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Lafayette St. paving postponed until 2025

School board says delay puts pupils in danger longer

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — A promise from the county to repave Lafayette Street this year and create a 4-foot bump-in area for parents to drop off their children at Cape May City Elementary School has been delayed until 2025.

During a City Council meeting Feb. 1, Cape May City Elementary School Board of Education President Dawn Austin said accidents have occurred in front of the school during the drop off and pick up of students. She said there have been close calls with children running out into the street.

Austin said the school board was very disappointed to learn of the new paving schedule from the county.

Mayor Zack Mullock said the school would give up some of its property to make the bump-in possible. He called it a needed project.

Deputy Mayor Stacy Sheehan she said was upset that the county had chosen to repave Pittsburgh Avenue before Lafayette Street.

"That's where I think as a council, we have to push back as a council and say we really need Lafayette Street done for safety reasons," she said.

Sheehan said Lafayette Street is in far worse shape than Pittsburgh Avenue.

Austin said the school board

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Werner Tedesco/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

Heavy fog envelops land and sea

When the snow began to melt last week, fog began to wrap the region in its ghostly embrace, making for a somber scene at the Fisherman's Memorial on Cape May Harbor.

Wilbraham Park to get facelift for anniversary

West Cape facility to mark 100 years

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — This year marks the 100th anniversary of the opening of Wilbraham Park and the borough's Shade Tree Commission wants to form a group to spruce it up.

At a Jan. 26 Borough Commission meeting, Barry Sullivan, a member of West Cape May's Shade Tree Commission, said the park is an incredible asset.

Sullivan said the Shade Tree Commission has the responsibility of taking care of the park.

"In order to prepare for the 100th anniversary, the Shade Tree Commission is looking to what it could do to really jazz it up and make it look spectacular for the anniversary and for the future," he said. "The volunteers we have had in the past are starting to be overwhelmed with other issues at the Shade Tree Commission is involved in."

The Shade Tree Commission discussed the need for additional volunteers in November. Sullivan said he approached the Cape May Garden Club for assistance, but they stated they were overcommitted with projects in Cape May.

Sullivan said he served as a national park ranger and manager for more than 35 years and has a lot of experience with "friends" groups.

"It seemed to me that Wilbraham Park was really ripe for a potential 'friends' group to come on

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Dempsey, Davis lauded for efforts in founding city's Tubman museum

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council honored two members of the founding team of the Harriet Tubman Museum of New Jersey, Emily Dempsey and Caroline Davis, during a meeting Feb. 1.

The Rev. Harold Harris, pastor of Macedonia Baptist Church, said Dempsey has been the primary force in archiving the contributions of the Black community in Cape May since the early 1990s.

As the founder of the Center for Community Arts and an avid collector of artifacts and historic papers, Dempsey has been instrumental in documenting the central corridor of the community in Cape May and its inhabitants and recording their oral histories, he said.

Harris said Dempsey is a descendant of members of the 22nd regiment of U.S. Colored Troops who fought for the cause for freedom in the Civil War. Many of the

exhibits in the Harriet Tubman Museum come from her collections, including an early edition of William Still's seminal work, "The Underground Railroad," which was first published in 1872 and catalogs the journeys to freedom of more than 800 formerly enslaved people, Harris said.

Davis is the matriarch of the last family to live in the Howell House, now home to the museum. With her husband, the Rev. Robert O. Davis, and their two sons Robert and Kendall, the family lived in the former parsonage of the Macedonia Baptist Church next door, from the 1960s through the early 1980s.

The Rev. Davis led the church for 47 years and was a passionate educator and collector. He used his collection of art and artifacts to teach Black history and cultural heritage to students throughout Cape May County.

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Song urges listeners to help save monarchs

Writer Hall of Orleans visits city often, dining in area eateries

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

"Save the Monarch" is the new single from singer/songwriter John Hall, a member of the rock band Orleans, which is celebrating 50 years of touring and recording.

The monarch butterfly is a much-loved creature in Cape May County, where it stops to rest and feed during its annual migration to Mexico.

Hall wrote Orleans' biggest hits, "You're Still the One" and "Dance with Me." He is no stranger to Cape May. Hall said he has visited the city on his sailboat dozens of times, anchoring at Utsch's Marina, walking around town and eating at local restaurants.

His song also urges listeners to save the emperor penguin, the queen of honeybees, the king condor, "Prince Zimba" the lion from poachers and the wildflowers "from the poison that we use."

"I thought the song was a way to couch the whole questions of endangered species by talking about the royals," he said.



Provided

John Hall of Orleans wrote a song called 'Save the Monarch,' imploring the public to take steps to assist the butterfly.

Hall said he was aware the number of migrating monarch butterflies have fallen but were making a comeback in some areas. He noted he would not be eating if not for pollinators.

"If they go, we're doomed as well," Hall said.

A Washington Post story this month reported a mass die-off of Magellanic penguins in 2021 in islands off Argentina due to abnormally hot weather, he noted.

Dar Williams duets with Hall on "Save the Monarch." He said he served with Williams on the board of directors of the Hudson River sloop Clearwater, which belonged to singer/songwriter/activist Pete Seeger.

The lyrics of "Save the Monarch" state "man was given dominion over things that walk the Earth, swim the sea or soar the sky."

"Forgive your people for they know not what they do,"

states the song.

"The song's a prayer," Hall said.

"Save them from us," the lyrics implore in the chorus of the song, which he said he hopes reaches as many people as possible.

Hall has sailed into Cape May on journeys starting from the Hudson River or Cuttyhunk Island, off Massachusetts, then continuing on up Delaware Bay.

Hall co-founded the group Musicians United for Safe Energy and helped organize the 1979 No Nukes concerts that featured Bruce Springsteen, the Doobie Brothers, James Taylor, Bonnie Raitt, Jackson Browne, Graham Nash, Carly Simon, Nicolette Larson, Phoebe Snow and others. The concerts were filmed for a motion picture.

About 43 years later, Hall said he is worried but hopeful about the current state of the world and climate.

"It depends on people kind of waking up and people learning how to work together better and not demonizing each other, and it depends on

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