



House of the week

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Globetrotters dribble into Wildwood

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Alternate site sought for public safety building

City considering facility to house police, fire, rescue, emergency management

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city's Public Safety Building Advisory Committee is looking for alternative locations, including city-owned property on Pittsburg Avenue and Lafayette Street, for a new combination fire house/police station.

The committee met for the first time Aug. 7 to study the feasibility and option of constructing a new facility to house the fire department, rescue squad, police department and Office of Emergency Manage-

ment. According to committee chairman Jerry Gaffney, a former city mayor, the committee discussed not building a new facility on the site of the current firehouse. He said the city owns a fair amount of property on Pittsburg Avenue near Cape May Lutheran Church.

"The fire chief and the police chief both believe that they would need a substation somewhere either in West Cape May or in the center of town because to get from Pittsburg Avenue to Cape May Point is a long haul," Gaffney said.

Another site for discussion is an empty lot at Pittsburg and Missouri avenues that once housed a Navy radio tower. Gaffney said the property was under contract for sale.

"I think the thought right now is let's see what we can use that we own already," he said.

During a City Council meeting April 4, architect Robbie Conley presented four options for either major renovation of the city's firehouse or construction of a new building with price tags in the \$4 million range, without including a police station.

Option one was to make the engine bays longer and increase height of overhead doors by building a small addition in the front. An addition would include an entrance and lobby, toilet facilities and training room, small kitchenette, maintenance, storage and gear rooms.

At that council meeting, Conley said the upgraded building would include a fitness room with separate bunk and locker rooms for women, a laundry area, storage area and mechanical room. The cost based on new construction of

about 9,000 square feet, substantial renovation of about 3,000 square feet, some minor renovation of 4,500 square feet, some site work and demolition and an emergency generator to operate the entire building, was estimated to total \$3.6 million in construction costs plus legal fees and bonding costs, bringing the total to just under \$4.5 million, he said.

Conley said a second alternative would be to save only the middle part of the building, the engine bay

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Edward O'Neill/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

Fishing, boating and history

A fisherman casts his line into the waters at Sunset Beach in Lower Township near the remains of the Atlantus, better known locally as the Concrete Ship. The ship ran aground during a storm in June 1926 and has been a mainstay of the area ever since.

Booking agents, new acts put city in singing mood

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Under new management, Cape May Convention Hall has had a successful summer of sold-out shows.

For the first year in the hall's history, the city assembled a committee to choose the artists and turned to professional booking agents Robert Rose and Spy Boy Productions and Michael Kline, who is known locally for the Exit Zero and Cape May Jazz Festivals, to book the talent.

In past years, the mayor, city manager and city solicitor booked the artists and signed entertainment contracts.

Cape May Marketing Director Laurie Taylor said six consecutive concerts have been sold out.

"It's been amazing. Ev-

everything fell into place the right way," she said.

Taylor said momentum was produced by the first few shows selling out, causing ticket buyers to worry they may not get in the next concert and buying early.

Audiences have been populated by the baby boom generation with a strong presence of those in their late 60s and early 70s. Performing artists have included 1960s rock 'n' roll favorites Peter Noone and Herman's Hermits, Felix Cavaliere's Rascals, Jay and the Americans, Martha Reeves and the Vandellas and Tommy James and the Shondells.

Taylor said the 2018 concert lineup is likely to appeal to the same age group.

"I don't see that we're going to try to fix what isn't

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Lower, Middle bike path connector complete

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

COLD SPRING — Like the completion of the First Transcontinental Railroad that linked the east and west coasts of our nation by rail in 1869, bike paths in Lower and Middle townships are now connected, allowing a cyclist to ride from the Cape May-Lewes Ferry terminal in North Cape May to the county zoo in Cape May Court House.

A ferry ride can also connect bike riders to a trail running from Lewes, Del., to Rehoboth Beach, Del.

Lower Township Councilman David Perry said Lower Township Department of Public Works did

an excellent job of paving the bike path.

"They had some challenges that they were confronted with, some drainage issues they had to take care of," he said. "They did a remarkable job over there."

A number of hurdles that delayed connecting the bicycle paths were solved, including utility pole guy wires in the way and residents who were not keen on a bike path traversing a right of way in front of their properties. The bike path in part of Middle Township runs through the front easement and driveways of some homes on Seashore

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Jeff and Kim Rice, of Lewes, Del., started their bike ride on the streets near the Cape May Lighthouse in Cape May Point State Park, then connected with the bike path.

Retired Cape May cop, PBA president admits to theft of union funds

TRENTON — John Campbell, a retired police officer who formerly served as president and state delegate of New Jersey Police-men's Benevolent Association (PBA) Local 59 in Cape May, pleaded guilty Aug. 10 to embezzling about \$105,000 from the union over five years, according to attorney Christopher S. Porrino.

Campbell, 48, of Cape May, a retired Cape May police officer, pleaded guilty to a charge of third-degree theft by unlawful taking before Superior Court Judge John C. Porto

in Cape May County. In pleading guilty, he admitted that he stole tens of thousands of dollars from

PBA Local 59 from 2012 through 2016, while serving as the state delegate for the union, by using the union's checking account and a business American Express card to make unauthorized personal purchases, expenditures and with-

drawals that were unrelated to union business.

Under the plea agreement, the state will recommend that Campbell be

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CAMPBELL

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