

# Cape May Star and Wave



159TH YEAR NO. 47 CAPE MAY, N.J. SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY WEDNESDAY, November 20, 2013 50¢



**HOUSE OF THE WEEK**  
Page B1



**LOOK INSIDE FOR GREAT IDEAS IN HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE**

**LOWER FOOTBALL ENDS ROUGH SEASON**

Page B4



## Committee discusses 'Resort House' rules

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – The 10-member Advisory Committee on Resort Homes, appointed by city council, met for the first time Friday to discuss potential amendments to various city codes and ordinances regarding single-family house rentals.

Mayor Ed Mahaney, a committee member, said over the last three years, especially, city council has noticed a level of involvement in the use of whole house rental properties. He said homeowners offer additional amenities, services and different types of entertainment to renters in order to keep tourists coming back, and survive in an ever-changing economy. Mahaney said the scope and role of housing has been enlarged.

In recent weeks, city council has discussed the changing use of these properties and hopes to balance the property rights of the homeowners while preserving the quality of life for other residents and visitors. Mahaney said there are a number of aspects to discuss in terms of the resort homes such as public and fire safety, ADA compliance, parking, zoning, licensing and fees.

"As we go through Cape May's history, there is a constant change as times change, missions change, people's desires change, the economy moves forward and on that note, there is never a status quo," Mahaney said. "City

government has a responsibility, especially the city governing body, to periodically review all aspects of the city's operations, programs and services."

He said the committee would be examining four documents in particular, which are the city's Master Plan, the Council On Affordable Housing (COAH) Plan, the Flood-Plain Management Plan and the Plan Amendment Document for Cape May.

"We look at those documents as the basis for how the city is organized, how it is to be developed and operated," he said. "We want to stay true to the missions of the city and keep the values and quality of life that we have while still staying current with the times."

City Solicitor Tony Monzo said Avalon has also been discussing similar issues with its resort houses and that municipality came up with a definition for such a property. Monzo said the city does not currently have a definition for whole house rentals, and would not use the same definition as Avalon, but Avalon could be used as a model for Cape May.

"We obviously won't use Avalon's definition verbatim, but it gives us a good guideline to follow," Monzo said.

The drafted ordinance in Avalon describes a resort house as follows:

"A residentially styled structure that is used, maintained, marketed, promoted and/or advertised as a destination location available for rent or lease or sub-lease for a gathering of invited guests for functions and special events, including, but not limited to, weddings, retreats, family reunions, parties and meetings. A resort house is a transient commercial use appropriate only in areas zoned for hotel/motel use and never have been permitted as legal uses under existing ordinance standards. The



Above, left to right, Bonnie Pontin of the John Wesley Inn, Code Enforcement Officer John Queenan and Capt. Robert Sheehan, participate as members of Cape May's Resort House Advisory Committee. Cape May City Council formed the committee to deal with concerns regarding whole house rentals.

term Resort House shall not be construed to include occasional family gatherings or weddings."

Monzo said the draft ordinance does not specify what "occasional" means, simply stating "no more than once" in an unspecified number of days.

Monzo said whole house rentals make up a large portion of Cape May's economy and do not all fit into this

category of "resort houses." He said that term is based on the use of the property such as one where tenants are allowed to host multiple events throughout the year or peak season.

"Our definition will need to be more clear without ambiguity so there is no misinterpretation," he said.

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Please see Rules, page A2

## Getting elected again 'kind of cool' for Simonsen

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

LOWER TOWNSHIP – Freeholder Director Gerald Thornton concluded his swearing in of Lower Township's new Ward 3 Councilman Erik Simonsen with the words, "Get to work."

Thornton's words were intended in a humorous vein, but he later added that Simonsen worked very hard during the election campaign, saying he was out there with him.

"This is a tough business we are in," Thornton added, saying it was necessary for young people such as Simonsen to get involved for it to be successful.

Simonsen said he was eager to get to work with council, saying, "It's good to be back up here."

Simonsen was a Ward 2 councilman for 11 months before having to step down because he moved out of the ward.

"I've now been elected in two wards, which is

See Cool, page A10

## 'Harborside Chat' educates public on beached marine mammals

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – It's hard to believe something as small as a spray paint can cap could cause the death of an animal as large as a bottlenose whale, but that's a scene the Marine Mammal Stranding Center (MMSC) has come across on the past.

Plastic pollution kills countless marine mammals and sea turtles each year, as they accidentally ingest balloons, bags or other plastic materials that become lodged in the throat, intestine or stomach. MMSC Education Coordinator Sarah Miele said her organization is constantly trying to spread



Above left, Sarah Miele of the Marine Mammal Stranding Center in Brigantine gives a talk on stranded marine mammals at the Nature Center of Cape May. Above right, a harbor seal on the beach.



the word about disposing and trash and recycling materials properly so they don't end up

at sea. She said immeasurable amounts of trash and waste wash up on the Jersey

shores every year and the majority comes from the mainland making its way to

the ocean through tributaries.

"Even if you drop trash on the ground far inland, it can still end up in the ocean," she said. "Don't throw your trash anywhere but in a garbage can or recycling bin."

The MMSC of Brigantine is an organization dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of stranded or otherwise distressed marine mammals and sea turtles along the Jersey coastline and tributaries. Much of the marine mammals and sea turtles that become stranded on shore are already deceased due to sickness, serious injury, accidental pollution ingestion or becoming tangled in discarded fishing line or nets.

Miele was the guest speaker at Thursday night's Harborside Chat at the Nature Center of Cape May. The Harborside Chats have been held every Thursday since late September, covering various topics like maritime history, birding, beekeeping and much more.

This particular chat titled "Stewards of the Sea" took an in-depth look at the MMSC and what its responsibilities are in preserving ocean life of New Jersey. The MMSC is the only organization in the state of its kind, doing hands-on rehab and rescue of marine mammals and sea turtles 24 hours a day, 365

Please see Chat, page A2

## VFW to send care packages to Afghanistan

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – VFW Post 386 in Cape May and its Ladies Auxiliary is participating in a national program to send care packages to active duty service members.

According to Post Commander Andy Barber, the post has linked up with the Military Assistance Program

(MAP) and adopted a unit in the 10th Mountain Division out of Fort Drum, N.Y., which is currently deployed to Afghanistan. Barber said there is a friend of a VFW member who is serving with the 10th Mountain Division in Afghanistan.

"It's not a sweet place to be," Barber said. Barber said the soldiers who will be receiving the packag-

es are at a Forward Operating Base (FOB) Shank. They call it Rocket City because they are being attacked with rockets every day," Barber said.

The notion, Barber said, gives him flashbacks of 1967-68, when he was deployed to Vietnam.

"I was there for the infamous Tet Offensive of 1968,"

Please see VFW, page A7

## WCM commission updated on sewer project

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY – Borough Engineer Ray Roberts said the contractor, F.W. Shawl and Sons, Inc., has begun the installation of the sanitary sewer main in Park Boulevard, between Central Avenue and Leaming Avenue.

In an update presented to

the Board of Commissioners, Roberts said work on Park from Myrtle Street to Leaming Avenue is substantially complete.

"At this point in time, it's going to be a matter of finishing up the north side of Grand Avenue," he said. "The goal is to have Park Boulevard paved at least with the sub base prior to the (Christmas) parade. So we should have a

solid sub base from Leaming all the way up to Broadway."

He said Central Avenue has been paved with the base course from Broadway toward Park Boulevard, including Willow and Maple Avenues and Grand Avenue (south side). Paving on Third, Fourth and Fifth Avenues has been completed.

Please see Sewer, page A7

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