

# Cape May Star and Wave

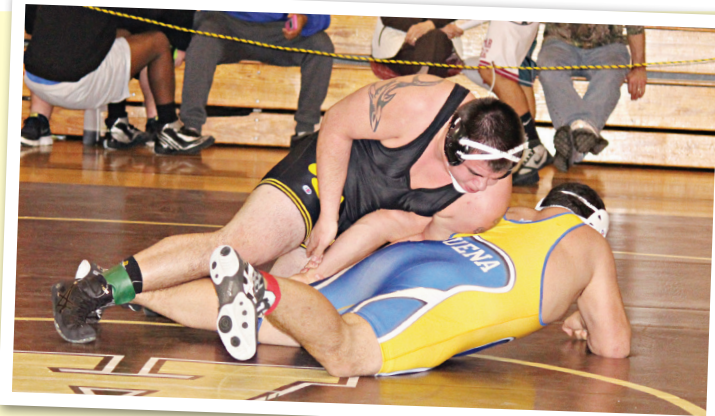


160TH YEAR NO. 9 CAPE MAY, N.J. SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY WEDNESDAY, February 26, 2014 50¢



## HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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## DISTRICT 32 WRESTLING RESULTS

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# Clark to Cape May officials: 'Let's stop this madness'

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH and CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

LOWER TOWNSHIP - Lower Township Deputy Mayor Norris Clark has invited Cape May officials to meet with township officials at Lower Cape May Regional High School to discuss Cape May's efforts to leave the school district.

"I appeal to the Cape May City Council and Cape May voters - let's not go to court, let's go to school," Clark said. "I appeal to (Cape

May) Deputy Mayor Jack Wichterman and the rest of city council to come to the school, then have a panel discussion. If they want their attorneys there, invite them too. Then we can sit down and air this out."

Recently, the Lower Cape May Regional School District announced they would not be able to borrow money for capital projects, including making repairs, until the school funding dispute was ended. Superintendent Chris Kobik said it would take years before the matter is settled.

Wichterman said Cape May's attorney said borrowing could

in both Cape May and the township are ending up paying

*'I think it will be a lot easier to say 'Let's stop this madness.'*

- LT Deputy Mayor Norris Clark

resume as soon as the county superintendent of schools sent his recommendation to the state.

Clark said the residents

legal fees they shouldn't have to pay.

"We are facing years of litigation because someone said 'Do you realize how

much per kid it's costing us?'" Clark said. "And people said I don't have kids in school - it's not fair."

Clark said his school taxes were over \$3,300, he has no children, and has been a taxpayer for 20 years. He said the fairest way to fund essential services is through property taxes.

"But a lawyer said, 'Pay my fee and let's go down the road together,'" Clark said.

Councilman Thomas Conrad said lawyers were padding their bill by advising a continuation of the effort

to withdraw from the school district.

Clark suggested people take their tax bills and go to the school superintendent and ask for a tour. He said the school provides kids with an education, keeps them out of trouble, and gives them hope for the future.

"I think for what we pay in taxes that's a great deal," he said.

"I say to Cape May, it's not fair? Compared to what? Then have your own school," Clark

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## Cape May announces new annual Seafood Festival

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - Commercial fishing and tourism have long been known as Cape May's lifeblood. On June 28, the city will combine the two into one event when it hosts its inaugural Cape May Seafood Festival.

As the second largest fishing seaport on the east coast, the festival is intended to highlight the vast economic impact and contributions of the commercial and recreational fishing industries in Cape May, as well as the city, a premier destination to live, work and visit.

"The idea is to promote the rich history between Cape May and the commercial and recreational fishing industry," Mayor Ed Mahaney said at a press conference, Feb. 19. "We want to educate the public on the various types of seafood. It doesn't come out of a Mrs. Paul's box or a tuna fish can."

Mahaney said the seafood festival is projected to bring anywhere from 7,500 to 10,000 people to the two block section of Beach Avenue between Howard Street and Gurney Street in front of Convention Hall.

The event will feature seminar sessions, demonstrations, and tastings to educate the public on an

array of topics, such as seafood harvesting, distribution, marine science, fisheries management and seafood preparation. In terms of tastings, there will be the usual favorites like flounder, clams, oysters and scallops, but also species that have been deemed "underutilized" like spiny dogfish, skate wings, whelk and scup.

Mahaney said it was important to note that eight local fisheries and seafood distributors from the area have agreed to provide the seafood for the festival.

"The local fisheries have voluntarily provided the seafood for this event a virtually no cost," Mahaney said. "We could not have put this event together without them. I can't tell you how cooperative they've been."

Sam Martin of Atlantic Capes Fisheries said it was a great opportunity for commercial fishermen and the industry to show people the time, effort and teamwork it takes to bring these species from the sea to their kitchen table.

"These are all companies that produce things we love on our plates," he said. "We have national and international accounts, but at the same time, (Cape May) is where our boats and busi-

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Christopher South/Cape May Star and Wave

## Damiana pins way to District 32 title

Above, Lower Cape May Regional High School senior Cory Damiana pins LaQuan Brown of Oakcrest in the semifinal round of the District 32 Wrestling Tournament held at Absegami High School this weekend. Damiana pinned all three opponents he faced in the tournament. See related story on page B3.

## Point eyeing reassessment of properties

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY POINT - At the February Cape May Point Board of Commissioners meeting, Mayor Anita vanHeeswyk said the county informed the borough its property values are 108.2 percent of the assessed values.

Locally, Cape May is at 102.55 percent, Lower Township at 109.81 percent, West Cape May 103.15 percent. The county tries to maintain all properties at a 100 percent equalized value rate.

County tax administrator George "Ray" Brown said the numbers over 100 indicate

the average assessed values are over the average of the selling prices (assessments divided by the selling prices). He said the figures, from the New Jersey Director of Taxation's Table of Equalized Valuations, are from the fiscal year ending in June 2013, and the figures were released Oct. 1, 2013.

Brown said the 108.2 percent was the average ratio taken from the director's table. He said there were 15 property sales in Cape May Point for the time period ending in June, and calculations based on those averages could mean assessments are more like 119 percent of true value.

vanHeeswyk said the bor-

ough received a letter indicating a revaluation or reassessment would be necessary to bring assessed values in line with the true value of its properties. She said the borough would be asking permission from the state to do a reassessment, and would be submitting a plan as to how they would go about it.

"It needs to be approved by the state," she said.

A revaluation is done with an outside firm being hired to revalue the properties in a municipality. A reassessment is also a revaluing of properties, but it is done in-house. Additionally, a revaluation is normally more expensive than a reassessment.

"A revaluation (in Cape

May Point) is estimated to cost \$85,000 plus the cost of the tax maps. A reassessment is estimated to be in the range of \$25,000," vanHeeswyk said.

The cost depends on how many properties have to be reassessed. vanHeeswyk said some municipalities have requested to do sections of town rather than the entire municipality at one time. She said she did not think that would be needed in the Point.

"That just doesn't make sense for us," vanHeeswyk said.

At the regular commission meeting, vanHeeswyk said they were attempting to see if

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## Cape May Police seek man regarding lewd act

CAPE MAY - Two juvenile females reported to the Cape May Police Department that a white male driving a newer model, dark grey hatchback approached them in the area of Madison Avenue and Columbia Avenue in Cape May while performing a lewd act inside his vehicle Feb. 22 at approximately 11:40 a.m.

The white male was further described as being

in his 40s, having a medium build and short dark brown hair that is balding. The vehicle is similar to a Nissan Juke and had a white circular sticker on the back windshield.

The Cape May Police Department is asking that anyone who witnessed this incident please contact the Cape May Police Department at (609)-884-9500.



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COMMENTARY.....A8 ENTERTAINMENT.....B8 COMMUNITY.....A4 OBITUARIES.....A6 SEA & DO.....B1 TIDES.....A3