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CD contains last recordings of Cape May's George Mesterhazy

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – A new music CD titled "It's Midnight" contains the last recorded works of the late, local music legend George Mesterhazy.

The CD contains songs written by former Cape May councilman David Kurkowski, who had been taking music lessons with Mesterhazy. "He was teaching me a lot about how to make songs sound finished," Kurkowski said. "I wrote the songs and lyrics but could only go so far. He taught me the subtlety of harmonics, what musicians call leading tones... we spent a lot of time on that. You would recognize it when you hear it but you might not know the terms."

Kurkowski said the CD was in the works, and they only had one more song to record when Mesterhazy died. "We were working with Robert Fowler, the recording engineer up in Smithville. We were in the studio doing the finishing of recordings, adding orchestrations, and the last one was on April 2. He died on April 12. I was just about to set up another session."

Kurkowski said he was planning on releasing the CD

in the summer or early fall of 2012. Instead, he called upon another well known local pianist, Barry Miles, to work on the final song with vocalist Paula Jones. Jones performs the vocals on "Midnight." "It really was an incredible

the Merion Inn, using new microphones George just got. Jones was there doing vocals. "That was how the recordings were done," he said. "We did that over a couple months."

They were all essentially live recordings, some done in a single take, others done in several takes. After the recordings were completed, Fowler and Kurkowski would tinker with the recording to get it in final form until they finally got the CD. Kurkowski said recording it as they did the album couldn't be pitch-corrected. He said to attempt to correct one part of it would "uncorrect" another. So he said the album has a very live feeling. "I was really pleased with the way they turned out. George's playing comes through...all the wonderful musical elements he brings through in any project...the same with Barry," Kurkowski said.

Kurkowski said he played oboe in the background of a couple of tunes. He said the last track, a song called "On the Road of Life," is actually a tribute to Mesterhazy. "This is the one Barry and Paula performed. It's about

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Image courtesy of David Kurkowski

Above, the CD cover of a new album of songs by David Kurkowski. The late George Mesterhazy played on all but one song.

project," Kurkowski said.

Kurkowski said he had written a number of songs over the years and he showed them to Mesterhazy. Kurkowski said Mesterhazy told him they should record them, and they started to record, with Mesterhazy playing piano.

"We started to record the most recent one and worked backwards in time," Kurkowski said.

Kurkowski said they started recording in January 2012 at



Christopher South/Cape May Star and Wave

Above, Roy Baker performs at the the Pilot House's Open Mic, held every Friday beginning at 8 p.m. The weekly event attracts local performers of all sorts – amateur, professional, semi-professional, up-and-coming and simply music lovers.

Open mic event assembles an interesting 'stew' of performers

Open Mic, Part I: Something good is cookin' at the Pilot House

By KEVIN MCKINNEY
For the Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – The Pilot House serves up a uniquely satisfying original stew of sorts on Friday nights. Standard fare aside, the seasoning for this hearty pseudo soup du jour – warm and inviting, but never predictable – calls for a pinch of the eclectic and a dash of the spontaneous. For nearly two and half

years now, that's been the recipe for a successful Open Mic Night at the landmark Cape May restaurant. "Open mics tend to come and go," observes open mic moderator Barry Tischler, who has been stirring the pot at the Pilot House from the start of its Friday Night Open Mic. "But this one has been super successful. "You never know who is going to show up. Every Friday night you get a different group of musicians playing together. And we get some good musicians playing a variety of genres. It

just seems to keep getting better."

It's all tossed into the pot. Folk, blues, country and rock n roll – heavy on acoustic originals – make up the mix. The night typically warms up with a stock base of familiar artists performing their favorite ditties.

Come 8 p.m., Tischler on guitar and vocals sets the flame; he usually laddles out a handful of folk tunes like Leadbelly's "Midnight Special" or Woody Guthrie's

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Cape May Point commissioners concerned over new flood maps

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY POINT – Cape May Point Deputy Mayor Anita vanHeeswyk expressed concern over new FEMA flood maps that put most of the point in the Velocity Zone (V-Zone).

VanHeeswyk said the municipalities have been provided advisory flood maps, and that she continues to attend meetings on new flood elevation maps provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"We are alone in having incomplete data on the advisory maps," she said. "What we are missing is the bay side of town."

VanHeeswyk said the Delaware Bay communities have no advisory maps, other than the current flood elevation maps adopted in



Chrisotpher South/Cape May Star and Wave

What's up, dock?

A section of floating dock floated up on the beach in Cape May Point, last week. See related story on page B2.

1996. VanHeeswyk said it seems as though FEMA has put in arbitrary elevations in response to Hurricane Sandy, and has put most of Cape May Point in the flood

zone. "On the ocean side they used velocity storm surge to evaluate the area as getting

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Healing Hands for Sandy Hook

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – It's sometimes amazing as a few concerned women can accomplish.

Following Hurricane Sandy, it was three local women who put together a relief effort that had tons of supplies headed to stricken areas in only a day.

The same kind of concern is being shown by three local

women who have put together a benefit to aide family members of the shooting at the Sandy Hook School in Newtown, Conn., deal with the pain of losing a child or spouse.

Christina Walls and two of her friends – Laura Goodavage and Jessica Greetsch – decided they had to do something to help the survivors.

"Basically, two other moms

and I got together to figure out way to help the Newtown community after the tragedy," she said.

Walls said one of the women knew someone in the Newtown community and they were linked up with the Newtown Parents Connection.

"They were like a staple in the Newtown community trying to help people with what-

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WCM may see a reduction in tax rate

By PAUL GRISER
For the Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY – 2013 municipal budget reconstruction dominated most of the time at the West Cape May Board of Commissioners meeting, Feb. 13.

The meeting started with Mayor Pam Kaithern introducing auditor Leon Costello and chief financial officer Frank Donato, who worked in

tandem during the meeting to explain ways of lowering the borough's budget.

After rearranging some figures from the 2012 budget, including a 2 percent raise for most city employees, Costello said the tax rate looks to have a 1.5 percent deduction from last year's budget. Costello said most cities in the area wouldn't be reporting a decrease.

The budget, which could

still receive changes the commission deems fit, could possibly be introduced Feb. 27 and approved by March 27.

Part of the reason for the tax break lies within the borough's first ever liquor license, which was awarded to Sunset Liquors last year.

Kaithern said the liquor license would become a positive in West Cape May for

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