up there is significantly greater. We have a very small area of responsibility here."

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Above, Capt. Jeff Powell, a helicopter pilot with the Royal Canadian Air Force, is now serving with the U.S. Coast Guard as part of an international exchange program. Powell has been getting used to flying the smaller, but more agile, MH-65 Dolphin used by the USCG, and participating in more sea search and rescue missions. In Canada he flew both land and sea missions.

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## Sewell Point settlement proposed

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – The state Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has proposed another settlement to allow East Cape May Associates to construct housing units on the Sewell Point Tract east of Pittsburgh Avenue.

The proposal has stemmed from decades of litigation involving East Cape May Associates (ECMA), NJDEP and the American Littoral Society. ECMA originally pursued a project that would develop 366 units on the

approximately 96-acre tract, but the proposal was rejected.

The parcel of land, commonly referred to as the Sewell Point Tract, was purchased in the early 1950s by a group of developers. The City of Cape May later agreed to provide roads, sidewalks, water, sewer, and a police substation if the land were developed.

The NJDEP initially concluded the land was primarily freshwater wetlands that were home to numerous endangered species with fragile habitats. Based on these findings, the NJDEP cited the developers in the

late 1980s for illegally filling wetlands and refused to issue permits necessary for development.

The developers sued for compensation, claiming the denial of permits was an unconstitutional obtaining, or taking, of their property.

The land was sold to ECMA, owned by developers Thomas Brodessor and Philip Robinson, in 1990 and settlement proposal deals have been pursued ever since. The latest proposal from the NJDEP, which came out last month, would allow ECMA to

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## Two-alarm fire at Bedford

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Firefighters spent over an hour fighting a devastating blaze that broke out at a historic Victorian bed and breakfast early Saturday morning at 805 Stockton Avenue.

At precisely 5:31 a.m., the Cape May Fire Department received a call for an activated alarm at the Bedford Inn, according to Fire Chief Jerry Inderwies Jr. He said when firefighters arrived on scene, smoke was coming out of the building and flames could be seen at the rear of the building. He said the fire was contained primarily inside the structure.

Archie Kirk, who has owned the circa 1883 B&B with his wife Stephanie since 2005, said he was in Audubon with his daughter when he received a call on his cell phone from his alarm company, notifying him that the fire alarm had gone off. Kirk said when he called the Cape May Fire Department a fire crew had already been dispatched.

Inderwies said the fire began on the first floor and spread upward to the second and third floors. He said the origin of the fire was near the heating system, however, the cause of the blaze has yet to be determined by the Cape



Above, high winds hampered fire-fighting efforts at the historic Bedford Inn at 805 Stockton Ave. There was little exterior damage but significant interior damage

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May County Fire Marshal and New Jersey Division of Fire Safety.

Kirk said the fire destroyed the dining room on the first floor, which was beautifully hand painted with a mural of historic Cape May sites and buildings. He said the fire also destroyed the two bedrooms directly above and also reached a third floor bedroom above those.

"It didn't look bad from the outside, but when I walked in I just broke down," Kirk said. "By the time I got there, it was just devastating."

Inderwies said Cape May and the Coast Guard Fire Company both responded to the fire initially, but when he realized how large the fire actually was he called for a second alarm, which brought fire crews from Cape May Point, West Cape May, Erma, Town Bank and Villas.

Inderwies said because of the classic construction, there are no fire stops between floors allowing the fire to spread so quickly to upper levels. "These old Victorians are

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## The verdant Point wants to remain so

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY POINT – At the January Cape May Point Board of Commissioners meeting, Mayor Anita vanHeeswyk said she received a call from a concerned citizen.

vanHeeswyk said the caller, a new resident to Cape May Point, told her a neighbor told them he intended to cut down all the trees on his property because he was tired of dealing with leaves. She said the person allegedly making the statement was a new homeowner in Cape May Point as well.

Concerned the person would act on his statement, vanHeeswyk composed a letter to send out to new homeowners in the borough.

"Trees are so important to us," vanHeeswyk said. "We have a zoning ordinance to protect trees."

vanHeeswyk's letter begins just that way, telling homeowners the borough considers trees and other vegetation so important they have an "award winning" zoning ordinance in place to protect them. The ordinance has won awards from both the New Jersey Audubon Society and the New Jersey Association of Environmental Commissions. The letter excerpts the municipal code, which requires a Landscaping and Vegetation Plan. One of the reasons, as explained in the excerpt, is to maintain

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