



## House of the week

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## WWII veteran celebrates a century

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165th YEAR NO. 4 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2019 \$1.00



## Incorporation date incorrect on flags, logos

### Correct year appears to be 1851, not 1857

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Before there was a Cape May, there was a borough of Cape Island and a city of Cape Island.

Then, at some point, the city of Cape May was incorporated.

It seems, however, that the city has mistakenly reported its date of incorporation for years, if not decades.

In 2017, resident John Bailey brought to the attention of the city a possible inaccuracy regarding Cape May's date of incorporation used on the city's logo and seal, according to Deputy City Clerk Erin Burke.

Both read "incorporated 1857."

Bailey contended the correct date of Cape May's in-

corporation should be 1875, based on a number of excerpts from history books. Burke contacted Laurie Boyd-Thomas, the county's public records and archives clerk. She researched the issue and provided excerpts of New Jersey Sessions Laws that showed an act to incorporate Cape Island into a borough on March 8, 1848, Burke said.

Boyd-Thomas said the borough had a burgess, an assistant burgess, a high constable and a borough clerk, which she termed as very Colonial.

"There was a metes and bounds description of the town that was kind of loose," she said.

An act to incorporate the city of Cape Island was enacted March 10, 1851. At

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## Police arrest two in death of West Cape May woman

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Two Lower Township residents have been arrested in connection with the drug-induced death of a West Cape May woman.

According to Cape May County Prosecutor Jeffrey H. Sutherland and Cape May Police Chief Anthony Marino, Francis Leszczynski, 79, and Paul Neville, 59, were arrested and charged Jan. 17 with strict liability for drug-induced death, a crime of the first degree.

On July 30, Cape May police responded to a 911 call reporting an unresponsive female at a home in the 700 block of Grand Avenue in West Cape May. Upon arrival, police discovered Susan Perkins, 59, lying on the

floor next to her bed. Rescue efforts were immediately attempted to resuscitate Perkins but were unsuccessful, authorities said.

A joint investigation by the county Prosecutor's Office's Major Crimes Unit and the detective unit of the Cape May Police Department was conducted. An autopsy was by the Southern Regional Medical Examiner's Office determined Perkins' cause of death was the effects of ingesting heroin and fentanyl.

During the course of the investigation, it was determined Leszczynski and Neville were responsible for selling and facilitating the use of the heroin that Perkins ingested.

## Housing must be goal

### Homelessness expert says shelters not a solution

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

RIO GRANDE — The best solution to homelessness is "housing first," getting permanent housing rather than using temporary shelters, according to a homelessness expert from the Tampa, Fla., police department.

A homeless forum was presented twice Jan. 16 at the Rio Grande Fire Hall, once for government officials, law enforcement, health care professionals and community organizations and once for the general public. The event was sponsored by Cape Assist, the county Prosecutor's Office and the Cape May Chiefs of Police Association.

Middle Township Mayor Tim Donohue said homelessness was a "multifaceted problem that needs a multifaceted approach." He said a warming center was opened at Cape Community Church, with the county providing Fare Free Transportation to get homeless persons to the church.

Guest speaker was Dan McDonald of the Tampa police, who founded an initiative in 2012 to address the needs of the chronically homeless. He participated in community collaborations that slashed street homelessness in Tampa by 48 percent in three years, he said.

His work with the homeless has received global acclaim, according to Middle Township Police Chief Chris Leusner. He said he viewed McDonald's visit as a first step in addressing homelessness in Cape May County.

McDonald said homelessness is a public policy issue and a humanitarian issue.

"If you have absolutely zero compassion for your fellow human beings, then



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Dan McDonald, an expert on homelessness who started an initiative in 2012 with the Tampa, Fla., police department to address the needs of the chronically homeless, speaks Jan. 16 during a forum at the Rio Grande Fire Hall.

I'm going to talk about the economic cost of homelessness," he said.

A community cannot say there are no solutions to homelessness, McDonald said, adding that "housing first" has worked since the 1990s.

McDonald said he has donated to charities but that charity will not solve the problem. If someone is given a meal or provided with a warming shelter, it fills a need but it doesn't solve the long-term problem, he said.

A meal can be used as outreach to talk to a homeless person about obtaining housing, McDonald said, adding that tent cities are not a solution to homeless-

ness. "If you want to succeed with your homeless situation, then you need leadership," he said. "There has to be someone steering the ship, someone in charge."

McDonald said an elected official could take the helm or a county director of social services. He said arresting homelessness persons is not an effective solution.

In Tampa, homelessness has been solved by housing homeless people, McDonald said. In some areas, a local hospital will build housing for the homeless because it is less expensive than a hospital providing

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'If you want to succeed with your homeless situation, then you need leadership. There has to be someone steering the ship, someone in charge. The shelter has to be a gateway to housing. If it's not, if it's a shelter for the sake of a shelter, then it's not going to solve any problems.'

—Dan McDonald, Tampa Police Department

## Legislators, Thornton in spat over Code Blue

By CRAIG D. SCHENCK  
Cape May Star and Wave

TRENTON — Elected officials have engaged in a spat over the new Code Blue legislation, which puts the onus for providing shelter for the homeless population during certain weather conditions on municipalities rather than counties.

Cape May County Board of Chosen Freeholders Director Gerald Thornton and state Sen. Bob Andrzejczak and Assemblyman Bruce Land exchanged statements on the issue last week, with the state legislators firing the first salvo and the county representative answering.

Andrzejczak and Land issued the following statement on the intent of the statewide Code Blue legislation:

"When we crafted the Code Blue legislation with Congressman Van Drew, the intent was for the 21 counties in New Jersey to take an active lead in formulating and implementing a Code Blue alert plan in their respective county. It is the county's responsibility to coordinate the efforts of those municipalities with an identified homeless population. County government's responsibility does not end with making an alert

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## Church, nonprofit step up to provide warming center

By JOHN ALVAREZ  
Special to the Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — When Pastor Brad Boyer arrived to take over the ministry duties at Cape May Community Church, his first action was to reach out to John Spriggs, administrator for Cape Christian Academy.

As they got to know each other, Spriggs asked Boyer how the two of them could work together to tackle the homeless problem in the county. Boyer replied with a response most people in the county would provide: "What homeless problem?"

During this conversation, Spriggs informed

Boyer of a problem with which many other residents remain unaware.

During the summer months, when the weather is warmer than January nights, homeless men, women and children can sleep out in the open either in the woods or near a business when they close for the night. But during the winter, when the nights can get extremely cold like it was Jan. 20 — when a Code Blue was called by the county Office of Emergency Management — the homeless situation can become dangerous if not deadly.

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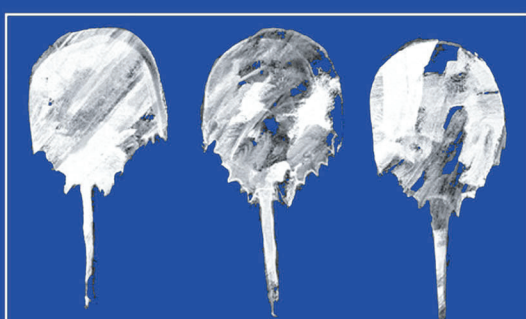
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