



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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WEST CAPE MAY SENDS FIRE TRUCK BACK

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Expert questions scope of JCP&L project

Geology professor says contamination likely much more widespread

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Allen Hatheway, who is recognized as one of the world's foremost experts on cleanup of former manufactured-gas plant sites, is questioning whether the remediation on city-owned property addresses the entire problem.

Hatheway, a geologist and engineer in practice since 1961, is author of the book "Remediation of

Former Manufactured Gas Plant Sites and Other Coal Tar Sites."

He served as an international consultant on site characterization, mitigation, environmental remediation, geotechnical trouble-shooting and general forensics, particularly former manufactured-gas plants and other coal-tar sites since 2000. Hatheway was a professor of Geological Engineering, School of Mines and Metallurgy, at the University of Missouri-Rolla.

From 1853 to 1937, the 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.

Through a number of mergers, JCP&L inherited the Lafayette Street site that includes the former Vance's Bar property, the city's dog park and property on St. Johns Street, all the future site of a city park.

Remediation plans call for the

installation of a vertical barrier around the perimeter of the site extending 55 feet underground. Groundwater will be pumped and filtered until it meets DEP standards.

While Hatheway said the procedure about to be undertaken for JCP&L should be sufficient for the Lafayette Street site, it is highly likely more hazardous material lurks underneath nearby properties. He said every manufactured-gas plant (MGP) had one or more

dumps on site or within blocks of the site.

Material dumped along waterways

Hatheway said the clarification process used at the Cape May plant would have used cool water to get tar particles out of the gas. He said each plant had a dumpsite, most often located along

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Deborah McGuire/Special to the CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

A birdwatcher enjoys the serenity of a quiet day at Flynn's Pond at the Cox Hall Creek Wildlife Management Area at Bayshore Road and Shawmount Avenue in Villas, formerly known as Ponderlodge golf course and, before that, Beer World.

GOING BACK TO NATURE

Former Ponderlodge deemed a success as open space, habitat

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Gone are the golf carts, clubhouse, lodge building and mansion. The only birdies now on the property once known as the Ponderlodge are in the trees.

Cox Hall Creek Wildlife Management Area, located off Bayshore Road and Shawmount Avenue, has become a giant nature trail for residents and visitors since its grand opening in 2011.

The plan was to take a defunct golf course and turn it into an area for the public to enjoy. The state Department of Environmental

Protection (DEP) Division of Fish and Wildlife wanted the property to revert to a natural state, letting trees grow on the former fairways and frogs inhabit former water traps.

In March 2006, the state Green Acres program purchased the 235-acre property from bankruptcy court for \$8.4 million. The property had once been the playground of Billy Pflaumer, former owner of Schmidt Brewing Co. of Philadelphia. He called the property "Beer World." When it opened as a golf course, he renamed the property "Pon-

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Deborah McGuire/Special to the CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Former golf cart paths have been converted into walking trails at Cox Hall Creek Wildlife Management Area.

Ferry traffic up, new buildings in the works at county airport

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

NORTH CAPE MAY — The Cape May-Lewes Ferry recorded its second consecutive year of passenger and vehicle traffic growth in 2015. Last year, the ferry service transported 266,149 vehicles and 782,241 passengers, compared with 262,010 vehicles and 767,209 passengers who used the Delaware Bay service in 2014. The vehicle and passenger numbers have increased nearly 4 percent and more than 5 percent respectively since 2013.

"We're pleased with the news and I want to thank our customers for their loyalty and willingness to travel with us," said Heath Gehrke, director of ferry operations. "Our employees are focused on wowing our customers every day."

Gehrke said he was particularly pleased with 2015 results.

"Last year, we canceled some 32 crossings due to severe ice conditions in the Delaware Bay," he said. "With that, and higher traffic in 2014 due to our 50th anniversary, we knew it would be a challenge to beat our year-over-year numbers. The results are a testament to our employees' hard work and dedication."

According to Rhona Bronson, director of marketing, the ferry's digital marketing efforts were also a factor.

"Travel and hospitality marketing is increasingly digital as customers go to mobile and online sources for research and self-serve booking. Through a variety of digital tools, we have developed channels that reach close to a quarter-million customers with ideas for visiting the bay and using the ferry to enrich their experience."

Ferry service officials also attributed the

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Man wanted in armed robbery at North Cape May bank still at large

NORTH CAPE MAY — Law-enforcement officers with the Lower Township police, county Prosecutor's Office and FBI are continuing to investigate the armed robbery of Crest Savings Bank at 3306 Bayshore Road that took place at 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 25.

Upon arrival of police, bank employees stated a male wearing a ski mask and holding a dark-colored handgun entered the bank at 1:30 p.m. and demanded

money. After obtaining an undetermined amount of cash, the male fled across Bayshore Road and into a wooded area. The suspect is described as a white or Hispanic male about 5 feet, 7 inches tall, weighing about 145 pounds and wearing all dark clothing.

Residents reported seeing a man running near Villa Woods condos as well as in a wooded area. Beginning at 3:10 p.m., Lower Township police had closed Bayshore

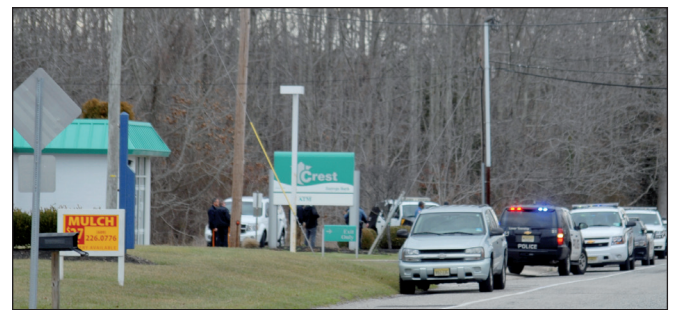
Road between Breakwater Road and Fire Lane for several hours as a search for the suspect continued.

Lower Township police with assistance from Delaware River and Bay Authority police, Cape May County Sheriff's Department K-9 unit, Cape May County Prosecutor's Office and a helicopter from the State Police searched wooded areas from Bayshore Road to Cape Woods to Mickel's Run.

According to a news re-

lease, a search of Kechem-eche, Cape Woods, Mickel's Run and Schooner Landing were unsuccessful in locating the suspect.

Lower Township police are asking anyone who has any information about the incident to notify the department at (609) 886-2711. Texts may be sent anonymously by texting TIP LTPD followed by your message to 888777, or go to the Lower Township police website and submit a tip.



Robert Newkirk/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

Police work at the scene of an armed robbery Thursday at Crest Savings Bank in North Cape May.

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