LCMR Sailing Club learning the ropes in Cape May

By CAIN CHAMBERLINCape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Students in the Lower Cape May Regional Sailing Club have been getting a helping hand from more seasoned sailors at the Corinthian Yacht Club of Cape May.

The sailing club, which for the past four year has been teaching local kids to sail, recently received a donation of equipment from a fund established in the name of a former member.

Each year from late August to around mid-October, students in the sailing club learn the fundamentals of sailing the terminology of sailing, reading the windage and cur-

rent, and navigating.

According John Wilsey, the year sailing club advisor for the last three years, the lessons are very beneficial to all the students who are a part of

"It's really a great thing for them to learn considering the

area they live in," he said.
The sailing club was started by a group of LCMR students in 2006. Nancy Sayre and Karen Vendetta, also advisors, both have children who were involved in the original formation of the club. Vendetta's daughter Lindsay has since graduated, but Sayre's son Gordan is now a



Cain Chamberlin/Cape May Star and Wave Above, Lower Cape May Regional Sailing Club members, left to right, Andro Gjuric, Sarah Schifflelbein, Alicia Calkins and Matt Baxter. Right, advisor John Wilsey (right in photo), gives instructions

to club members. senior and still with the club.

According to Gordan Sayre, his grandparents on both sides of his family were sailors. Gordan wanted to follow in their footsteps and began taking sailing lessons the summer before going into eighth grade.

Another student, Ally Cook is a junior at LCMR and has been sailing for nearly nine years. Her grandfather and uncle were both commodores at the yacht club, where she has been a member for seven

"My whole family sails, so I always wanted to learn," she

A first-year sailing student, sophomore Hannah Lamey admits that she was not fond of the idea of learning to sail in the beginning.
"My mom kind of forced me

into it, but I like it a lot now," she said.

According to Nancy Sayre, there are around 15 kids in the sailing club, and because of the lack of equipment

available the club can only accept a certain number of

"We don't over advertise right now because we don't want too many kids trying to join," she said. "As much as we would like to accept every student who is interested, we just don't have the funding and equipment."

She said the high school had four small Sunfish sailboats they offered to the group and the yacht club has also been very generous with lending equipment. Sayre said the yacht club has also been generous with donations. She said C. Wallace "Wally" Stuard Sailing Foundation of the Corinthian Yacht Club gave \$1,500 to the club, which they used to purchase three

new sails and rudders. Wally Stuard was a club member who passed away in August at 88.

"It's a great dedication to Wally, he wanted to promote

sailing throughout the area, he really loved it," said Sayre. The foundation provides

sailing scholarships to children who live on the local Coast Guard base and also to LCMR students. According to Sayre, the foundation handed out 30 scholarships this year, 20 of them to USCG children and 10 to LCMR students.

The entire sailing club program is based on hands-on experience, Sayre said. By the second week of each season, an experienced student is paired up with an amateur student and they go out on the

Before each lesson, students gather around and take direction from Wilsey, who has been racing sailboats since he was seven and a member of the yacht club since 1962.

He asks the students questions about the present water current, the direction of the wind, if any, and what they should do in any given scenario.

All the advisors then go out on the water with the stu-dents and guide them until the end of the lesson.

"It's a really great program, and all the students have a lot of fun with it," Sayre said.

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MacLeod recommended a 25-year lease agreement, with an option to renew for another 25 years. He also asked city council to review the lease fee, which is set at \$1 per year.

'I'm not sure that is appropriate," MacLeod said. "I think we should look at something a little more reasonable, like \$500 or \$1,000."

Councilman Bill Murray

said MacLeod made a good point regarding the length of the lease, but questioned why the city should increase the fee. MacLeod said there are certain administrative costs related to leasing land to nonprofits, as it does for the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts and Humanities, and Cape May Stage. He said the \$1 nominal fee does not cover the administrative costs of leasing property, and the nonprofits are generating a rev-

enue stream from its use.

Deputy Mayor Jack Wichterman said the club's timeline for completing the project is 20, which means they would only have five years left on their lease at the end of the project.

"I'm opposed to a 25-year lease. I have more confidence in them than that," he said. He also said raising the

lease fee was nickel-and-diming the organization. The tone of the discussion lightened when Murray

began saying, "None of us will be here in 50 years..." "Speak for yourself," Wichterman told him.

"Nobody but Jack Wichterman will be here 50 years from now," Murray said. "Fifty years is a long time to tie this up."

Councilwoman Deanna Fiocca, who said she worked Deanna as a ball girl at the club when she was younger, said she didn't care whether the lease was for 25 or 50 years, but thought the fee should remain \$1. Councilwoman Terri Swain said a 25-year lease with a 25-year renewal option was essentially a 50-year lease. She said she would like to see the fee cover the city's administrative costs.

Mayor Ed Mahaney said the city has seven such partnerships with organizations in the city, and they were set up mainly to relieve the city of the cost of maintaining those properties. But he said 50 years did seem unrealistic for such an arrangement, despite the exclusively positive reports he has heard about the tennis club. He said the city needed to figure out the administrative costs before

raising the fee. "Before we raise the fee we have to estimate what costs we have. Some require almost nothing, while others are a significant amount," he said.

Perry Collier, representing the tennis club, said in the best-case scenario \$500,000 project would be completed in 25 years. He said the club's fees maintain their activities, but are not adequate to fund capital improvements. Mahaney said the project, which would rely on donations, seems ambitious, but is not so given the



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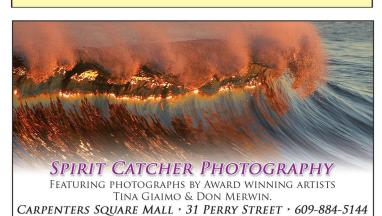
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