

'The Locals' appear weekly on WCFA radio program

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — "The Locals" is an ambitious radio show on Cape May's community radio station, WCFA-LP-101.5 FM, recorded live in a restaurant. It's not a food show, although one of the hosts will tell you "what's cooking."

John Cooke is one of a panel of hosts that include City Councilman Shaine Meier, former sales manager for Channel 40 Ed McDonough and Middle Township Mayor Michael Clark. Tom Hogan handles audio recording with microphones and a mixing board with a digital recorder.

The show normally is recorded at 7 a.m. on a weekday at Uncle Bill's restaurant on Beach Avenue. The concept is live to tape with no stops.

"We do a one-hour program primarily based on some topic of local interest to Cape May," Cooke said.

He said because WCFA's signal reaches into Avalon, Middle Township may also be a topic on the show. The program airs at 2 p.m. Fridays but repeats at 9 a.m. Mondays and 9 p.m. Wednesdays.

David LaPuma, director of the Cape May Bird Observatory, was a guest on an episode to talk about

birding in Cape May. Kevin Celli, farm director for Willow Creek Winery, visited the show and offered expert advice on wine.

"With every show, we learn something new or interesting about the guest," Cooke said.

Episodes of "The Locals" can be downloaded any time from SoundCloud, he said.

Cooke credits McDonough with creating the concept of the radio show.

"He had been kicking around the idea of a local talk show," he said. "That niche did not seem to be filled in Cape May."

Cooke hosts a segment of the show titled "What's Cooking," covering upcoming weekend events in Cape May.

On Dec. 1, the show was taping at the Blue Pig Tavern at Congress Hall with guests Curtis Bashaw and Myra Vassian, event coordinator for Cape Resorts properties.

Recording in a restaurant at mealtime can present some audio competition from clinking and clanking silverware and cups and saucers from nearby tables, but Cooke said it's all part of the show.

"It adds to it," Cooke said. "The show is loosely based on the concept of NPR's (National

Public Radio) barbershop series where you have a couple of guys in the barbershop talking about what's going on and you might here a clipper and scissors in the background."

When the show records at Uncle Bill's North Cape May location, it is in competition with a meeting of the Rotary Club taking place at the same time.

Controversy is not avoided on "The Locals." Prior to the November election, candidates Patricia Hendricks and Zack Mullock were guests on the same episode. Mayor-elect Chuck Lear was a guest on another show. Cooke said Mayor Edward Mahaney was invited onto the show but did not respond to an email invitation.

A disclaimer is read on air at the start of each episode indicating the views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the management of WCFA, the board of directors of the Center for Community Arts, the licensee of the station or the hosts.

"We're all free to say what we want to say," Cooke said.

The show is heard far beyond Cape May County by streaming online, which has brought an audience in many other states. The hosts will record the 13th episode of the program this week.



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

'The Locals,' which was recorded Dec. 1 at the Blue Pig Tavern at Congress Hall, includes guests Curtis Bashaw, front right, and Myra Vassian, panelists Cape May City Councilman Shaine Meier, Middle Township Mayor Michael Clark, Ed McDonough and John Cooke, as well as technical wizard Tom Hogan.

Pay raise

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Beck said the incoming council should vote on the resolution and take ownership of giving themselves a raise, which means it would not go into effect until January 2018. On Jan. 2, 2016, Councilman Erik Simonsen will be sworn in as mayor and Frank Sippel as deputy mayor.

Councilman Tom Conrad said former Democratic councilman Wayne Mazurek stated council needed to take steps to attract candidates to run for office. Beck said

unless the township offered \$100,000, "It's not going to work."

"Raising it \$3,000 isn't going to attract a single person to come down here and do what we do and go through what we do," Beck said. "It's not for the money."

Clark said it never occurred to him that council could raise its own salaries. He said the \$12,000 annual salary he received paid his Lower Township property taxes.

"None of us are doing it for the money, it's public service," Clark said.

Sights, sounds of the season



John Alvarez/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

Cape May placed its Christmas tree in the new gazebo at the refurbished Rotary Park. Below, this photo provided by Congress Hall shows its tree lit up for the season.



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Lower Township Mayor Michael Beck shares a joke with those gathered for the tree lighting. Below, Cape May Mayor Edward Mahaney tells children to watch for Santa Claus.



TIDES : December 2016				
DATE	HIGH		LOW	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
7	1:05	1:20	6:58	7:38
8	2:09	2:25	8:07	8:35
9	3:11	3:29	9:14	9:32
10	4:11	4:31	10:17	10:27
11	5:07	5:30	11:17	11:21
12	6:00	6:26		12:13
13	6:52	7:20	12:14	1:07
14	7:44	8:13	1:06	2:00

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