

Wolf

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force. "We're the last nation in the world that has an all sail propelled, all privateer navy," he said.

The Conch Republic separated from America when the U.S. Border Patrol set up a roadblock at the Last Chance Saloon in Florida City, which led to a 17 mile traffic jam between the mainland and the Florida Keys. Gittelman said the Border Patrol searched every vehicle, top to bottom, claiming to be searching for illegal aliens and causing many who saw the incident on the news to cancel their vacations and trips to the area.

When the lifeblood of the budding tourism industry was threatened, community leaders filed against the government's action in Federal Court in Miami. The court ruled in favor of the Border Patrol's actions, which essentially treated the Keys as a foreign nation. Following the court's decision, the Key West delegation led by Mayor Dennis Wardlow decided it was in the best interest of the people to secede, and the Conch Republic was born.

On April 23, 1982, the Schooner Western Union, under the command of Capt. John Kraus, attacked the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Diligence with water balloons, Conch fritters and stale Cuban bread. Coastguardsmen on board the Diligence fought back with firehoses and the battle of the Conch Republic had officially begun, which ultimately sounds more like an outdoor food fight gone too far. Wardlow surrendered and asked for U.S. aid that never came, however, the roadblock was removed and the Conch Republic kept its sovereignty.

He said the battle is reenacted each year with a Coast Guard Cutter on the April 23 Conch Nation Independence Day.

Gittelman said the secession and creation of the Conch Republic shouldn't be viewed as a revolution against the United States. He said it exists as a sovereign state of mind, which signifies its vision of the America they are proud to be a part of.

"We consider ourselves an allied nation," he said.

The current Schooner Wolf tour along the east coast of

the United States started in the Florida Keys with port visits scheduled at tall ship festivals in places such as Beaufort, S.C., Hampton, Va. and Baltimore, Md. He said no matter what port the Schooner Wolf finds itself in - it's the only ship to fly two flags.

"We sail under the U.S. flag and that of the Conch Republic," he said. "We're proud to sail under both of those flags."

The 74-foot topsail schooner can travel at a speed of 12 knots under sail and is powered by a 216 horsepower diesel engine. Capt. Joe Holz of the Conch Republic Navy has been serving as the second mate on this tour and gave numerous members of the public a tour of the Schooner Wolf while it was docked in the marina.

Holz said the schooner has no winches aboard, as everything is done traditionally by hand. It is not equipped with radar and it wasn't until 2004 when it finally had a GPS installed. However, Holz said much of the navigating is still done by use of a compass and celestial navigation, which he learned from

Gittelman. He said both his father and grandfather sailed with Gittelman and helped build the vessel. Holz started out scrubbing the deck and worked his way up the ranks.

The Schooner Wolf has a cargo capacity of 20 tons and can carry a crew of four to 10. Holz said the ship performs very well in rough weather, but given the wooden material and age of the ship, the crew aboard needs to be prepared for any emergency. He said it's tight quarters below deck, but he manages to get through fairly easy after being on the ship for so long.

"You never know what kind of situation you're going to come across, you just have to be prepared to go with it," he said. "Everything is pretty hard to get around to, so you need to be a little crafty. When an emergency situation happens, I don't know how I fly through as fast as I do, but I do."

He said not only does the Schooner Wolf defend the Conch Republic, but it has also delivered relief supplies to small island communities and provided support to places like Jamaica, Honduras, and Haiti following severe



Cain Chamerlin/Cape May Star and Wave
Above, the crew of the Schooner Wolf on their visit to Cape May: Joe Holz, Julie McEnroe, Adm. Finbar Gittelman, First Mate Red DeWrench, and Lt. Cao Boi.

natural disasters. Gittelman said the next stop during the international voyage will be New London, Conn.

Events

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"I have a concern, because when you're dealing with someone's livelihood and a small portion of that group

might be preserved farmland, you're creating an ordinance or law that's going to impact everybody," he said.

Deputy Mayor Peter Burke said under current legislation the preserved farms are unable to host these so-called "celebratory life events," so opposing the legislation would not be an attempt to take anything away from those farms.

"They're being given something they didn't have - so we're only inputting onto that," Burke said. "The Assembly bill says 'no local zoning' basically. Local zoning is in place now and we're only asking that consideration be kept."

Borough Solicitor Frank Corrado said under the Right to Farm Act, farms can engage in agricultural related activities, which include harvest festivals, product festivals and wine pairing dinners that pair the product with locally grown produce. He said the debate is whether the agricul-

tural related activities can or can't include special occasion or life events the legislation is referring to.

During the work session, Mayor Pam Kaithern said the SADC and the state Department of Agriculture are opposed to this legislation, however, there could be amendments made to make it more agreeable.

"Some of the things they said is that it basically undermines the whole purpose of farmland preservation in the state," she said to Geyer. "It's not that there isn't room for adaptation as it moves forward."

During the work session Burke referred to Willow Creek Winery located on Stevens Street and said these life events could cause heavy

traffic on the road and cause a nuisance for residents in the specific area.

At the June 13 regular meeting, a group of Stevens Street residents spoke during public comment addressing their concerns regarding how the winery would be a burden due to noise, traffic congestion and issues of public safety.

Willow Creek Winery Director Kevin Celli said the winery is located about three-quarters of a mile from the street and half-a-mile from the nearest residence, which he believes creates a more than efficient buffer in terms of noise. He said they have been constructing the 12,000 square foot winery for the past two years and have never received a noise com-

plaint. He said there is also sufficient parking for events at the winery on the 50 acres of partially preserved farmland, meaning no on-street parking would occur.

Geyer said during the weekly West Cape May Farmer's Market, held behind Borough Hall in the summer, there is an abundance of parking and traffic congestion on side streets and dead-end streets.

"The whole thing is very difficult for me because on one hand, we listen to residents complain about the potential traffic, parking and other issues on Stevens Street," Geyer said, "and yet we're encouraging people every Tuesday to park in another neighborhood on three dead end streets. To me, that's saying 'OK, we don't want anyone to park on that street but it's ok if you park over there.'"

Kaithern said there was a big difference between the two because the farmer's market is only held 10 times throughout the summer while this legislation allows over 100 events throughout the year at each farm. There are four farms on Stevens Street.

Celli said Willow Creek Winery is simply a beautiful partially preserved commer-

cial farm trying to sustain itself like every other commercial farm, especially in rough economic times. He said the winery hasn't yet opened, but Stevens Street residents are concerned about problems it might cause.

"We haven't even begun to do any type of events - we're still just trying to open. They're trying to hit us with the 'what ifs' when we haven't even opened yet," Celli said. "Celebratory life events have been taking place on farmland since biblical times while West Cape May has been farmland since the 1700s. Any avenue we can look at that could help to sustain our farmland we can take that's legally permitted and safe for the community we're going to examine it. Local government should be supportive and embrace farming agri-tourism activities."

"The Mayor lives directly across the street from us on Stevens Street and has never even visited our farm winery after numerous personal invites. Why would anyone be against something so beautiful for our county that will supply jobs, increase tax revenue, and add to the already

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TIDES JULY 2012 Eastern Standard Time			
	High	Low	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M. P.M.
4	9:05	9:27	2:50 2:51
5	9:57	10:15	3:40 3:43
6	10:47	11:03	4:29 4:36
7	11:37	11:50	5:16 5:28
8		12:27	6:02 6:21
9	12:38	1:18	6:48 7:16
10	1:27	2:10	7:34 8:14
11	2:19	3:03	8:22 9:13

Moon Phases	
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New Moon, July 19	First Quarter, July 26
Perigee, July 1, 29	Apogee, July 13

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