



Girls soccer scores two solid wins to improve to 6-1

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House of the Week

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169th YEAR NO. 39 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2023 \$1.00

MTRAC suggests PILOT to educate Coast Guard kids

Training Center tax-exempt; city residents fund schooling

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The cost for each student from the city attending the Lower Cape May Regional School District of \$137,000 continues to spark the interest of Cape May's Municipal Taxation and Revenue Advisory Committee (MTRAC).

Cape May students represent about 5 percent of the school district's total enrollment, but the city is paying 50 percent of the school district's expenses, Dennis Crowley said Sept. 14 during an MTRAC meeting.

Of the students who attend from Cape May, 27 are connected to the military. He said City Council was asked two years ago to adopt a resolution supporting a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) funding program from the federal government on behalf of Coast Guard Training Center Cape May, which does not pay property taxes.

Crowley said city officials met with U.S. Rep. Jeff Van Drew on the matter but have not heard of any movement on the issue.

"We're also going to try and reach out for informational purposes to the Coast Guard to explain what it is we're doing here and why

it's not a threat to the Coast Guard," Crowley said.

He said many towns want to be a Coast Guard Community but Cape May is the "only town actually paying for that."

According to Crowley, the last available data from October 2022 show Cape May has 58 students in the regional school district while Lower Township has 1,036 and West Cape May 23 students.

The Coast Guard base property represents an assessed valuation of \$235 million, which could generate \$3 million annually in property tax. The PILOT program would involve a yearly payment since the Coast Guard does not pay property taxes but uses city and school district resources.

"I still think we're on solid ground asking for a PILOT program because it's a unique situation and we're the only town I can find that is not getting compensated," he said.

In another issue, the Coast Guard agreed to maintain the planted median strip along Pennsylvania Avenue through an area of base housing but has not done so, generating a complaint from the county, Crowley said.

Cape May loses \$51,911 on summer's Capestock

Mayor says city commonly pays fee to provide seasonal entertainment

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city lost almost \$52,000 on a concert event on the beach called Capestock, a three-day re-creation of Woodstock from Aug. 18-20 featuring tribute bands.

City resident Jules Rauch told City Council on Sept. 19 that he used the Open Public Records Act to obtain financial data for the concert behind Convention Hall.

The lineup featured tribute bands playing the music of Jefferson Airplane; Janis Joplin; The Who; Creedence Clearwater Revival; Santana; Crosby, Stills and Nash; and Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Tickets were priced at \$45 for the Aug. 18 show, \$75 for the Aug. 19 show and \$45 for the Aug. 20 concert. A three-day pass was \$150.

According to the documents, the city paid the bands \$37,000, spent \$6,350 to rent a sound system and \$6,100 for renting fencing. Includ-

ing advertising, the city spent \$63,737 plus police overtime wages of \$2,919, Rauch said.

"The total expenses are just under \$75,000. The revenue, on the other hand, there were 360 tickets sold in three days for a gross revenue of \$22,245," he said. "The project lost \$51,911."

Rauch said the estimated seating capacity for the concerts was 2,250 with a potential revenue of \$123,750. He said 72 complimentary, non-revenue tickets were distributed.

The break-even point required the sale of 1,294 seats, while only 360 seats were sold.

"This is a significant project of its size and content. It needs to be brought before City Council for consideration and evaluation, public discussion of budget and approval. To my knowledge, I did not see that coming before council," Rauch said. "I think we need to answer some of these

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Butterflies get royal treatment



Rachel Shubin/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

Cellular Tracking Technology CEO Michael Lanzone and former director of the Monarch Monitoring Project Mark Garland tag monarch butterflies in front of the crowd Sept. 21 at the Cape May Point Science Center.

Experts tag monarchs using tracker developed locally

By RACHEL SHUBIN
Special to the Star and Wave

CAPE MAY POINT — Under a cloudy sky, a single monarch butterfly fluttered above the crowd gathered to watch the launch of Project Monarch on Sept. 21 at the Cape May Point Science Center.

The butterfly was not part of the tagging demonstration, but simply a passerby.

The CMPSC, in conjunction with Cellular Tracking Technologies (CTT), created the collaborative community science project to leverage the advancement of technology tracking to monitor monarch migration.

The CTT tracker is the smallest transmitter ever put on an organism. Project Monarch Science app users can scan and upload detections and help contribute to monarch conservation science.

During the event, CTT CEO Mi-

chael Lanzone and former director of the Monarch Monitoring Project Mark Garland tagged several butterflies in front of the crowd.

The tiny solar-powered tracking devices weigh only 60 mg, about the same as a grain of rice. The devices transmit at the same frequency as Bluetooth.

According to CTT, the data will allow scientists to track the butterflies' movements in detail never previously imagined. The information will show how they use key stopping points along migratory routes and other pertinent information.

The transmitters were attached with eyelash glue on top of the butterflies' thorax, which scientists say does not affect their flight.

"The eyelash glue is very good at attaching to things with oil," Lanzone said. "As soon as you put a tracking device on an individual, it allows us to track every place it

stops." Event attendees could use the app in the courtyard of the science center, to scan the area and record the first sightings of the tagged butterflies. Apple users can search "Project Monarch Science" and Android users can search "Project Monarch" in the App Store to download.

"All of these monarchs will be able to communicate with the Motus network," Lanzone said. "There is going to be a tower right on top of the building here, which is not up yet. Every butterfly that passes the towers will get recorded."

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System is an international collaborative research network that uses coordinated automated radio telemetry to facilitate research and education on the ecology and conservation of migratory animals.

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Run for the Fallen

Teams of military members embarked Sept. 21 on a 225-mile journey from Sunset Beach to Holmdel to honor every New Jersey service member who died in support of the global war on terrorism. The team stopped at hero markers along the route including the Sandman School, above, and Lower Cape May Regional High School to honor alumni who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Memorial plaques delay bench replacement plan

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — After a suggestion that most of the 370 benches on the Promenade need to be replaced and holders of memorial plaques on the benches would be charged \$1,416 for a new bench, the city reversed course after public outcry.

The city issued a news release to social media Sept. 21 stating it had changed its mind.

At a Sept. 19 City Council meeting, Mayor Zack Mullock said many of the benches on the

Promenade are in disrepair.

"We all know how important this is to so many people, their location that they have the benches, etcetera, etcetera, so please understand right from the beginning that council is very much aware of those things," he said.

Councilwoman Maureen McDade said she was tasked with coming up with a solution that would honor the memories associated with the benches but at the same time make sure they are

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