



## LCMR boys soccer gets first playoff victory in 16 years

Page A8



## House of the week

B1



166th YEAR NO. 46 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020 \$1.00

# Big Thanksgiving gatherings discouraged

Experts say bringing family, friends together could increase spread of coronavirus

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

With a rising rate of COVID-19 infections nationwide, families may want to rethink how they celebrate the holidays.

Experts say bringing relatives and friends together for dinner or longer could increase the spread of the coronavirus.

Gemma Downham, director of infection prevention at AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center, said the health care facility has seen a number of older patients

hospitalized after having a family gathering where there were adults and children. She said the hospital has had patients who attended a birthday party or a funeral.

"We've seen a lot of people that attended something where it was family," Downham said. "They considered it was safe because it was people that they were related to and they were family members, but individuals from outside their household got together and it ended up spreading the virus amongst those family members that attended."

There is much poorer ventilation indoors and it is difficult for family members to stay 6 feet apart and remain masked, she said.

"The risk in reality is that getting together with anyone in an indoor state that is outside of our immediate family, those that we spend time with every day, when we're not masked, does add risk," she said.

People who do not show any symptoms are still able to spread the virus, Downham said.

AtlantiCare has had essential

workers as patients, including police officers, teachers, restaurant workers and retail employees, she said.

"Those that are out there in the world having contact with people all day long have higher exposures," Downham said. "We've seen a lot of patients who have sick family members and we've had a lot of patients with multiple family members in the hospital at the same time."

New Jersey has issued an incoming travel advisory that all individuals entering from states

with a significant spread of COVID-19 should quarantine for 14 days upon returning. As of Oct. 27, 41 states were on the list.

Downham said those who are getting together with others, even family members, coming from a community that has high rates of transmission are susceptible to catching the virus. She said a person can be infectious for a couple of days before showing symptoms.

When inviting people to a Thanksgiving celebration, it is

See Gatherings, Page A2



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

## Fountain of knowledge?

The Travelers' Fountain in Cape May's Rotary Park notes on a plaque, 'The world is a book and those who do not travel read only a page.'

## CORONAVIRUS SPREAD ACCELERATES

# Lower schools, brewery report cases

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

ERMA — Two school districts and a brewery have reported cases of COVID-19.

On Nov. 2, Lower Cape May Regional School District Superintendent Joseph Castellucci stated in a letter to parents that a staff member at the Richard M. Teitelman School had tested positive for COVID-19.

"The district is coordi-

nating closely with public health officials and following CDC, state, and local health department guidance in order to assure the health and safety of our community. At this time, we have been advised that there were no close contacts with this person which would require any additional individuals to quarantine. Cleaning and disinfecting of all exposed areas has been completed. The school is also taking precautions to prevent the

introduction and spread of viruses and other germs and is cleaning frequently touched surfaces daily. The status of this situation is fluid, and we are monitoring it closely," the letter stated.

On Nov. 9, in a letter to parents, Castellucci stated a student at the Richard M. Teitelman Middle School tested positive for COVID-19.

"In cooperation with the Health Department we are identifying close

contacts and are informing those individuals of specific quarantine requirements," he stated.

Lower Township Elementary School District Superintendent Jeff Samanigo reported Nov. 15 that four students had tested positive for COVID-19 — one at Douglass Memorial School, one at the Carl T. Mitnick School and two at the Sandman Consolidated School.

Lower schools, Page A3

# O.C. leads county in active infections

By DAVID NAHAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

COVID-19 claimed the lives of three Ocean City residents over the past week as active cases surpassed 400 in Cape May County.

The resort town leads the county in overall active cases with 63 in the community and a breakout in

long-term care facilities, where there is an additional 20 cases.

The deaths of two nonagenarians from Ocean City were announced Saturday, a 96-year-old female and a 95-year-old male. Both were residents of a long-term care facility.

On Sunday, the Cape May County Department of Health announced the

death of an 86-year-old Ocean City resident.

As of Monday, there were 374 active cases of the coronavirus among county residents, up 100 from a week earlier, as new cases have been reported at a faster pace. There also were 25 active cases in long-term care facilities and 12 active cases among non-residents.

Lower Township led with

79 of the active cases among residents, with Ocean City and Upper Township close behind with 63 and 61 cases, respectively.

On Sunday, there were 42 new cases, 16 of them in Ocean City, nine in Lower Township and five in Upper Township. On Saturday, there were 31 new cases,

See Ocean City, Page A5

# Murphy: Keep holiday crowd to a minimum

Limits private gatherings to 10, chops sports capacity allowance

By DAVID NAHAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

Gov. Phil Murphy placed a 10-person maximum on private gatherings, most notably Thanksgiving, and set new limits that could mean no spectators at indoor winter youth sporting events, including high school.

In his Monday afternoon COVID-19 press conference, Murphy and state Health Commissioner Judy Persichilli said the new limits are the result of coronavirus cases continuing to soar in New Jersey just as they are around the country.

Murphy said over the four days from Friday through Monday there have been 14,566 new cases of COVID-19 reported, and the Saturday and Sunday numbers are the highest since the pandemic began. That equals 5 percent of the cumulative 281,493 cases since March 4 have happened in the past four days, he explained, calling that number "pretty darn sobering."

Sunday there were 4,540 cases and Saturday 4,395 cases statewide.

The highest case counts

are no longer from when the virus began rampaging across New Jersey in March and April, he said.

"They have come now when we are grappling with pandemic fatigue and when we know people have begun to let their guards down," Murphy said. "We have got to get back in front of this virus as best we can right now so when a vaccine — multiple vaccines, which looks increasingly likely — are ready for wide-scale distribution, which we hope is in a matter of a few months, we are in a stronger position for our vaccination program to work."

Effective at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 17, indoor gatherings were limited to 10 persons, down from the 25-person limit set on Aug. 3. Exceptions include religious services or celebrations, political activities, wedding ceremonies, funerals or memorial services, and performances will continue to be limited to 25 percent capacity of a facility, but a maximum of 150 people.

There was no change to the 25 percent limit on indoor dining.

See Murphy, Page A4

# Point commission race tied; appointee may take the seat

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY POINT — Following the county Board of Elections count of provisional ballots and properly postmarked, late mail-in ballots Nov. 11, in accordance with the governor's executive order, a race for a seat on the Board of Commissioners was tied.

Incumbent Anita van-Heeswyk is tied with challenger Mary Kelly at 88 votes.

At a Nov. 12 Borough

Commission meeting, Borough Clerk Elaine Wallace said if the tie stands, which will not be known until Nov. 18, neither candidate would be elected and the seat would be vacant as of Jan. 1.

The two commissioners that take office in January would select someone to temporarily fill the commission seat until the next general election.

Incumbent Mayor Robert Moffatt was re-elected with 129 votes and newcomer Catherine Busch was elected with 97 votes.

## November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month



Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in the country in both men and women, with 80% of those deaths are believed to be caused by smoking. Long time smokers should speak with their physician to see if they qualify for a Low Dose CT scan (LDCT), that can detect lung cancer early and increase survival rates.

