



## Winter track wraps up another successful season

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## House of the week

B1



169th YEAR NO. 6 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2023 \$1.00



Benita Battaglia/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

### Eagles (logo) spotted on the beach

Brendan Schaffer of Schaffer Art Studios created a Philadelphia Eagles logo sand sculpture on Cove Beach on Feb. 2. Schaffer is a lifelong Eagles fan. He received help from city employees. The sand sculpture took about five hours to create.

## Orthopedic surgeon: Advantage Eagles

### Doctor says Chiefs QB won't be fully recovered for big game

By CRAIG D. SCHENCK  
Cape May Star and Wave

SOMERS POINT — Philadelphia Eagles 27, Kansas City Chiefs 17.

That's the Super Bowl prediction of orthopedic surgeon Dr. Dante Marconi, who said quarterback Patrick Mahomes' high-ankle sprain will limit the mobility and throwing power of the Chiefs signal-caller, allowing the Eagles defense to keep him in check.

Mahomes suffered a high ankle sprain Jan. 21 during a 27-20 AFC Divisional Round victory over the Jacksonville Jaguars. He was 22/30 passing for 195 yards and 2 touchdowns in the game before suffering the injury on a tackle and being replaced by Chad Henne. He was able to return after being treated on the sideline.

Despite the injury, Mahomes led the Chiefs to a 23-20 victory over the Cincinnati Bengals in the AFC Championship Game eight days later. The quarterback was 29/43 passing for 326 yards and 2 touchdowns.

With two weeks to rest and receive treatment, it would appear as if Mahomes has little to worry about.

Not so, says Marconi, an orthopedic surgeon at Shore Medical Center in Somers Point who specializes in

sports medicine and shoulder surgery, as well as shoulder, elbow, hip and knee arthroscopy and shoulder, hip and knee joint replacements.

Marconi focuses on minimally invasive procedures, resulting in limited downtime and rapid return to sports and normal activities, in addition to caring for general bone and joint health.

And he's a lifelong Philadelphia sports fan.

Marconi grew up in Blackwood and his parents are from the City of Brotherly Love across the Delaware River. In his 30s, he grew up in the Donovan McNabb era and "never really lived through the terrible years."

He also knows what he's talking about regarding injuries to professional athletes. Marconi did a sports medicine fellowship in Houston, through which he treated members of the Texans, Astros, Rockets, Dynamo and Dash.

"I worked in the locker room closely with players, seeing them at time zero — as soon as injury happens — when you can be more aggressive at treating an injury and ensure the correct rehab as well," Marconi said.

The doctor said a high ankle sprain involves trauma to one or more of the four ligaments on the outside of the ankle, above the an-

kle joint, that help stabilize the ankle, tibia and fibula.

"We saw clearly with Mahomes, he planted the foot and the external rotation movement of the ankle continued. Energy puts stress on ligaments, so depending on how severe the force is, it can affect one or more ligaments and can lead to partial injury versus full injury," he said, noting the significance of the injury affects the recovery process.

Marconi said treatment involves getting X-rays to see if there is bone displacement. If not, it's treated by limiting inflammation and weight-bearing activities and managing the pain.

Marconi said Mahomes had X-rays and returned to the game, so there was no fracture or displacement. An MRI was necessary to determine the grade of the injury.

He said recovery from a Grade 1 injury that does not require surgery is typically three to six weeks for a regular Joe. An athlete such as Mahomes might be on the lower end of the recovery timeframe.

Many athletes play through injuries by heavily taping the affected area and even taping the shoe on to increase stability. Marconi called it a tight rope, in which a trainer tightens down the syndesmosis and

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## Prevention key to fight against drug addiction

### Cape Assist says legal cannabis sends mixed message to youth

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

WILDWOOD — For 40 years, Cape Assist's mission has been to prevent and treat substance abuse in Cape May County, which ranks in the top three statewide for substance abuse problems.

Executive Director Katie Faldetta has been with the organization for half that time and has seen changes such as opioid abuse centered on fentanyl and the legalization of recreational cannabis.

She said Cape Assist continues to focus on promoting healthy lifestyles and mental health and reducing substance abuse as a coping mechanism.

The legalization of cannabis sends a mixed message to children, Faldetta said, noting that while alcohol is still the drug of choice for youth because it's easily accessible, more likely will use cannabis as it becomes more available.

"Too many kids confuse legalization with safe and healthy, and that's not just the case," she said.

Prevention is very important and conversation between parents and their children is vital, Faldetta said.

She said the county's position in the state for

substance abuse is due in part to the low number of people who live here, since it is based on percentages, but said the seasonal economy also takes a toll on residents.

The county has a problem with unruly teens gathering in groups and damaging property. Cape Assist has the Lower Township Healthy Youth Coalition working with the school system, businesses and faith-based groups. She said there is no "silver bullet" solution to juvenile issues.

Lower Township has a comprehensive recreation program but not all teens are interested in sports, Faldetta said.

Cape Assist is rolling out new initiatives at Cape May Tech and Lower Cape May Regional High School with a peer-to-peer program entitled "Mental Health First Aid for Teens." Over the past few years, Cape Assist has seen growing evidence that kids are concerned about their mental health and that of their peers, she said.

"But, they have been lacking the skills to have the conversation either for themselves or to approach their friends about how they're feeling and

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## West Cape eyeing further limits on swimming pools

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — The borough is preparing to prohibit the construction of swimming pools in front and side yards.

Borough Commission reviewed a new ordinance Jan. 25 but tabled its introduction with plans to do so during its meeting Feb. 8.

Mayor Carol Sabo said the ordinance would prohibit construction in a side yard and addresses setbacks. The location of pool equipment may not be less than 10 feet from any side or rear property line, she said.

Sabo said no tree of significant value, as listed on arborist's heritage list or as specified by the borough's Shade Tree Commission, may be removed to make room for a swimming pool.

"I think that is an incredible statement in the ordinance of our commitment to our shade trees here in the borough," she said.

During public comment, Katherine Creenan asked if the ordinance would cover

hot tubs. Borough engineer Tony Chadwell said the ordinance should not apply specifically to hot tubs, which are wholly above grade, take up less than 100 square feet and have a rigid cover when not in use.

Bill Oetinger, a member of the borough's Shade Tree Commission, asked if the ordinance would address the removal of multiple trees to install a pool, trees not necessarily on an arborist's heritage list. He said seven trees were removed for one pool installation.

"We certainly would feel as though seven trees coming down has a negative effect on the (tree) canopy," Oetinger said.

Borough solicitor Erika Lezama-Simonson said decisions on trees would be made on a case-to-case basis.

Sabo said the borough is concerned about clear-cutting of lots for accessory uses.

Oetinger asked if there were any consideration

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## Sewer would cost West Cape owners \$1.6M.

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — A project to connect as many as 68 residents with failing septic systems to municipal sewer service could carry a price tag of at least \$1.6 million.

The homeowners would share the cost of the project and have 10 years to pay it back, interest free.

At a Jan. 26 Borough Commission meeting, auditor Leon Costello shared the estimated cost and said the borough could pass a local im-

provement ordinance that would be different from a general capital ordinance, allowing the borough to assess the property owners for a portion or all of the costs.

Costello said the borough could take a bond anticipation note for the construction, pay it off over eight to 10 years and use the money that was assessed to each of the homeowners to fund it.

"If the project costs \$1.6 million to do, maybe not all \$1.6 million is assessable to the properties, so that will be determined as time goes on,"

he said. "That's the maximum that would happen, but it is not necessarily cast in stone."

An assessment board would be formed to determine the amount of money and how it benefits each property, Costello said.

"As you know, your property is going to be worth more with a sewer line on it as opposed to a septic system," he said. "If you take two developments, one has sewer and one doesn't, the one that has it is going

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