



## HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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## BOY INJURED WHEN CAR HITS VILLAS HOUSE

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# Drug addict: I have to dedicate life to sobriety

## Heroin user marked his year of recovery by making key choices

**Editor's note:** The subject's name was changed to protect his identity.

By **KRISTEN KELLEHER**  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COUNTY — Brendan, 23, marked the successes of his first year of sobriety by something he didn't do: he did not accept a prescription for Percocet a doctor wanted to give him when he broke his ankle.

He deleted the phone numbers of at least 12 drug dealers he had on his phone.

He also found a way to handle

those who offered him drugs when he returned home from a sober living facility. Brendan, who has a quick temper, said he does not get angry. Instead, he asks if they want to go to a meeting.

"It's usually the last time I hear from them," he said.

Over time, Brendan has learned to de-escalate his temper, when to remove himself from situations, how to be grateful and to pay attention to his thoughts.

Some of sobriety is a mindset, a mental discipline which keeps him moving forward.

The other side of that coin is that a lapse in mental strength can



make him an addict again. That worries him.

"You relapse well before you take your first drink, smoke," he said. "That still scares the crap out of me."

In his early days of recovery, his unconscious, sleeping thoughts

scared him. They were a source of temptation.

He said he was "plagued" with dreams in which he got high.

Brendan recalled one dream which occurred during his second and most recent attempt at sober living.

Though he did nothing, he woke feeling guilty.

Later in the day, he went to a meeting and spoke to his sponsor, who assured him the dream was a good thing. It was a sign of healing.

Healing, for Brendan, will be a lifelong process.

He attends four to seven meet-

ings each week. He found religion. He changed his "mental picture of the world."

"I dedicate my life to it. I have to," he said.

Today, he has a hard-earned sense of self-awareness. He sees his substance use as "running from something."

He characterizes himself by a sense of general discomfort and anxiety.

In crowds, he feels alone. He is introverted and "uncomfortable naturally," he said.

"I feel like it's that way for a

See **Drug addict**, Page A4

# Retests rule out water as source of elevated lead

Fountains, faucets found at fault

By **JACK FICHTER**  
Cape May Star and Wave

COLD SPRING — Earlier in the month, during routine testing, elevated lead in drinking water was discovered in specific locations in Lower Township's Maud Abrams and David C. Douglass Memorial schools.

Water fountains were turned off and bottled water was provided to students and staff. Retest results showed the elevated lead was from fixtures and not from the school's water supply, according to Superintendent Jeff Samaniego.

In accordance with the Department of Education

regulations, schools implement immediate remedial measures for any drinking water outlet with a result greater than the action level of 15 µg/l (parts per billion [ppb]).

On Jan. 31, Coastal Environmental contacted the Lower Township Elementary School District indicating that three of the 45 samples taken at Memorial School tested above the lead action level established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for lead in drinking water, and that 12 of the 42 samples taken at Maud Abrams tested above

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# Detroit murder suspect captured in Cape May

CAPE MAY — Members of the U.S. Marshal's Regional Task Force, Cape May County Prosecutor's Office, Cape May City Police Department and Lower Township Police Department initiated an investigation Feb. 10 resulting in the apprehension of Russell Charles Govett, 38, a fugitive from justice from Michigan and a suspect



GOVETT

See **Murder suspect caught**, Page A3



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

This phase of remediation includes removing shallow soils down to 3.5 feet below ground surface in upland and wetland areas of the former manufactured gas plant on Lafayette and St. John streets in Cape May.

# JCP&L contractor removing soil at uplands, wetlands along creek

CAPE MAY — While little can be seen of Jersey Central Power & Light's remediation activities other than dump trucks coming and going from the city and glimpses of machinery behind covered fencing along Lafayette Street, major work is taking place in wetlands along Cape Island Creek.

From 1853 to 1937, a manufactured gas plant burned coal to provide Cape May with gas for heating, cooking and lighting. In the process, benzene, naphthalene and

other chemicals were left underground.

This phase of remediation includes removing shallow soils down to 3.5 feet below ground surface in upland and wetlands areas of the site. Some soil is being dewatered in a tent structure near St. John Street. The soil is being transported off the site in dump trucks.

Work scheduled for this week: complete installation and commence operation of temporary water treatment system, continue dewatering activities within the

area of excavation to allow for removal of impacted soils and continue excavation of impacted soils within the wetlands and transfer of material to the sprung structure (tent) for continued dewatering and stabilization.

In addition: continue load out of stabilized material from within the sprung structure and spoils associated with slurry from the Secondary Containment Wall, continue backfilling of excavated areas to limit the extent of open excavation requiring dewatering,

commence construction of the permanent treatment system building foundation.

According to JCP&L Project Manager Anna Sullivan, continuous perimeter air monitoring is under way as well as continuing to apply dust and odor mitigation measures, such as odor suppressant foaming, as needed.

The remediation work is scheduled to continue until Memorial Day. In addition, the project includes the construction of a water-filtration facility on site.

# Project would shore up Delaware Avenue

By **JACK FICHTER**  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is considering a project to stem erosion on the southern side of Cape May Harbor and prevent damage to Delaware Avenue and a sewer line.

At a Feb. 7 City Council meeting, Gretchen Whitman, director of the Nature Center of Cape May, said

the Army Corps of Engineers in conjunction with the county and city of Cape May are examining the possibility of improvements along the southern shoreline of Cape May Harbor, in particular, erosion control.

Whitman said Hurricane Sandy as well as late year's Winter Storm Jonas produced much erosion along Delaware Avenue. The Army Corps study is currently in the public review

period, she said. It is available online at [nap.usace.army.mil](http://nap.usace.army.mil). Put "Delaware Avenue" in the search box to go to the report.

One option is to do nothing, but that puts a sewer line running along Delaware Avenue in peril of being breached plus the integrity of the road with continued erosion, Whitman said.

She said the Army Corp's preferred plan is installing

rip-rap along the shoreline. Whitman said old concrete was placed along the harbor in the 1960s and 1970s that the Army Corps would remove and replace with stone rip-rap. Some sections of the harbor have rip-rap, she said.

After placing the rip-rap, the Army Corps would backfill with dredge spoils and plant 2 acres of Spartina

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The project would add stone rip-rap along the southern side of Cape May Harbor to help prevent erosion.



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