



House of the week
Page B1



Easter Bunny in Lower Twp.
Page A5



Van Drew: Shore may get 'short end of stick' in aid

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE – Cape May County's small spring population and seasonal nature of business could mean less aid for the area.

U.S. Rep. Jeff Van Drew (R-2nd) answered questions from constituents at a virtual town hall meeting April 9 hosted by the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce. He answered questions emailed in advance to the chamber.

Van Drew said he used \$10,000 of campaign funds and \$4,000 of

personal money to purchase and donate surgical masks and N95 masks.

He said he did not have the answer to every question, so he invited Vernon Hill, executive chairman of Republic Bank, to participate in the virtual town hall meeting.

A participant asked how long it should take to hear from the Small Business Administration (SBA) on a loan application. The questioner said she filled out a loan application on April 2 and was accepted at that time.

"As we know, the federal government had been kind of clunky

in dealing with this," Van Drew said. "It's the biggest program in the history of the United States of America that has been done through the SBA, so it's had some kinks."

He said answers on application were generally taking two to three weeks.

Hill said the loans were available for businesses that employ 500 or less persons.

"We do have certain problems with businesses at the shore because the current rules make it difficult to get the appropriate amount of money," he said. "Jeff and I and others are working with

the government to get the rules altered so that the shore funds will be available."

Banks approve the loans, not the SBA, he said. Loan applications are submitted by banks to the SBA to get an account number which takes one to two days after the bank receives the information from a business owner. Hill said much of the time lag is due to borrowers not submitting all necessary information.

"There's no credit approval here in the sense of a loan approval, it's all about complying with



Jack Fichter/STAR AND WAVE
Congressman Jeff Van Drew during his virtual town hall last week.

See Short End, page B2

Budget delayed

Projections in Cape May like 'throwing darts'

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – City Council delayed approval of its 2020 municipal budget anticipating lost revenue from a shorter tourist season.

At an April 7 council meeting, auditor Leon Costello, of Ford Scott and Associates, said a number of towns have expressed concerns of how the COVID-19 pandemic would impact revenues.

"So far, people having been adopting budgets as is," he said.

Costello said the city had a large exposure with beach tag revenue. He said it was hard to guess what will happen this summer with beach tags.

"You don't know if you are going to be open in June, July or never for this year," Costello said.

If council decided to reduce anticipated revenue from beach tags by \$800,000, what would it cut for \$800,000 to keep the budget in balance, he asked.

See Budget, page B2



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

High winds caused damage all across Cape May County, blowing down the big sign at Lucky Bones Backwater Grille at the entrance to Cape May and doing serious damage to the roof and front of Carney's on Beach Avenue in Cape May. A wind gust of 71 mph was recorded at Middle Thorofare Bridge Monday morning.



Bashaw calls for business interruption program

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Curtis Bashaw, managing partner of Cape Resorts Group, which owns and operates Congress Hall, the Virginia Hotel and Beach Plum Farm, was a guest of "The Story with Martha MacCallum" on Fox News Channel on April 9.

Bashaw said federal loan programs did not go far enough to help maintain the infrastructure needed for small businesses to stay in business. He said it was difficult for Cape Resorts Group to lay off 400 persons.

"We're so grateful that the first round of relief went to them through extended unemployment and expanded unemployment," he told Fox

News.

Small businesses are the soldiers that need to fight on the economic front of this battle, Bashaw said.

He suggested the Paycheck Protection Program (PPE) needed to be extended by about 12 weeks to a total of 20 weeks. Bashaw said businesses could not let their credit be depreciated, so credit scores needed to be held from February ratings until the end of the crisis.

Bashaw also called for an equivalent of a business interruption program.

"Had this been a fire or flood, I would have been insured for capital expenditures such as mortgage principle, property taxes, flood insurance, property insurance," he told

MacCallum.

He said that working capital is needed now. Bashaw suggested the federal government make COVID-19 an insurable item under business interruption and provide working capital. MacCallum noted 80 percent of hotel rooms across the nation are empty. She said Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said hotels could possibly be reopened this summer.

Bashaw said Cape Resorts was getting prepared for a "new normal in hospitality." He said guests might require more space, so outdoor dining capacities were being expanded and more space was being allotted for diners.

Winds blast area

By DAVID NAHAN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Winds up to 71 miles per hour slammed south Jersey Monday morning, damaging multiple properties in Cape May and tearing apart a big storage building at All Action Water Sports in Somers Point, sending the debris flying over the stored wave-runners and neighboring properties.

The winds tore down signs, from the one at Lucky Bones Backwater Grille in Cape May up the one for Bob's Grill by the

Ocean City Boardwalk.

Across New Jersey, State Police Superintendent Pat Callahan, during Gov. Phil Murphy's daily COVID-19 briefing Monday afternoon, said all but five counties in the northwest corner of the state were under a tornado watch. The watch continued until about 6 p.m. Monday, but there were no reports of a tornado in south Jersey.

Christina Rovinski sent video to CBS Philadelphia showing the moments when the high winds took the roof off a big storage shed at

See Wind, page A3

COVID-19 ROUNDUP Sixth death at Victorian Manor Virus hits girl, 11, boy, 14

By DAVID NAHAN
Cape May Star and Wave

As testing has begun for symptomatic residents of Cape May and Atlantic counties, officials are reporting the sixth death of a resident of long-term care facility Victoria Manor in North Cape May and the infection of an 11-year-old girl and 14-year-old boy in Atlantic County, showing that all ages are susceptible to COVID-19.

Across New Jersey, the death toll rose to 2,443 with 64,584 positive cases as of Monday afternoon, according to Gov. Phil Murphy, who said he is working in concert with the region's governors to decide when restrictions can lift and businesses can reopen without causing a "boomerang" effect of a second surge of the unique coronavirus.

In Atlantic County, there were 20 new cases on Easter Sunday, but no new deaths.

In Cape May County Saturday, the local Department of Health reported three new deaths, including two at the Victoria Manor long-term care facility in

North Cape May, where there has been a breakout of the unique coronavirus, infecting residents and staff alike. So far, six residents of the facility have died. On Saturday the department said a 75-year-old female and an 80-year-old male succumbed and on Monday, it reported a 77-year-old woman there had died.

The other death reported Saturday was in Dennis Township. The earliest victim was a resident of Upper Township.

Because there are so many cases at Victoria Manor, Lower Township leads the county with 54 active cases and six deaths. Middle Township has 33 active cases, Ocean City has 11 and Upper Township has 10.

Wildwood and Wildwood Crest have eight cases each, Dennis Township has six and Avalon has five, according to the Department of Health.

"Our deepest sympathy goes out to all the families who have lost loved ones due to the COVID-19 pandemic," Cape May Coun-

See COVID, page B2

SHORE PHYSICIANS GROUP IS OFFERING TELEHEALTH FOR NEW AND CURRENT PATIENTS.

CALL YOUR SPG PROVIDER'S OFFICE FOR AN APPOINTMENT.

Visit ShorePhysiciansGroup.com for provider contact information.

