

MAC celebrates 164th birthday of Cape May Lighthouse

Page A5



House of the Week

B1



169th YEAR NO. 46 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2023 \$1.00

Franklin Street School library set to open in April

Former segregated school to hold branch of Cape May County Library System

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city's new library in the reconstructed Franklin Street School is expected to open in April.

At a Nov. 2 town hall meeting, Michael Calafati, architect for the project, said construction should be completed in January.

"At that point, it will have to be furnished, wired for electronics, so our target date is the second quarter of 2024, which is around April 1," he said.

Calafati said the Franklin Street School was built in 1927, one of the last public school buildings constructed under segregation. The forward part of the building was a primary school and behind it was a gymnasium

for the high school students, he said.

The building had no connecting doorway between the school section and the gym, keeping the students separated.

He said the reconstruction of the building began a year ago. Calafati said the roof and windows leaked, producing mold in the school that was remediated.

Vestiges of stamped tin ceiling and windows remained in the gym, he said. The ceiling was high enough for an intermediate level to be constructed in the former gym, he said.

For much of last winter, the building was covered by scaffolding.

"Wood windows were taken off-site and restored," Calafati said.

The building will have

new heating, air conditioning and security systems and will have sprinklers for fire suppression, he said. All the existing masonry, the brick surface was raked and re-pointed and, in the process, re-secured, he said.

Calafati said an addition to the north side of the gym extends no farther than the school itself and will become the young adult lounge for the library. Beyond that will be a computer lounge and a quiet study room.

The wall built to separate the gym from the school building stood as a reminder of segregation and was in the way of the building being used as one facility, he said.

"Last December, we brought together some of the students that attended the

See Franklin, Page A2



John Cooke/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

The Franklin Street School, which is being remodeled for use as a branch of the Cape May County Library System, is slated to open to the public in April following major renovations.



John Cooke/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

Cape May marks Veterans Day

The Greater Cape May Historical Society commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument at Gurney Street and Columbia Avenue during a ceremony marking Veterans Day. A wreath commissioned by the society was presented by Lt. Commander Brittany Fifer of the U.S. Coast Guard. The monument was completed in 1923 and dedicated July 4 as part of an elaborate city celebration. Above, Jacquelyn Makowski sings the national anthem as members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion and Coast Guard salute. Below left, Fifer places a wreath at the flagpole. Below right, Capt. Warren Judge, commanding officer of Coast Guard Training Center Cape May, addresses the crowd.



Township will not consider enacting rent control rules

Mobile home park residents told to take it up with court

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Despite pleas for help for months from Shawcrest Mobile Home Park residents concerned with steep increases in their monthly lot rent, Lower Township Council declined to pass a motion to create a rent control ordinance.

At a Nov. 6 meeting, Lower Township Hall's meeting room was filled with residents of the mobile home park.

Shawcrest resident Helen Maguire, who said her monthly lot rent increased from \$475 a month to \$650, said other mobile home parks that have increased monthly lot rents offer amenities, something Shawcrest does not offer. She said no improvements have been made since Legacy Communities purchased the mobile home

park in 2022. While Legacy Communities claims Shawcrest has a dog park and pickleball court, it has neither, Maguire said, noting Legacy Communities states the mobile home park has boat and jet ski slips but those are rented for an additional fee and are available to the general public.

She said the water in the mobile home park is "atrocious," and was shut off three times in one week, and that trash collection is haphazard.

Maguire said she spoke on the phone with Gov. Phil Murphy, who is leading an initiative to make living in New Jersey more affordable. More than half of Shawcrest residents live in the park full time and most are senior citizens on fixed incomes, she said.

"He (Murphy) is saying See Township, Page A4

Republicans sweep county, state races

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Republicans had a clean sweep of election victories Nov. 7 in Cape May County for County Commission and First District Senate and Assembly seats.

In the state Senate race, incumbent Mike Testa defeated Democrat Charles LaSpata 16,896 votes to 7,694.

In the Assembly race,

incumbents Erik Simonsen and Antwan McClellan were re-elected, with Simonsen receiving 26,747 votes and McClellan garnering 26,376.

Democratic challenger Damita White-Morris received 15,236 votes and Eddie Bonner 15,229 votes.

In the County Commission race, with three seats available, Republicans had a clean sweep with

See Republicans, Page A4



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