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Lower Cape May Regional High School students joined the national walkout to protest gun violence Wednesday, March 14. The Student Council-organized event included the distribution of information on voter registration and how to contact legislators.

Walkout promotes voting, activism—

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dinate the event, he said.

Following the event, Kobik said he was very proud of the students.

"There is great hope and promise for our future with their leadership," he said.

Student body Vice President Maggie Roth, who heralded the event, said the walkout was first and foremost a way for students to honor the 17 victims of the shooting in Florida.

"It was a tragedy that, though it was far away, struck a chord for a lot of our students here, and we wanted to do something to recognize what had happened," she said. "I could also see that a lot of my peers were frustrated with these shootings that keep happening and they were calling for

a change, so I also used this demonstration as an opportunity to distribute information on how to register to vote and how to contact their representatives."

Roth said with the help of the administration, students were able to set up an event that without promoting any political agendas, gave students an outlet to grieve for the victims of the Florida shootings. She said the walkout allowed students to express their frustrations and receive information necessary to get politically engaged "all in a peaceful and productive manner."

Richard M. Teitelman Middle School students participated in a program called "Seventeen Acts of Kindness." The school held a moment of silence at 10 a.m. Kobik said the staff

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-LCMR student body Vice President Maggie Roth

worked with the student government and the Builders Club to organize a series of events called "The Teitelman School Week of Expression." On Monday, students were encouraged to wear the school's colors and Tuesday was anti-violence day, encouraging the wearing of ribbons. On Wednesday, students were encouraged to wear white and maroon clothing, the school colors of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, as a sign of solidarity, Kobik said.

Township passes budget with no tax rate increase

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Lower Township Council approved its 2018 budget Monday with a zero increase, keeping the tax rate the same as 2017.

Mayor Erik Simonsen thanked the financial staff and department heads "for a job well done."

"It's been a great year with all the projects that have been started and the projects that continue," he said.

Auditor Leon Costello said the township's surplus account balance was \$90,000 higher than 2017.

"Your surplus is less than

half of what we're using to fund this budget, so there's no gimmicks in here to get to zero," he said.

A total of \$7.1 million of surplus was available with \$3 million used in this year's municipal budget, leaving a balance of \$4.1 million. Township Manager Jim Ridgeway said Lower Township has its largest-ever surplus balance. Costello said the budget is \$1.3 million under what the township is permitted to raise in taxes. He said the budget was \$990,000 under what the township was permitted to spend.

Ratables increased by \$9.1 million with assessments

totaling \$3.6 billion, Costello said. The additional ratables allowed the township to raise \$66,175 without affecting taxpayers, he said.

There was no change in the amount of state aid, which totals \$1.5 million, according to Costello.

The \$28 million budget raises \$20.8 million from local purpose taxes. Salaries and wages total \$10.5 million, with other expenses totaling \$9.5 million. Debt service totals \$2.9 million.

The local purpose tax rate remains at 57.4 cents per \$100 of assessed value, or \$574 for every \$100,000 of assessed property value.

USAF mission flag donated to NASW Aviation Museum

ERMA — Over the past 20 years, the Naval Air Station Wildwood Aviation Museum has had many guests, including locals who have volunteered their time to help further the museum's mission.

These volunteers have come from all walks of life — some are veterans or aviation enthusiasts, others are from families that have lived in the area for generations and remember how the war effort affected Cape May County.

The Ryan family of North Cape May is a mixture of all the above. They recently presented the museum with a "mission flag" to honor the mission of the museum.

Since the museum's inception, Richard Ryan has volunteered his time on a variety of different restoration projects throughout the museum. Ryan has helped rebuild aircraft for displays, worked on electronic components and equipment and is always around to lend a helping hand.



Provided

NASW Foundation Chairman Joseph E. Salvatore, left, U.S. Air Force Capt. Richard Ryan III and Richard Ryan. The Ryans present Salvatore with the mission flag and a certificate of authenticity.

His sons share their father's love for all things aviation-related. In fact, all three of his sons have served in the U.S. Air Force. Early in 2018, USAF Capt. Richard Ryan III was deployed in the Middle East supporting America's war on terrorism through Operation Inherent Resolve. While deployed, a flag was flown aboard a USAF EC-130H on Jan. 13 during combat missions over the skies of Iraq and Syria. The Ryan family presented that flag to NASW Foundation Chairman Dr. Joseph E. Salvatore by to be displayed in the museum.

There are various artifacts within the museum, many donated by families who wanted to see their family's stories live on while educating the public. It is an absolute honor for the museum to be able to help these stories and legacies continue. This mission flag will share in that special sentiment.

The Naval Air Station Wildwood Aviation Museum is a nonprofit aviation mu-



The flag and certificate in its display case at the museum.

seum housed in an original wooden hangar from World War II. The NASW Foundation's mission is to restore and rehabilitate the hangar to its former glory, educate the public and honor the 42 men who perished while training there. The museum is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Beginning April 1, the museum will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week. Visit usnasw.org.

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