



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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WIDE OPEN SPACES DREW WINEMAKER TOWARD FARMING

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Airport business park ready for takeoff?

DRBA finally breaks ground on new commercial building in Lower Twp.

By CAROL R. EMMENS
Special to the Star and Wave

ERMA — “Cape May Airport is a part of the community,” said Stephen Williams, Delaware River and Bay Authority director of airports.

Williams, himself a pilot, said he understood that a local airport is much more than a place where a pilot takes off and lands. It is “the front door to the community,” which makes the groundbreaking for a new building at the

airport June 8 a key component to creating jobs that will add to the economic well-being of the county. The new building will house light industrial and commercial businesses. Williams described light industry as companies that do not utilize heavy machinery and do not “drain natural resources.”

The new building, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2016, will have 15,000 square feet and will cost \$1.9 million. There will be two 1,500-square-

foot units and one 3,000-square-foot unit, and the rest of the building will be “configured to the needs of the businesses,” said Victor Ferzetti, DRBA chief financial officer. He noted that all the existing units at the airport were rented and there was a “need for more space for businesses and that demand will drive where we go from here.”

“We have a number of commercial business prospects who have expressed interest in leasing space,” Ferzetti added.

The rents start at \$1,200 a month.

After decades of stagnation, Williams noted that the new construction is “the culmination of small steps” and he praised the contributions to the airport that have resulted from the successes of the Flight Deck Diner, the award-winning Cape May Brewing Co. and the Naval Air Station Wildwood Aviation Museum.

Lower Township Mayor Michael Beck noted a “sea change six years ago” when the county,

DRBA and others began to work together to develop the airport and to make it an asset, primarily because “people needed jobs.” The businesses at the airport “sow the seeds for employment,” he said.

According to the state Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Cape May County has the highest unemployment rate in the state at 11.1 percent, which is due in part to the casino closings

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Kim Royster/Special to the CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Safety panel: Expert input needed on beach injuries

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Beach Safety Committee member Dennis DeSatnick is questioning whether the committee is not just “going in circles” trying to find a solution to a beach slope blamed for bathers’ injuries in the surf zone.

At a June 13 meeting, DeSatnick complained that a report of Cape May’s surf-related injuries was not presented to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the November 2015 meeting. He said he continues to request a representative from the Department of Protection or the Army Corps at-

CMBP lifeguards teach children keys to staying safe on the strand.
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tend a committee meeting.

He said no one on the committee is an expert on beach slopes or injuries.

“We’re not coming up with the answer as to what’s causing these injuries in the surf zone,” DeSatnick said.

Committee member Jack Wichterman, a former deputy mayor, said he sat in meetings for years with the

Army Corps and DEP. “I don’t think anybody has a clue of what’s finally going to be done to correct the problem,” he said.

Wichterman said the city has heard different theories of what is causing surf zone injuries but was no closer to solving the problem. He said it was a matter of “guess work” on the part of the DEP and Army Corps.

DeSatnick said he has been told meeting after meeting the Army Corps and DEP were on top of the matter but that he has seen no evidence to support that claim. He said professionals are needed to conduct more

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Hundreds Escape the Cape

The 4th annual Escape the Cape Triathlon drew 1,750 athletes from 41 states June 5 who leapt from the deck of the MV Delaware, swam ashore and biked through the beautiful vineyards and back roads of the lower cape before running to the finish line. Winners included Brandon Hontz, 18, of West Chester, Pa., and Ly-Lan McCarthy, 35, of Rumson in the Sprint division and Nikos Phelps, 33, of Harrisburg, Pa., and Jenny Lofaro, 29, of Gladwyne, Pa., in the International division.



Lower Township sees more building permits, violations

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — After reviewing the first-quarter performances of Lower Township departments, Township Manager Jim Ridgway said the township is winning more tax appeals and writing more code enforcement violations.

He said according to Tax Assessor Jennifer Dowe, the township in 2015 lost \$1.5 million in ratables due to 64 tax appeals that went unchallenged. Ridgway said since

hiring Dowe, the township has won 25 of 27 tax appeals in 2016, a ratable loss of only \$369,000.

Ridgway said under the direction of Tax Collector Susan Jackson, 251 properties went to tax sale a few weeks ago with 247 purchased. Total charges collected were \$254,000.

Code Enforcement Coordinator Walt Fiore wrote 241 violations in the first quarter, up from 98 violations in the first quarter of 2015, according to Ridgway. Trash and

debris led with 95 violations, followed by 62 miscellaneous and zoning violations.

Ridgway said Grants Coordinator Colleen Crippen has reported thus far in 2016, grants received are over the \$1 million mark. He said all applications have been filed for the Small Cities Housing Program, which will help restore the Judge Nathaniel Foster House.

The township’s Building and Construction Office is up

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Sea Tow offering loaner life jackets

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

SCHALLENGER’S LANDING — Sea Tow Cape May is offering boaters a free loaner life jacket if they come up short supplying each of their passengers with one.

Capt. Jack Moran and Sea Tow Cape May have opened a Life Jacket Loaner Stand at the Spicers Creek Boat Ramp in the Lucky Bones restaurant parking lot.

At a June 6 Lower Township Council meeting, Councilman Erik Simonsen thanked Moran for opening the stand and thanked Lucky Bones proprietor David Craig for making the area for the stand available.

The stand holds life jackets provided by the Sea Tow Foundation. Boaters may borrow the life jackets to replace missing or damaged life jackets or use for extra guests on board their boats. The life jackets are avail-

able in a variety of sizes, including children’s sizes, which is useful because the U.S. Coast Guard requires all children under 13 years of age to wear life jackets when a boat is underway.

“All boaters should have the right number of usable life jackets on board. But in case they come up short, they’ll have the peace of mind of knowing they can borrow them from our new

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WINE FLIGHTS HAVE LANDED

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