



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

Real Estate Resource



LOWER LAUDS DUO FOR SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER

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Containment wall at gas plant site facing delay

Soil testing holding up remediation work on Lafayette Street

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The first phase of work on contamination left behind underground by a former manufactured gas plant off St. Johns and Lafayette streets was scheduled to be completed by March 22 but may be behind schedule as the remediation team waits for the results of a soil sample sent for testing, according to City Manager Bruce MacLeod.

At a March 15 City Council meeting, MacLeod said an onsite meeting was held March 10 that included the city

administration, members of Public Works, police and fire personnel, Jersey Central Power and Light personnel and Northstar engineers, the entity handling the remediation work.

On the previous day, a large one-pass trencher had arrived on site that will allow the installation of an underground containment wall "in a significantly shorter period of time than was originally forecast," MacLeod said. The work was originally projected to take 12 to 18 months.

MacLeod said once the containment wall installation process begins, the city has agreed to allow the work to

continue on consecutive days including two Saturdays and a Sunday to enable Northstar to complete it in a continuous flow in a duration of seven to 10 days.

He said the containment wall work should be completed by March 22. MacLeod said the containment barrier would be 3 feet wide, about 55 feet deep and approximately 1,125 feet in rectangular length.

During the seven to 10 days while installation of the containment barrier is taking place, one to two dump

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

The one-pass trencher seen above will allow for the installation of an underground containment wall in seven to 10 days instead of the 12 to 18 months originally anticipated.

North Cape May man dies in crash



David Nahan/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

A State Police trooper investigates the scene of the crash that killed Anthony Westcott, 26, of North Cape May, on Tuesday, March 22, on the Garden State Parkway.

By CRAIG D. SCHENCK
Cape May Star and Wave

UPPER TOWNSHIP — A North Cape May man was killed Tuesday when his vehicle left the road and struck trees in the median on the

Garden State Parkway.

Anthony Westcott, 26, of Bayshore Road, was pronounced dead at the scene after his white Ford pickup left the northbound lane, State Police said. It was unclear what caused

the crash.

State Police spokesman Trooper Lonnie Peele said authorities were notified at 6:54 a.m. that a crash had occurred in the northbound lanes of the parkway. A passing motorist reported

the accident.

Upon arrival at the scene, authorities and emergency medical service personnel from Upper Township found the truck had left the roadway and entered the tree line.

City manager says public notified of dangers on beach

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Manager Bruce MacLeod addressed comments made in a letter to the mayor and City Council by the Taxpayers Association of Cape May concerning public safety and sharp drop-offs on city beaches, noting he wanted the public to be aware of steps the city has taken to promote beach safety.

The Taxpayers Association stated "each one of the family rentals holds the hopes of a great vacation and the promise of sun and fun on the beach. Sadly, these vacations can be spoiled by a beach injury, some very serious." The association asked what could be done as a community to help spread the word about potential beach injury. It stated the mayor had set up a committee, yet no action had been taken.

At a March 15 City Council

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Signs warn beachgoers of the dangers of swimming in the ocean.

Kids' art may aid plight of shorebirds

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — There's more than one way to get a message across to the public. Signs with stern warnings send one message, but imagine the impact of a sign made by children featuring artwork of nature as seen through their eyes.

At Lower Township Council's meeting Monday, Deputy Mayor Norris Clark said there were many signs at beach entrances along the bay, all of which were made by adults. He said young people from Cape May County made signs to deliver an important message for people enjoying Delaware Bay beaches.

The beaches of Villas draw visitors but also birds known as red knots for an annual visit to feed on horseshoe crabs eggs and rest before flying to the Arctic Circle. Horseshoe crabs come out of the bay to lay eggs on the beach at the same time the red knots

arrive from South America.

The largest concentration of rufa red knots is found in May on Delaware Bay beaches, where the birds stop to gorge themselves on the eggs of spawning horseshoe crabs; a spectacle drawing thousands of bird-watchers to the area. In just a few days, the birds nearly double their weight to prepare for the final leg of their long journey to the Arctic. The red knot population has shown a serious decline in recent years.

Laura Chamberlin, program coordinator of Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, made a request of council to place signs made by children at beach entrances.

For a few weeks each May, some beaches in Villas are closed to allow the red knots to feed and rest.

"We want to take those restrictions and turn them into a positive light," she said. "We also want to cre-

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Laura Chamberlin, of the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, asks Lower Township Council to allow the organization to erect signs at beach entrances.

Cape May OKs budget with zero tax increase

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council approved the city's 2016 municipal budget March 15 with no increase in the local purpose tax rate.

City Manager Bruce MacLeod's initial budget proposed a .7-cent increase in the property tax rate. Mayor Edward Mahaney said the increase equaled \$225,000. Premium money was taken from bond sales and funds leftover in open bond issues where projects came in under cost and put back in the budget to produce a zero tax increase, he said.

During public comment, former mayor Jerry Gaffney stated on the revenue

side of the budget, it appeared the city probably had the biggest surplus in its history. Mahaney said \$3.8 million in surplus. Gaffney noted the 2016 budget used \$2.1 million in surplus funds. Auditor Leon Costello said \$1.7 million was left in surplus. MacLeod confirmed the city's surplus funds were at an all-time high.

Gaffney asked about a reserve of \$158,000 in the budget to pay debt service. Costello said that was revenue received in prior years only to be used to pay debt service.

"We had an increase in debt service because we're paying off some bond anti-

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