

County's Hope One van offers options to addicts

By ERIC AVEDESIAN
Cape May Star and Wave

OCEAN CITY — Drug addiction persists in Cape May County, but officials are adopting an outreach approach to help addicts before they become involved in the criminal justice system.

Lt. Joseph Landis formally ran the Guns, Gangs and Narcotics Task Force with the county Prosecutor's Office before switching to Community Outreach, where he helps addicts find the road to recovery.

Landis was raised in the Kensington section of Philadelphia, which he said was "riddled" with drugs. He said his father is a "stone-cold heroin addict" and he buried two cousins last year from overdoses.

"If you stay positive and have some positive drive in your household for your kids and grandkids, that can change," Landis said, adding his mother was a positive influence. "Neither me nor my sister are heroin addicts, alcoholics. We have our problems in life, but we got to where we are because I had that positive to over-counter the negative of my dad."

Landis and Cape May County Prosecutor Jeffrey Sutherland spoke with 30 residents Jan. 26 at the Ocean City Free Public Library.

Landis said education and community outreach works. Last year Cape May County had 206 overdoses. Of those, only one victim was under the age of 18, Landis said.

"I've been to every single

school in this county and I beat into these kids' heads from middle school to high school that these drugs are going to kill you. Opiates are going to kill you. Heroin is going to kill you. If you try this one time you're going to become addicted and it's going to be an almost non-existent end to this road," Landis said.

Landis said parents and grandparents should talk to their children and grandchildren about the dangers of drugs.

"The drug business is real. Don't underestimate drug dealers. They're very smart businesspeople," Landis said, noting drug dealers first offer free samples. "The first one's always free, but the next time it's not going to be free."

Sutherland said the county is pursuing drug addiction in the wake of the opioid crisis.

"Somebody who's addicted to drugs now is recognized by law enforcement across the board as an illness that has to be addressed," Sutherland said. "Technically are you a criminal if you have an illegal substance and you're taking a substance? You are because it's an illegal substance, but the fact that you're addicted to it is not a crime."

One way law enforcement is fighting addiction is the Hope One van, a community outreach vehicle funded by money seized from drug dealers. The van is staffed with mental health and substance abuse counselors who provide information, resources and access to treatment.

Landis said several orga-

nizations partnered with the county Prosecutor's Office for Hope One: the South Jersey AIDS Alliance, Cape Counseling, Cape Assist, Christians United for Recovery and Cape Addiction Recovery Services.

Landis opened the Hope One van to the public at the library and explained the van's features and operations.

"We're there simply to provide a service. We want to get these people off the streets before we either have to arrest them and then it costs taxpayers money to put them in jail, or we end up going to the hospital because somebody overdosed and died and we have to go to the family and say 'You need to come down and identify your daughter or son or uncle or mom,'" Landis said.

Addicts can receive immediate help from recovery coaches in the van, Landis said, adding three addicts were successfully transported to recovery centers.

He said staff provides training to administer Narcan, an opioid antidote that temporarily reverses the effects of an overdose. The van also has a recharging center for cellphones and a TV for educational presentations.

The Hope One van is scheduled for the following locations from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.:

Feb. 12 at EtCetera Shop, Dennisville/Court House Road, Cape May Court House; Feb. 26 at Social Services, 4005 Route 9 South, Rio Grande; March 12 at

ACME Shopping Center, 3845 Bayshore Road, North Cape May; and March 26 at ACME Shopping Center, 6212 Landis Ave., Sea Isle City.

Sutherland said law enforcement has other proactive initiatives for combating drug abuse. He said any unwanted or expired prescription medications can be disposed of in special boxes at local police stations.

"It's really important to attack this from all fronts: education, removing the prescription drug that could become an illicit drug, and to get people in the system out and make them contribute, and deal with those that deserve punishment," Sutherland said.

In 2017, 59 people died from drug-related overdoses in Cape May County, compared to 32 drug-related overdose deaths in 2016 and 2015, according to state data.

Narcan was administered 249 times in Cape May County in 2017, 226 times in 2016 and 169 times in 2015.

Sutherland said the county's "recovery court" also helps addicts get treatment.

According to Sutherland, somebody arrested with a drug addiction can plead guilty and go through an extensive program of treatment based on his or her level of addiction. The person is tested regularly for drugs and undergoes counseling.

"It's a process to try and get people out of the cycle and get them back in society," Sutherland said.

Cape May County also has

a veterans diversion program that took effect in 2017 to help veterans arrested for theft, assault or other petty crimes. The veterans qualifying for the program usually suffer from some type of post-traumatic stress disorder, Sutherland said, adding veterans can apply for the program and participate in counseling. Once they complete the six-month program, they receive a certificate and their record is wiped clean.

Sutherland said the veterans diversion program

recently held its first graduation ceremony.

"We want to get to the people before they're picked up by the criminal justice system. Even in our community we've had drug-related overdose deaths not that long ago in Ocean City," Sutherland said, adding people get addicted because they started taking painkillers after an injury or have mental health issues and have been arrested before. "We're trying to get to those people and get them treatment."



FISH MARKET

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH
thru SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH

SCOTTISH SALMON
(Organically farm raised)
\$10.95/LB.

SHRIMP CHOWDER
\$5.95 PINT

TAKE OUT SPECIALS

FRIED SHRIMP PLATTER

Served with baked potato or french fries & cole slaw (regular price \$12)

\$6.95 EACH

Good Only Wednesday, February 6, 2019 at the Take-Out counter



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH
thru SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9TH

FRIED OYSTER PLATTER
served with baked macaroni and cheese & stewed tomatoes
\$12.95

BROILED OR FRIED STUFFED SHRIMP WITH CRAB MEAT
served with baked potato or french fries & coleslaw
\$12.95

APPETIZER SPECIAL

CLAMS CASINO
\$7.95

BUY 1 GET 1 FREE SEAFOOD COMBO PLATTER

Good for Sunday, February 10, 2019 ONLY!

BROILED or FRIED SEAFOOD COMBINATION FILET OF FISH DEVEILED CLAM, SHRIMP, SCALLOPS
served with baked potato or french fries & cole slaw - \$14.95

Phone Ahead to Order

609-884-3064

The Lobster House

FISHERMAN'S WHARF in CAPE MAY

www.thelobsterhouse.com

Frozen pipes in shore homes preventable

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — It happens every year — a neighbor or passerby spots water running out of an unoccupied house and reports it. Fire departments and local plumbers spend a substantial amount of time addressing broken water pipes during cold snaps at the shore, where many homes are empty all winter.

A broken water pipe can flood a home, causing expensive damage. According to State Farm, a 1/8-inch crack in a pipe can spew as much as 250 gallons of water a day, causing flooding, serious structural damage and

Budget

Continued from Page A1

fire dispatch and the public safety building, Ridgway said. Wildwood Crest recently joined county dispatch, which will decrease Lower Township's dispatch fees in the future. He said utility costs at the new building are also decreasing.

the immediate potential for mold.

The problem is fully preventable, according to plumber Harry Sundstrom. One solution is to keep the house sufficiently heated to at least 55 degrees or hire a plumber to winterize the home before freezing temperatures occur.

"Just turning off the water won't do it," he said.

To winterize a home, water needs to be drained from the water heater and pipes using compressed air. Antifreeze can be added to toilets and sink and tub drains.

Sundstrom noted the pressure inside a frozen pipe can rise to 40,000 pounds per square inch, which no pipe

can endure. If the power goes off, shutting down the furnace, absentee homeowners are pretty much out of luck, Sundstrom said. Having a house-sitting service check on a home is helpful but they are not plumbers, he said.

When very cold weather is forecast, Sundstrom advises leaving a small stream of water — about the size of a pencil — running from faucets. He said a slow drip may not be enough. Flowing water is much harder to freeze, Sundstrom said.

Opening cabinet doors under sinks is advised. He advises turning off outdoor showers no later than mid-October and disconnecting

garden hoses. Outdoor showers, detached garages or sheds with water are often trouble spots, he said. If a leak is discovered, a homeowner should turn off the water at the main shutoff valve and call a plumber.

Pipes running through outside walls, attics and crawl spaces are all vulnerable, especially if there are cracks or openings that allow cold air to flow across the pipes.

If a home is unoccupied in winter, Sundstrom advises hiring a plumber to have it winterized. The worst thing a homeowner can do is turn off the water and turn off the heat without further preparation, he said.

There was no increase in the local purpose tax rate in 2018. In 2017, township council approved 1.8-cent

tax rate increase.

A public hearing for the budget is scheduled for council's meeting at 7 p.m. March

18 at Township Hall. Copies of the budget are available on the township website as well as in the Clerk's Office.

Attention: Dog & Cat Owners of Cape May City, Cape May Point, West Cape May And Cape May County

ANNUAL FREE RABIES CLINIC

Tuesday, March 5th - 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Cape May City Fire Department Building
712 Franklin Street, Cape May City

All dogs must be on a leash and cats must be in a pet carrier. No licenses will be sold at this free clinic. You must purchase dog licenses from your Municipal Clerks Office during regular business hours.



TO GOD BE THE GLORY

THE HARRIET TUBMAN MUSEUM

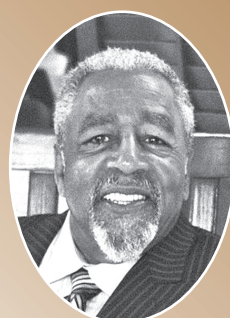
~ OPENING IN 2020 ~

at The MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH featuring The Reverend Davis Exhibits

Thank you to

FENWICK ARCHITECTS
SJ FENWICK ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS LLC

who are creating a design for the renovation of the parsonage building. We are blessed by their generosity and enthusiasm for this project!



Reverend Davis



The mission of the Harriet Tubman Museum is to preserve the historic parsonage of The Macedonia Baptist Church and create a permanent exhibit honoring the life and work of Harriet Tubman and other abolitionists in Cape May, New Jersey.

To Contribute to the Harriet Tubman Museum, please send your tax deductible donation to PO BOX 2385, Cape May, NJ 08204