

Report

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ing include a partnership and communication between law enforcement, businesses, residents, and the media, to enhance awareness and crime prevention.

"But as budgets decreased, and staffing decreased, it's not possible to have doing things that are not part of normal police functions," he said.

That said, Marker said he still has a commitment to the theory of community policing.

"Every police officer should be community oriented. They should do all the things community police officers did such as building bridges of communication, visiting businesses, and working daily with the community," he said.

Marker said the police can have a better handle on crime when they have a good relationship with the community.

One of the things the LTPD has done to increase communication and cooperation with the department is its Cop/Stop Program. The department has officers visit a business location in the community, normally a Wawa, where they can speak to community members and get their feedback.

"The Cop/Stop program will continue in December, but we haven't picked the date yet. That's one way to reach out to the community, but there are other ways, such as commu-

nity meetings," Marker said.

Marker said a community meeting would be a good way to educate the public in areas like drug trafficking and crime prevention, and how they can assist the police by being a good neighbor.

"We ask people to be a part of the solution. We don't ask them to be a vigilante or patrol a neighborhood, we just ask them to be eyes and ears in their neighborhood. A simple call to let us know about suspicious activity is the key to prevention," Marker said.

Marker said in the past neighborhoods have set up a community watch program, where the citizens establish, coordinate and run the activities. He said the job of the police in a neighborhood watch group is to provide information and give the members training on different topics, such as what to look out for. But he said the success of a neighborhood watch program depends on the commitment of the people on that block or street.

"Normally, if there is a crime on a street, people are upset. Unfortunately, the heightened sense of awareness fades over time," Marker said. "But I believe in neighborhood watch programs. They don't have to be as sophisticated as in large towns or cities, and if they are established we will assist them."

Marker said the LTPD could provide speakers and literature. However, he said, all that is really needed is for people to call the police when they feel there is a problem.

"That is all we ask for," Marker said.

Marker said after the first of the year, perhaps the third week of January, he would like to have a community meeting, where the department could explain some of the goals of police department, ensure there is more contact with residents and businesses.

"I want to make sure they feel they have a sense of partnership and are working with us," he said.

Addressing the issue of drug use, Marker said there are always people with addictions, and Cape May County in general has a very high percentage of addictions, be it to drugs, alcohol or tobacco. He said it's a township problem and we can't blame it on others bringing it in.

"But where it exists we need to find how we can address it. We work with county to enforce the laws, and where courts refer someone to treatment, that is what needs to be addressed," he said.

Marker said the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office has a Drugs, Guns and Gangs Task Force, with which they are in regular contact.

Wait

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is now in the review stage. Borough Solicitor Frank Corrado said the clerk has 20 days to review the petition and verify the signatures. The commissioners then have 20 days to review the ordinance and decide whether to repeal the changes to the service hours or put them on a voter referendum and let it be decided by the public.

McDonough said he believes if the hours are extended to midnight, the license holder will stay open until that time and create late night

noise in the business district, where some year-round residents live. McDonough said no one is going out to eat at midnight, therefore the board was in essence trying to promote a bar.

Corrado said the zoning regulations in West Cape May prohibit taverns within the municipality.

"A bar is not a permitted venue anywhere in West Cape May," he said.

Kaithern said she doesn't believe one restaurant serving alcohol until 11:30 p.m., the "last call" time set by commissioners, will create a

high noise level in the borough. She said selling the licenses was to create tax relief for residents over the next several years, which is important to people in these tough economic times. Selling both licenses at the established minimum bid prices would generate \$1.1 million in tax relief to the borough.

She said lowering the minimum bids and extending the hours was a way of making the licenses more appealing to potential buyers.

"There are people who would really appreciate tax relief, and need it," she said.

South Jersey families host CG recruits for Thanksgiving

CAPE MAY - More than 220 recruits from Coast Guard Training Center Cape May had Thanksgiving dinner with 92 families in Southern New Jersey as part of Operation Fireside Thursday.

Families eager to host recruits lined up outside of Coast Guard Guardian Chapel aboard Training Center Cape May where they were met by representatives from the American Red Cross and Coast Guard chaplains. The Southern Shore Chapter of the American Red Cross coordinates the community's involvement in Operation Fireside.

"(It feels) fantastic to be involved in Operation Fireside," said Donna Croskey, the Operation Fireside coordinator for the Red Cross. "It's a gift that I can give back to the military and the community."

Since 1981, Operation Fireside has placed thousands

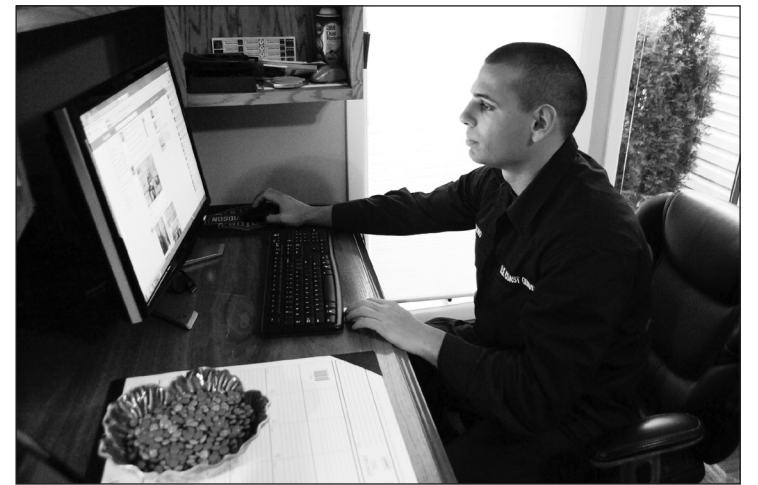


Photo by CWO Donnie Brzuska/USCG

CAPE MAY - A recruit checks his Facebook account during his visit to a host family's house during Operation Fireside. Since 1981, Operation Fireside has placed thousands of recruits with South Jersey families during the holiday season.

of recruits with South Jersey families during the holiday season. Coast Guard Training Center Cape May can have up to 600 recruits training at any given time from all 50 states and U.S. territories. Operation Fireside allows the recruits to celebrate the holiday with their host family while they're separated from their loved ones during training.

"This is one of the best ways the community can give back to the military," said Cmdr. Miles Barrett, the chaplain for Training Center Cape May. "It shows the most junior and newest military members that people care about them and their missions."

The families walked into Guardian Chapel where the recruits were seated straight up with their eyes dead ahead waiting quietly for their host families to arrive. Company commanders paced the halls

to ensure the recruits maintained military bearing up to the moment they left with their host families. Many people pick up the recruits in the family car, and others go the less conventional route.

Dr. Jim Kauffman arrived at Guardian Chapel with a stretch limousine and representatives from the Atlantic County Toys for Kids Program. Eight recruits piled into the limo and were led by police escort through Somers Point, N.J., to Kauffman's home in Vineland, N.J. Kauffman's wife, April, was waiting for the recruits when they arrived with trays of food, computers and phones to call home.

"What better way to show your appreciation for people who serve than to give them a great meal, give them shelter for the day, some TV, a computer and a chance to call

Please see Host, page A7

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