



## Rea farm excluded from expanded historic district

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## House of the week

B1



168th YEAR NO. 2 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2022 \$1.00

# Lower schools open, Cape Island's closed

## Students remain on virtual instruction amid spike in COVID infections

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

ERMA — The Richard M. Teitelman School remained closed Monday with virtual classes, awaiting results of a water system test, but Lower Cape May Regional High School reopened to in-person instruction.

Superintendent Joe Castellucci stated in a letter to parents that he expected the Teitelman School would reopen soon.

"While we are confident that the water issues at the middle school are resolved, we have yet to receive results on our most recent water

test," he stated Jan. 8. "We hope to have that soon and will return Teitelman students to in-person learning immediately after."

Castellucci urged the community to help keep schools open.

"I must also caution everyone that our region is continuing to experience record numbers of COVID infections among children and adults. I am asking that all families maintain practical mitigation protocols such as frequent hand washing, avoidance of large gatherings and not sending students to school who are experiencing any COVID like symptoms," he stated.

"If your teenager is experiencing

symptoms of any kind or is simply not feeling well, please contact the school nurse for further advice," he continued. "As has been the case throughout this school year, all students and staff are required to wear masks and face coverings while in our school buildings."

Castellucci stated the district hopes to maintain in-person instruction for the remainder of the year because officials fully recognize the value and importance of keeping students in school.

Lower Township Elementary Schools returned to in-person classes following a week of virtual learning. Superintendent Jeff Sa-

maniego stated COVID numbers had decreased between students and staff and the Board of Education supported his recommendation for children to return in-person Jan. 10.

Cape May City Elementary School went to virtual classes due to rising positive COVID cases in the county, staff and students who have tested positive, and/or currently out on quarantine, and a lack of availability of substitutes and testing detection kits for COVID as the region moved to the "very high risk" category on the COVID-19 CALI Score that was broadcast by the state Department of Health.

Superintendent Zack Palombo stated remote instruction that began Jan. 7 would continue through Jan. 14.

"Through this time period we will be evaluating if our school can reopen safely on Jan. 18. Please note that remote learning may be extended beyond January 14, 2022," he stated.

Students were sent home with individual Chromebooks and activities.

Palombo, who is also superintendent of West Cape May Elementary School, placed it on the same virtual instruction schedule as Cape May Elementary.

# Fighting the coronavirus surge

## Drive-thru test center now open in Atlantic

By CRAIG D. SCHENCK  
Cape May Star and Wave

NORTHFIELD — With the Omicron variant of COVID-19 rapidly spreading across the country, the U.S. is now averaging more than 700,000 new cases per day.

To help deal with the increase, in collaboration with AtlantiCare, the county opened a drive-thru test facility Monday in the Atlantic County Public Works Yard at Dolphin and Harvey avenues in Northfield.

The site will offer polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing for symptomatic and asymptomatic adults and children. Appointment hours will be 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mondays through Fridays (no testing Jan. 17 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day). Appointments are required for each person in a vehicle and individuals must provide identification at their scheduled testing time.

"We are grateful for the support of AtlantiCare in helping us provide this



Craig D. Schenck/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

AtlantiCare nurse Molly McCloy of Galloway Township, right, speaks with a test recipient while Mary Rosen of Ventnor logs in the sample during the first day of drive-thru COVID testing in Northfield. Below, Heather Nigro and Duston Robles Garcia prepare for a crowd Monday.

drive-thru testing facility that will serve to better meet the current demand for testing and alleviate some of the stress on other locations," Atlantic County Executive Dennis Levinson stated in a news release about the opening. "I encourage our residents to take advantage of this free public service to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect themselves, their families and our community."

"I'm very happy that the county has decided to reopen COVID testing on Dolphin Avenue," Northfield

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## National Guard to deploy to Northfield nursing home

By CRAIG D. SCHENCK  
Cape May Star and Wave

NORTHFIELD — Men and women wearing a different kind of uniform are now walking the halls of a local nursing home. A 10-member New Jersey National Guard strike team was deployed Monday to Meadowview Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Northfield.

Gov. Phil Murphy announced Jan. 6 that the National Guard would be deploying to long-term care facilities throughout the state to assist with COVID-19 response efforts and augment facilities' staff.

He said the deployment is

an extension of Joint Task Force COVID Guardian, which has provided assistance since the first weeks of the pandemic.

"Time and time again, the New Jersey National Guard has stepped up to the plate throughout this pandemic," Murphy stated in a news release. "This deployment will send members of our National Guard to long-term care facilities with staffing needs and will act to protect the health and safety of long-term-care residents while the Omicron variant surges throughout the nation."

First District Assembly-

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## COVID claims 9 more lives in county as cases top 2,000

By DAVID NAHAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Cape May County recorded nine more deaths attributed to the surge of COVID-19, county commissioners announced Friday.

The deaths include two men, a 94-year-old and 81-year-old, from Upper Township; an 89-year-old man from Ocean City, an 86-year-old man and a 78-year-old woman from West Cape May, an 87-year-old man and a 64-year-old man from Middle Township, an 86-year-old man from Wildwood Crest and a 75-year-old woman from

Dennis Township, according to Cape May County Commission Director Gerald F. Thornton and Commissioner Jeff Pierson, liaison to the Health Department.

They said although the Omicron variant of the coronavirus is less severe than the Delta strain, the record numbers of new COVID cases in New Jersey and the Northeast have led to a rise in deaths.

Since the start of the pandemic in 2020, there have been 262 fatalities attributed to COVID-19 in the county, including 157 among residents and 105 in long-term care.

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# Lewis replaces Priole as chief in Lower Twp.

VILLAS — Kevin Lewis was sworn in as chief of the Lower Township Police Department effective Jan. 1, replacing Chief William Priole.

Lewis and his wife, Christina, have three children: Ryan, 27, Brooklyn, 22, and Kody, 16.

He is a 16-year veteran of the Lower Township Police Department, hired in January 2006. He was member of the Cape May County Regional SWAT team for 11 years and served as a field training officer for newly hired police officers. Lewis attended the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police Command and Leadership Academy in 2019 and the Police Executive Institute in 2021.

Lewis retired from the New Jersey Army National Guard in 2020 as a command sergeant major, after serving for nearly 33 years. He served in Iraq from April 2003 to April 2004.

"I am committed to ensuring that the officers of the Lower Town-

ship Police Department are provided the best training, education and equipment available to ensure the safety of our officers and those we serve," Lewis said.

Priole is a 30-year veteran of the department. He was hired in fall 1991 and graduated from the Atlantic County Police Academy in February 1992.

He was a member of the department's Fatal Crash Investigation Team and once was named Officer of the Year. He was promoted to patrol sergeant in June 2011, to lieutenant in July 2015 and to captain in June 2019.

Priole was instrumental in planning renovations of the township's public safety building and merger with county dispatch. He also managed the implementation of the transition to the 700Mhz radio system.

Priole graduated from the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police Command and Leadership Academy in 2017.

## Borough backs business' bid for cannabis license

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — Shorehouse Canna LLC has applied to the state Cannabis Control Commission (CRC) for a microbusiness license to operate a cannabis dispensary in the borough.

Borough Commission passed a resolution Dec. 29 supporting Shorehouse Canna's license application. That followed passage of an ordinance July 14 allowing cannabis businesses in the borough following a number of favorable comments by the public.

The ordinance allows properly licensed cannabis cultivation, manufacturing, wholesaling and distribution as a conditional use in the borough's R-2, R-4 and R-5 zoning districts on lots a minimum of 5 acres.

David Christian, a principle of Shorehouse Canna, said the owner of the company, Tom Nuscis, is a Cape May resident and owner of Pappy's Pig Roast and Barbeque in Marmora, Upper Township.

This area is severely underserved in relation

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