



House of the Week

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'Allergist's Wife' a comedic look at midlife crises

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Lear shares progress at helm with chamber

Cites committee assignments, removal of abandoned boat, fire inspection efforts

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city is working toward taking back fire inspections from the state and getting a sunken boat removed from Cape May Harbor, according to Mayor Chuck Lear.

When Lear delivered his first State of the City address Jan. 1, he had been in office only for a few minutes. On June 13, Lear delivered a State of the City address to the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Cape May following six

months in office.

He apologized for not having information on the city's website about paving of Beach Avenue by the county during June.

"We're hoping to get it over with before everybody gets here," Lear said.

He reported the state of the city is good, promising and hopeful. Lear said he routinely meets with council members to understand their views and concerns.

"Each council member has also taken a responsibility as a liaison to various boards and commissions,"

Lear said.

He said the city is drafting plans to reclaim responsibility for fire inspection, now operated by the state, something the city handled in the past. He said the city has heard a number of requests to bring fire inspections under local control.

"We agree and we are working on an ordinance to do just that," Lear said. "It is certainly in the best interests of city residents to have a uniform fire safety act enforced locally to ensure consistent provision for services for the health, safety and welfare of the residents,

visitors and businesses," Lear said.

The city arranged for one of two abandoned boats in Cape May Harbor to be removed from the shoreline and is working on removing a second boat, he said.

Lear said Pastor Jeff Elliott has agreed to shepherd fundraising to garner resources to remove the almost totally submerged boat, the Nor'easter.

"It is an expensive undertaking and we're trying not to use taxpayer resources to retrieve the boat abandoned by the owner," Lear said.

He said the city's Green Team

and Creative Team were reorganized.

On Jan. 1, the city officially established a Beach Safety Committee, which has been meeting regularly to improve beach safety education programs, to promote accurate and timely data gathering about surf injuries and to secure broader auspices of beach management and refine a plan for a beach safety demonstration project, Lear said.

He noted a Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee was created that

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Robert Newkirk/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

They surfed again

With the help of the organization Life Rolls On, more than 60 participants with spinal cord injuries or disabilities were able to ride a surfboard June 18 in Wildwood Crest with the help of more than 100 volunteers. Cape May's Chad DeSatnick, who recovered after suffering a spinal cord injury while surfing, was among the volunteers.

Bike-pedestrian plan: Close mall streets to traffic

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Among proposals in a bike-pedestrian plan examined by the city's Planning Board during a meeting June 14 was closing cross traffic on the Washington Street Mall and creating bike path connections between Cape May and Cape May Point.

Grants consultant Jim Rutala said City Council passed a resolution in August 2015 asking the state to consider funding a bike-pedestrian plan that would be considered an element of the city's master plan.

He said the state selected WSP Engineering Consultants, of Philadelphia, to undertake the plan and in January 2016, a steering committee kicked off the project. A well-attended public information session was held June 3.

Steve Chiaramonte, lead transportation planner for WSP, said his firm is also designing a safe bike path from the U.S. Coast Guard base to Cape May City El-

ementary School.

For the overall bike-pedestrian project, staff was sent out into the field in May 2016, returning in July to research the peak season, he said.

"The goal of that was to sort of canvass the city and the Point," Chiaramonte said.

He said the crew walked, biked or drove every road in Cape May and Cape May Point and came up with initial observations and presented those to a steering committee last August. The initial assessment was the city was doing a "pretty good job of encouraging people to walk and bike," Chiaramonte said.

"You see if you're here for five minutes, you're going to encounter someone on a bike and tons of people walking around," he said.

Some areas could be improved, he said, based on crash histories. Traffic stress for bicyclists was measured based on existing road conditions. He

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Lower man convicted of attempted murder

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — A Cape May County jury has convicted Ernest P. Davis, 44, of Lower Township, of attempted murder (first degree) and aggravated assault (second degree) of 39-year-old Doris Howell.

Davis was also convicted of possession of a firearm for an unlawful purpose and hindering his own prosecution following a one-week trial in Cape May County Superior Court, according to county Prosecutor Robert Taylor.

On Oct. 3, 2015, Davis shot Howell with a shotgun

while aboard the fishing vessel Storm, which was docked in Lower Township. As a result of the shooting, Howell's left foot and partial calf were amputated. The investigation was conducted by members of the county Prosecutor's Office, State Police and Lower Township police.

Judge John C. Porto presided over the matter and scheduled sentencing for Aug. 18. Taylor stated due to the charges and Davis' criminal history, he faces a maximum of life imprisonment with 85 percent of parole ineligibility.



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE
Green Street in West Cape May has been secondarily named John A. Vasser Jr. Way.

West Cape May dedicates a street in honor of former mayor Vasser

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — The late John Vasser, who served as mayor of the borough for 24 years, received the honor of having the street on which he resided named in his honor at a ceremony June 17.

While the road technically will retain the name of Green Street, it now also marked with a secondary street sign proclaiming it "John A. Vasser Jr. Way."

A sizable crowd was in attendance for an unveiling ceremony including friends, officials and a number of

family members. Vasser was remembered in short speeches praising his generosity and his aid in helping residents purchase homes in the borough. He was also remembered for providing food for anyone in need.

Nikki Vasser Glee, a niece of John Vasser, said the street naming solidified all he did for the community.

John Vasser's son, Bill, said his father served for many years "because the people loved him."

"Everything he did, he did in the name of the Lord," he said.

Bill Vasser thanked Mayor

Pam Kaithern for bringing the street naming project to fruition.

"This honor is due, it's long due," said daughter Shirley Vasser Johnson. "I remember my father saying 'We've got to make sure so and so has food to eat, we've got to make sure so and so has a shelter over their head.'"

She said he was an advocate of education. Vasser Johnson said if her father saw her doing nothing, he would tell her to get a book and read it.

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