

Cape May Star and Wave



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HOUSE OF THE WEEK

Page B1



2ND BARRY'S CAPE MAY OP'RY A HOOT (AND NANNY)

Page B6



LoBiondo talks about the issues

By ERIC AVEDISSIAN
Cape May Star and Wave

National surveillance

For U.S. Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-2), it's been a long journey from his family's Rosenhayn trucking business to Congress.

LoBiondo, 67, was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1994 and has garnered 50 percent of the vote in each election since, returning to office by comfortable margins.

He represents New Jersey's Second Congressional District, the largest district in the state by geographical area, including all of Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem counties and sections of Burlington, Gloucester and Ocean counties.

LoBiondo serves on the U.S. House Committee on Armed Services, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. He was former chairman of the House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation.

He stopped by the Ocean City Sentinel offices Aug. 7 to chat about national security, sports betting in New Jersey, and changes along the shore since Hurricane Sandy.

Classified Leaks

LoBiondo said there are bipartisan measures being taken to prevent leaks of classified information. He called Edward Snowden, the former CIA and NSA computer specialist who leaked evidence of secret surveillance programs a "defector and traitor and (who) should be treated as such."

"I think there's more evidence every day that he knew exactly what he was doing. His intention was to steal classified information. The guy walked out of the country with four laptops," LoBiondo said. "He was on a mission to get into programs that he did not have authorization to get into to be able to transfer classified information to, we guess the Chinese and Russians."

LoBiondo said after Snowden and U.S. Army soldier Bradley Manning, who leaked classified information to the website WikiLeaks, the House Intelligence Committee is weighing a number of measures to better secure those who have access to classified data.

The Snowden leaks revealed several clandestine National Security Agency (NSA) surveillance programs the U.S. government enacted following 9/11. One program, PRISM, is a mass data-mining program, where trends are detected after aggregated data analyzed.

"If used properly, they protect the country," LoBiondo said of technological tools available. "We try to have safeguards on that."

He said the Intelligence Authorization Bill, slated for a Congressional vote this Fall, would safeguard personal privacy.

"The whole idea is not to get at your personal information. The whole idea is if a terrorist is dealing with somebody here or if we have a home-grown terrorist," LoBiondo said.

The U.S. Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, operating under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), supervises the program.

LoBiondo said the NSA collects "metadata" - the phone numbers and origin of the calls - to and from foreign countries.

LoBiondo said if a terrorist in Pakistan or Yemen calls the United States, there's no way to identify who the terrorist is calling. With current technology, a FISA court judge can obtain the collection of phone numbers via the program.

LoBiondo wants to assuage concerns the U.S. is tapping phone calls of ordinary citizens.

"The NSA is not listening to anyone's phone calls. There's more information in the telephone book than the NSA has," LoBiondo said. "I've been very disappointed with the inaccurate and false information that's been put out there. It's spread as if it were the truth."

He said on Sept. 11, 2001, the day of the terrorist attacks in New York, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C., a call was made from Pakistan to San Diego.

"We had no idea how to identify who in San Diego that was," LoBiondo said. "These programs have developed as a response to a threat from terrorists off our shores. I don't know how we can do

Please see Issues, page A7



Congressman LoBiondo



Christopher South/Cape May Star and Wave

Stronger Than The Storm

A team from New Jersey's Stronger Than The Storm campaign was in Cape May on Saturday, Aug. 17, to promote fun at the shore, providing sand castle building equipment and kites for flying. The Sandcastle and Kites event was part of a \$25 million campaign to let people know the Jersey Shore is open for business...even though the end of the season is just around the corner. See more pictures on page A10.

Township hires attorney on funding issue

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

LOWER TOWNSHIP - The township will be hiring a special council to represent Lower Township in the school funding case now with the county executive superintendent of schools, but which could also end up in the courts.

Lower Township Solicitor Charles Sandman said attorney Francis Campbell would attend the next township council meeting, scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 4, at 6 p.m.

The normal Monday meeting was scheduled for the first Wednesday in September due to the Labor Day holiday.

Sandman said Campbell was recommended by the attorneys who represented the respondents in a case attorney Vito Gagliardi took to the New Jersey Supreme Court.

"He was on the team when Vito Gagliardi was soundly defeated," Sandman said.

Sandman suggested the people of Cape May were being taken for a ride at their expense.

"Somebody is looking out

for his own job security, and not looking out for his client," Sandman said.

Sandman said Cape May would not come out the winner in any event, because they are looking at perhaps a decade of legal fees. He said Cape May cannot win under this scenario.

"The relief they are seeking is blatantly impossible," he said. "We are going to try to educate the people of Cape May...if this drags out for 10 years, you've lost."

Sandman said the cost of litigating the matter, perhaps to the level of the Supreme

Court, would cost them dearly.

"In one of these cases the litigation went on for 14 years," Sandman said.

Lower Township is also hiring Terrence Crowley to prepare its feasibility study for county Executive Superintendent of Schools, Richard Stepura.

Crowley was previously appointed as a Cape May County executive superintendent with the purpose of conducting a three-year feasibility study on school consoli-

Please see Hires, page A2

No grace period on mercantile licenses

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY - The West Cape May Board of Commissioners have decided not to extend the grace period on renewing mercantile licenses, believing the discount period of nearly two months already in place is sufficient.

Mayor Pam Kaithern said the mercantile licensing in West Cape May has an early payment discount period starting in early May running through June 30 for the application or renewal of a license.

"Each year someone forgets, and come July 1 when the early payment discount

expires, the clerk's office will typically have two or three people come in saying, 'Oh gosh, it's (July) second, can't you let me slide?'" Kaithern said.

"If we're going to let it slide, we're going to have to let it slide for everybody," Deputy Mayor Peter Burke said.

Kaithern said the board had to consider a possible five to 10-day grace period for the application or renewal starting July 1, when applicants could still receive the discounted rate. According to Kaithern, West Cape May currently does not have a provision for a grace period, so there is no way the borough can morally or ethically "let

it slide" if someone applies on or after the July 1 deadline. She noted West Cape May already has cheaper mercantile license rates than neighboring municipalities.

Commissioner Carol Sabo said she felt the seven-week period for a discounted rate, which is half-price, seemed sufficient enough.

"It sounds like the grace period is that early pay period," she said.

Clerk Elaine Wallace said there are roughly 250 mercantile licenses issued in West Cape May and approximately 35 were renewed after July 1. She said the fees are much higher for a business than a homeowner or land-

lord. Apartments, condominiums, duplexes and guesthouses are charged on a per unit basis at \$50 prior to July 1 and \$100 on or after July 1. Owners of single-family homes where the whole house is rented, pay the same fee as other rentals. However, businesses such as restaurants in the borough pay an early fee of \$7 per seat and \$14 on or after July 1. Retail stores with 1,000 square feet of less of store area pay a discounted fee of \$125 or \$250 if late. Stores with 1,000 square feet of space or more pay \$175 before July 1 and \$350 after.

"If you're a business, it's

Please see Grace, page A2

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