

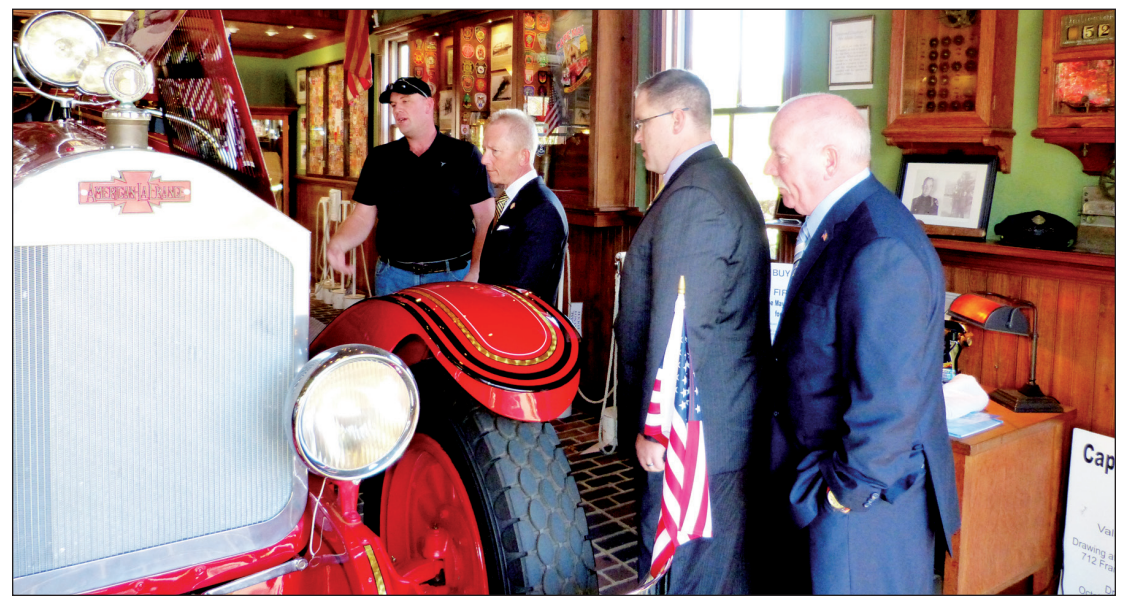
# Cape May raffle benefits restoration of 1928 firetruck

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — State Sen. Jeff Van Drew, Assemblyman Robert Andrzejczak and Assembly candidate Bruce Land participated in drawing the winning entry for a Low Speed Vehicle (LSV) Oct. 31 in a raffle to benefit restoration of Cape May Fire Department's 1928 American LaFrance firetruck. The Fire Department raffled off a 2015 "Star" LSV valued at \$8,500. Andrzejczak spun the tumbler containing the entry cards and Van Drew picked the winning entry. Leah Marino, of Ft. Washington, Pa., received a phone call from Van Drew informing her she had won the shiny, red LSV. "This is Sen. Jeff Van Drew, I'm calling from the great state of New Jersey from Cape May..." Van Drew said to Marino. He asked her if she remembered buying a ticket for the

raffle. "I'm not kidding," he said. Before the drawing, Cape May Fire Department Lt. Jeff Laag showed Van Drew, Andrzejczak and Land the historic pumper that was in use until 1964 and explained the need for further restoration. He said gold leaf and striping had recently been replaced on the truck, the hood and fenders repainted and tires replaced, mainly cosmetic work. Laag said the firetruck needs a complete mechanical rebuild. He said the truck runs and drives but its type of engine is notorious for major failure due to a buildup of exhaust gasses in the combustion chamber and block area if not maintained properly. Valve seats are leaking on the 92-year-old firetruck, Laag said. The engine has six cylinders with three separate cylinder heads with pistons about the size of a two pound

coffee can, he said. With the money raised from the raffle, the engine will be removed from the truck and new main bearings, pistons, rings, wrist pins will be recast and a complete internal rebuild, Laag said. The firetruck will be transported to a shop in Pennsylvania for the work. Laag said the truck was not maintained over the years. Chrome on the truck will be redone, he said. Brakes will also be replaced. "I just put a clutch in it last winter," Laag said. "For the first time in its life it had a new clutch." The truck is chain-driven and has wooden spoke wheels, he said. Laag said the truck can be started with a hand crank or an electric starter. "It's pretty right now but it needs to be mechanically sound because how else do you preserve something like this," he said.



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE  
Cape May Fire Department Lt. Jeff Laag shows state Sen. Jeff Van Drew, Assemblyman Bob Andrzejczak and Assembly candidate Bruce Land the 1928 firetruck the department is in the process of restoring. Van Drew drew the winning raffle ticket in a drawing to benefit the restoration process.

## Beach slope

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engineer, studied Half Moon Bay near San Francisco. In northern California, big waves come from the northwest, pushing sand to the south. Critical to that area is a large headland that anchors Half Moon Bay on the north end and blocks the beach, Leatherman said. Smaller waves come into beaches on the northern end, where sand is moderate in grain size and the slope of the beach is gentle, he said. Leatherman said the middle beaches receive more wave energy, meaning fine-grain sand is being pulled out, the sand is coarser and the beach

is a little bit steeper. "If you go to the very southern end where they are getting the full extent of the big swell waves, where all the surfers go, the sand is very coarse and the beach is very step," Leatherman said. He said there is a confirmed relationship that coarse sand makes steep beaches. Leatherman said a sand bypass under the Cape May Canal would still be considered beach fill and covered under the same government provisions. He said while the cost may seem high initially to build a sand bypass, it make be less expensive in the long run. Wendy Carey, a coastal

processes/coastal hazards specialist with the University of Delaware, said the university is undertaking a surf zone injury project but it is not directed toward the issue of beach nourishment. Carey said the issue of beach nourishment comes up as cause for injuries but the study was not on that topic. The university project is seeking to find if beach injuries come in clusters. "It turns out that they do," Carey said. "That's what the chief of emergency medicine at Beebe Medical Center (Lewes, Del.) first noticed, and that was the impetus for the study because the injuries occurred in clusters." She said the project has five study beaches, which include nourished and non-nourished beaches, and the injuries oc-

cur at both types. Carey said the study was looking at the possible causes or correlation of causes for injury occurrence. "Can these clusters of injuries be related to ocean conditions, environmental conditions, human behavior factors?" she asked. "Are there days when a large number of injuries can be predicted?" Carey said the ultimate goal of the project is public safety and trying to determine whether the results can be applied to surf zone forecasts or to help inform beach patrols about when there may be a heightened risk for visitors. The University of Delaware study is a work in progress and has been ongoing for four years. She said it must be kept in mind the period of record of each year is short, only from Memorial Day to Labor Day. When trying to develop statistical correlations and trying to determine what is a significant correlation among factors and injuries, more observations develop stronger correlations, so the study will continue for another year or two, Carey said.

The trauma registrar at Beebe Medical Center is keeping a record of the type of injuries, how many are considered serious and how many are related to C-spine fractures, she said. Carey said the university project includes beach slope measurements but not sand grain measurements. "I think folks have to remember that beach slope is impacted by grain size, not only grain size, but also the waves and current impacting the beach," she said. Another factor is antecedent geometry, the natural geometry of the coast, Carey said. "It's hard for humans to alter something that's naturally steep," she said. Carey said she was not familiar with New Jersey beaches and how the coast evolved here but if there is a natural steepness to the shoreline, it could be controlling the slope no matter how much sand is put on the beach. She said memories may be short when it comes to how the beach looked 30 years ago. There may be others factors contributing to the shape of the beach other than the jetties at the canal and beach nourishment, she said. The university study is tracking the zip code of patients that go to the emergency room for injuries. "It helps us in figuring out at how to target our education information and awareness information," Carey said. "There are many folks that come down to the beach and they have no idea about the power of the ocean or the power of the waves." She said a number of injuries in Delaware occur when bathers are wading in the ocean and turn their back on a wave. Carey said the bathers may not understand swimming in an ocean is very different than swimming in a pool. Currents and water levels can change dramatically, sweeping a person off their feet, pounding them with a wave even in knee deep water, she said. "I think the human factor is fairly important in this," Carey said. "That goes to the

public safety question and then goes to education and awareness." She said no matter what the slope of the beach, there will still be folks knocked off their feet and pounded into the sand. "If you're very observant and you're watching the waves and don't let them pick you up and slam you down, they you're ok, but not everybody is always watching the waves and these waves are very dangerous because of a shorebreak," Leatherman said. He said the shorebreak will allow a bather to be picked up by a wave and as it breaks as a plunging breaker, it sends the swimmer headfirst into sand. "People aren't used to that, they're used to waves rolling in, spilling type waves and not breaking right on the beach where there is no water cushion there," Leatherman said. He said it is all about the slope of the beach and all about the sand coarseness. "The only way you're going to solve this problem is get that natural beach sand from Wildwood and start bypassing the inlet with it," he said. Leatherman compared moving existing sand around on the beach to fix the shorebreak to building sand castles on the beach. "It's not going to do anything," he said. He said shorebreaks are found where big waves exist. Plunging breakers occur where steep beaches are located, Leatherman said. Without a change in the consistency of sand, Cape May will be dealing with this for the foreseeable future, he said.

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