



House of the week

Real Estate Resource



Hospitals adds outdoor tent

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No new recruits coming to C.M. Coast Guard: More changes

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – The Coast Guard announced April 4 it will graduate 64 new recruits from the eight-week program at Training Center Cape May (TRACEN), but will reschedule shipment of new recruits to boot camp as it adapts to the COVID-19 emergency.

The graduates will be heading to cutters, stations, and other Coast Guard units on the front line of Coast Guard operations. Of the graduates, 58 are active duty and six are reserve members.

All graduating recruits will be provided with travel to their first unit when possible. Those not able to travel immediately due to local COVID-19 concerns around their new unit will remain at TRACEN in the interim. All leave has been cancelled.

The delay in recruit shipping is in place for at least three weeks. Previously scheduled recruits will remain in a delayed-entry status and will work with their local recruiters to reschedule their attendance to basic training once the training center resumes intake of new recruits.

“Out of an abundance of caution, and to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, I have directed the temporary rescheduling of receiving new recruits at Training Center Cape May,” Rear Admiral Brian Penoyer, Force Readiness Command, said. “The health and safety of our personnel is our priority.”

This is the most recent and significant series of precautions the Coast Guard has initiated at TRACEN and other training centers to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 threat, according to a release.

“Some previous measures include: daily medical screening of staff and students to include randomized ‘on-the-spot’ health screenings, roving medical personnel, individually packaged meals to reduce contact, increased cleaning of all facilities after usage, and the reduction of some training events after consultation with medical staff,” stated the release.

There are currently 254 recruits continuing training under these modified conditions.

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John Cooke/Special to the CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Covering up at the post office

A woman seen in the Cape May post office, who wishes to remain anonymous, said “I feel like the Unabomber, what every well-dressed COVID-19 pandemic woman is wearing.”

Businesses worry about lack of summer workers Legislators answer questions on impact of COVID-19 in district

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE – Local business owners voiced concerns during a virtual town hall meeting that residents collecting unemployment, due to the COVID-19 shutdown, may not want to work this summer and noted it appears no J-1 workers from overseas would be available.

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce held a virtual town hall meeting April 2 with 1st District Republican legislators Sen. Michael Testa and Assemblymen Erik Simonsen and Antwan McClellan on the topic of local impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants asked questions

using Zoom via their computer or phone.

Testa said it was not the time for second-home owners to be coming to the county.

“I can tell you that myself and Freeholder Director Thornton have received quite a bit of – for lack of a better term – hate mail, for our position we’ve taken that this is not the time for people to be visiting their second homes in Cape May County,” he said, “but we have to do everything we can to flatten the curve of this nefarious virus.”

Testa noted Cape May and Cumberland counties were at the lowest end of the numbers of infected individuals in the state. He said if residents follow the rules, he was confident the

state would see a decline of infections rather than an incline in the next two weeks.

Simonsen said the legislative office could be reached by phone and was helping residents with unemployment and small business questions. The phone number is (609) 778-2012.

“The sooner we can get on the other side of this curve, the sooner that we can get back to business, so to speak,” he said.

On a question of how well the system was working to file unemployment claims with the state, Testa said the system has been inundated with excessive volume and a time schedule was created to

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COVID-19 26 infected at Victoria Manor Facility is in N. Cape May

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

NORTH CAPE MAY – As the number of COVID-19 cases increased to 99 this week in Cape May County, the Health Department confirmed Monday, April 6, that 15 residents and 11 staff members at Victoria Manor in North Cape May tested positive for the coronavirus.

No deaths have been reported in connection with the outbreak as of Monday morning at the Genesis

healthcare facility located at 3809 Bayshore Road.

“Public health has been preparing for the possibility of outbreaks happening in skilled nursing facilities and other congregate care settings and we have provided clear guidance for facilities in responding and controlling the spread of illness,” said Cape May County Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing Mary Tighe in a press release.

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More cases in area; 86,000 to 509,000 projected in state

By DAVID NAHAN
Cape May Star and Wave

As deaths attributed to the COVID-19 virus topped 1,000 this week across New Jersey, and the state projected up to a half million cases at the peak, Cape May County and Atlantic County are reporting more positive cases and that two local residents have succumbed to the coronavirus.

Across the state, more than 41,000 have been infected and more than a thousand have died, according to the state Department of Health.

One resident of Cape May County died, one a 72-year-old Upper Township woman with underlying health conditions, reported on Saturday, April 4. The Cape May County Department of Health reported a north Jersey resident, who was visiting family in Ocean City, also died, but that fatality statistic may be listed

elsewhere because the person was not a resident of the county.

As of Monday afternoon, there were 99 cases in Cape May county.

The first local death was an Egg Harbor Township man in his late 50s, reported on April 2. So far, that is the only fatality related to COVID-19 in Atlantic County.

Drive-thru testing in Cape May County

Also on Saturday, the Cape May County Department of Health announced it was partnering with the CompleteCare Health Network to open a drive-thru COVID-19 testing site this week. The location is not being disclosed. It will be open one day a week for county residents and first responders who are symptomatic.

At this time, testing will only be for CompleteCare

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Senior facilities around county limit access, protect residents

By BILL BARLOW
Special to the Sentinel

OCEAN CITY – As New Jersey, the nation and the world take unprecedented steps to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff at United Methodist Communities at the Shores and other senior living facilities work to keep life as normal as possible for residents while protecting them from the disease.

That’s meant increasing the already extensive guidelines for cleaning, according to Roberta Voloshin, the marketing and sales director at the facility, and limiting social interaction both within the

facility and with the outside world.

“We’ve definitely increased our cleaning and disinfecting. We are delivering meals to residents in their rooms or apartments,” she said.

While it’s been years since the name of the facility has changed, most in Ocean City continue to think of The Shores by the name it held for decades, Wesley Manor. Typically, most residents at The Shores have an active social life, with many meals eaten in the dining room and classes and events throughout the week. Much of that has been curtailed, including a planned Easter lunch. That is instead going to take place virtu-

ally, with residents able to see each other and interact without gathering.

“We’re taking tons of precautions,” she said. “We’re not allowing visitors, but we’ve expanded our technical capabilities with Skype and Zoom and Facetime.”

The online digital video platforms allow families to virtually visit their loved ones, and residents to interact safely. Staff members help the residents log on and use the virtual systems, which have seen a massive increase in use for business and social interactions as people of all ages isolate because of the virus.

Cape May County’s Crest Haven

Nursing and rehabilitation Center in Middle Township closed to visitors. Aside from staff, the only other people allowed in the building are medical responders and those making deliveries.

“On March 13, we closed the center to outside visitors based on the president’s guidance and the governor’s guidance that this was going to be a national emergency,” Freeholder Jeffrey Pierson said.

The next day county Public Health Coordinator Kevin Thomas recommended all senior facilities take similar steps. According to Pierson, all facilities in Cape May

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