



Rosanne Borgo/Cape May Star and Wave

PBA Local 59 members, above and below, take part in informational picketing to bring attention to the fact they have been working without a contract for 18 months.



## Ventnor resident challenging in D2

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

OCEAN CITY – What does it take to unseat an 18-year incumbent from his seat in Congress?

First time candidate Cassandra Shober said she is going to take her campaign to the people, who she believes are suffering from a struggling economy.

More to the point, Shober feels if the incumbent has any particular faults, it's an indifference to the people, and he is more concerned with partisan politics.

"If you look at his voting record, he votes with the party before the people," Shober said during an interview at the Ocean City Sentinel in



Cassandra Shober

Ocean City. Shober said there is a lack of honesty in Congress, resulting in legislative gridlock. Meanwhile, there is double-digit inflation in the Second Congressional District, reaching 14 percent in Cumberland County and 17 percent in Cape May County.

"As a representative, you need work to change that," she said. "The incumbent is a big part of the problem in Washington."

Shober again pointed to LoBiondo's voting record, particularly his support of the so-called Ryan Budget, named for Republican Congressman Paul Ryan, chairman of the House Budget

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## USDA grant allows more bike paths

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY – The Borough of West Cape May has been granted permission by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the state Department of Transportation (NJDOT) to widen Central Avenue for a new bike lane after sewer improvements are completed, engineer Ray Roberts said.

West Cape May received a \$180,000 grant from NJDOT in April to construct new bicycle paths throughout the borough. The first phase of the four-phase project was completed in January 2009 when a bike lane was created on a portion of Park

Boulevard. Phase 2 involves extending the bike lane from Park out to Central Avenue. Phase 3 will be a bike path on Central from Park to Broadway and the final phase will be a lane on Leaming Avenue leading to Cape May city. West Cape May was also given a \$2,305,000 loan and a \$708,000 grant from the USDA to improve water and sewer systems. Central Avenue was included in the project.

At the Sept. 14, 2011 meeting, Mayor Pam Kaithern asked Roberts if the borough could use the USDA funding to simply widen Central for the bike lane after the

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## PBA members picket having no contract for 18 months

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Cape May Police Officers represented by PBA Local 59 have staged informational pickets beginning Friday, May 11, and vowed to continue until the city agrees to a settlement.

The officers have been working without a contract since Jan. 1, 2011, when their contract expired. According to local union representative John Campbell, the process of renegotiating the contract began as long ago as August 2010, but the contract did not expire until Dec. 31, 2010.

"We usually start negotiating about 120 days before the expiration of a contract to get something in place before it expires," Campbell said. "North Wildwood was wrapped up in four weeks starting from the presentation to the agreement."

The PBA represents 20 officers from the Cape May Police Department, who have been working without a contract for 18 months. Campbell said the city and the union have had only five meetings over since the contract expired: three when the city was represented by attorney Russell Lichtenstein, and two under City Solicitor Anthony Monzo.

"The first three were really were fruitless and nearly a waste of time," Campbell said. "The city had had another attorney (Lichtenstein) and we were getting nothing done."

Campbell said there were a number of meeting dates scheduled, but he said the city cancelled them for one reason or another. He said some of the cancellations were made with little notice, just that the city couldn't make it.

"I don't know their reasoning but I felt like (negotiations) were being delayed unnecessarily," Campbell said.

Campbell said the PBA was told the city was concerned about fitting the contract into the budget under the 2 percent spending cap. He said the contract the PBA proposed is similar to what other municipalities, such as North Wildwood, Stone Harbor, and Lower Township have authorized. PBA Local 59 represents 283 active officers in Cape May County, with the exception of Wildwood and Sea Isle City.

"We believe (the PBA proposal) fits in with 2 percent cap. These contracts kind of follow trends based on what is done around the state," Campbell said.

Campbell said part of what the PBA proposed was a 2 percent salary increase for

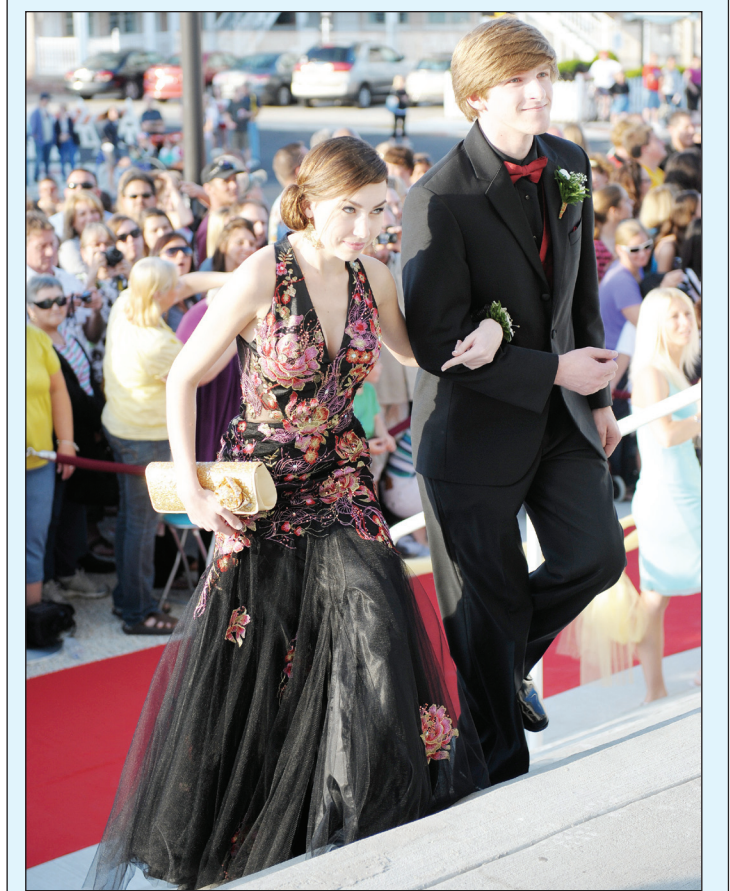
each of the four years of the new contract, beginning Jan. 1, 2011. Once the contract is agreed upon, the city will have to pay the wage increase retroactively. Campbell said some of the officers who were advancing in steps toward full pay could be owed as much as \$7,000 to \$8,000 if the contract is settled soon. Campbell said the PBA also proposed extending the number of steps an officer has to pass to get to full pay from 10 to 15.

Campbell would not say what the city had offered, but it was not 2 percent. He said the city for the first time ever had presented a wage guide.

"Our proposal would save the city in excess of \$200,000 (over the career) for each new hire," Campbell said.

He said the city had asked for other concessions, which

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David Nahan/Cape May Star and Wave

Above, Meaghan Joyce and Tyler Hienkel walk up the steps to Convention Hall Saturday evening for the Lower Cape May Regional High School prom. Five hundred students attended the prom – the first event at the new Convention Hall. More photos pages A7-8.

## Convention Hall is a hit for LCMR prom

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Mayor Ed Mahaney said the Lower Cape May Regional prom couldn't have been better, given the great weekend weather and the spirit of those who attended.

Mahaney said there were around 500 LCMR students who attended and over 1,000 people outside watching the students walk up the red carpet into the building. Mahaney said the new building performed according to specifications and the public was also allowed to tour the building prior to the dance.

"The 500 students who came were decked out in

outstanding attire and were thrilled to be in Convention Hall," he said. "We're looking forward to having the prom at the hall annually."

"All the comments made by the students, faculty and the public were positive," he added. Mahaney said Convention Hall is currently open to the public everyday between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., giving people a chance to leisurely tour the new facility.

## Convention Hall is finished, open

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – The new Convention Hall has been completed in time for the scheduled Memorial Day opening date, said Mike Whipple, Director of Marketing, Communications and Event Sales.

As of late last week, there was mainly simple cleanup and housekeeping work to be done in preparation for the Lower Cape May Regional prom, held on Saturday night. Whipple said with the excep-

tion of a few installations, the hall has been completed. Because of the need for space, the city opted to wait until after the prom before the chair risers would be installed in the rear of the main hall. The chair risers will extend around 20 feet from the rear wall with floor seating set up in front. Installation of the risers began Sunday. Permanent stage lighting will also be put in shortly as well, as the attachment bars are already in place. Whipple said all the plumbing and electrical systems have been installed and tested.



Cain Chamberlin/Cape May Star and Wave

Above, the recently completed Convention Hall on Beach Avenue.

"It didn't make sense to have all that extra equipment for occasional events," Whipple said. "The Nero concert will be much bigger than most of the performances here."

Taking a tour through Convention Hall, Whipple pointed out the entry foyer and hallway with the restrooms, information center and front desk area. Behind the information center is the catering kitchen with access to an outdoor ramp on the side of the building. At the end of the hallway is the ocean view community room, which will be used for small business conferences and similar events. The hallway has guest access to the main hall.

In the main hall, there is a center divider that can be used for dual events. He said the large window with a wide-angle view of the Atlantic will make Convention Hall an ideal wedding venue. He

"It feels great to be done ahead of schedule," Whipple said. "It's more than substantially ready."

Whipple said the Peter Nero and Philly Pops concert scheduled for Saturday, May 26, requires an upgraded lighting and sound system as compared to what was approved in the contract for the construction of Convention Hall, and a larger

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