



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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EAGLE SCOUT SALUTES ALL VETERANS

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Lower Township Council awards itself a pay raise

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — In a 3-2 vote, the Republican-dominated Lower Township Council voted Monday to award each member a \$3,000 raise.

Mayor Michael Beck and Deputy Mayor Norris Clark, both independents, voted against the raises. Beck and Clark's terms end Dec. 31.

"I've been on 16 years and I've never voted for a pay increase and I won't do that tonight," Beck said. "I really think it should be postponed until the next council comes in because they're the people that will benefit from this."

Township Manager Jim Ridgway said the resolution called for a \$3,000 across-the-board raise for mayor and council beginning Jan. 1. He said council salaries are supposed to be evaluated every two years.

Ridgway said the last time the matter had been addressed was 11 years ago. He said Lower Township paid the mayor and council less

than many other towns. Council until 2009 was eligible to receive benefits but none since that time, Ridgway said. He said the cost of benefits now would be half the salary of council members.

Beck said the salary was never a reason for him to serve on council.

"I was here in the debacle in 2005 when they raised the salaries in the backroom one night," he said. "We went from \$7,800 I believe to \$12,000."

He said the resolution would take their salary to \$15,000.

"In 11 years, you have basically gone from \$7,800 to \$15,000," Beck said.

He said that figure represented a 100 percent increase in salary. Beck said he did not care what councilmen were paid in other towns.

"If I was still making the same amount of money that I made when I came on in 1998, I don't care," he said.

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John Cooke/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

Strolling carolers make their way around Congress Hall in Cape May during its tree lighting and concert Dec. 2.

Sights, sounds of the season



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Above left, Santa gets a lift by a firetruck in the West Cape May Christmas parade; above right, children from Star of the Sea Catholic Church; above, the Durning String Band; at left, members of the Joanne Reagan Dance Studio.

MacLeod to retire effective Dec. 31

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Manager Bruce MacLeod tendered his letter of retirement Nov. 29, according to City Councilman Shaine Meier. MacLeod's final day will be Dec. 31, the same day his contract expires.

MacLeod said his retirement papers have been in the possession of the governing body for several months. He served in local government for more than 42 years, of which 37 years

were with the city of Cape May.

MacLeod's retirement will necessitate replacement of the city manager position but also that of certified tax collector, as he served in both positions.

Former Mayor Jerry Gaffney said MacLeod was an asset to the city and was dedicated in his work.

MacLeod, 63, was appointed city manager in October 2008 after serving as interim city

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MACLEOD

Sonic boom to blame for shaking, Navy says

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Residents from Cape May Point to Harvey Cedars reported rattling doors and windows and hearing a rumbling sound at about 4:26 p.m. Dec. 1. While residents suspected an earth tremor, the U.S. Geological Survey reported no earthquakes at that hour.

The rumbling and shaking is being blamed on a military aircraft offshore from Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md. A news

release was provided by NAS Patuxent River Public Affairs Officer Patrick Gordon.

"An aircraft out of Naval Air Station Patuxent River was off the coast of southern New Jersey on a test flight around the time of 4 p.m. Dec. 1. The aircraft was a Joint Strike Fighter on a test flight and was cleared to go supersonic."

The Department of Defense manages airspace used for military testing that begins about three

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Members of the Lower Cape May Regional High School choir sing during Cape May's tree-lighting ceremony.



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

The Righteous Ringers perform during the tree-lighting ceremony in Lower Township. See more photos on A2.

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