

Jump

Continued from page A1

served as vice-president of the MMA while Protasi was president and worked with him on a daily basis. "He spent the day talking to merchants and residents of Cape May. He never had an unkind word about anybody, and he could always make me giggle," she said. "He wanted everyone to get along, he wanted to put out the fires, he was connected to and friendly to everyone on the mall. If he came outside he would soon have a group of merchants around him. People from the city would stop in to ask Steve what was going on around the mall," Smarro said. According to Smarro, Protasi turned the MMA around. She said when he became president there were

94 stores on the mall, and only 20 were participating members of the MMA. She said he went door to door the first year and built the membership up to 70 businesses. "That wasn't in his duties and responsibilities as president - that was him," she said. "He did things for the betterment of the community, not for him personally." Other than his commitment to his business, church, family, and the other merchants, as many have said, Protasi was known for his sense of humor and being fun to be around. According to Rantuccio, when Protasi and her husband Toney got together it was a lot of laughs. She said when Protasi was president and Tony was vice-president the mall merchants decided to enter a float in the Christmas parade. She said

when the two of them went to work on the project it was like two kids who were given a spending spree in the toy store. "They had meetings, took a day trip to talk to a lady who did floats, and by the end of it they had a cannon that shot confetti," she said. "But it was really all about making a good presentation for the mall merchants." "I always picture Steve and Big T together," Mediuch said. "I can even picture them now looking down and telling each other 'My funeral was bigger'." A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated today at 9:30 a.m. in Our Lady Star of the Sea Church, Cape May. Burial was at New St. Mary's Cemetery, Bellmawr.

Meters

in the past three years. A petition on the Washington Street Mall revitalization project was raised in the spring of 2007 and put on a special ballot in August. Voters rejected the bond ordinance and city council scaled down the plans. Another referendum was introduced in 2008 for bond ordinances on the Convention Hall project. There were two ordinances, one for \$1.5 million for the soft costs and another for \$10.5 million for construction costs. The ordinances were rescinded and comparable bond ordinances were introduced with the stipulation they would be subject to a vote in the November 2008 general election, saving the city \$30,000 on a special election. Monzo said if the petition is found to be defective there is a period of time allowed to remedy defects. If not corrected in 10 days the ordinances would be effective retroactively.

Jim Testa of FAN ECM doesn't believe the petitions will be found defective. He said the group checked the petition signers against a list of registered voters. He said while the group includes second-home owners, they were dependent on voters from all over town. "In roughly 10 we days got 220 signatures. We needed five voters to be on the (petition) committee, and we asked people to circulate the petition," Testa said. The group also asked people to shift their residence to Cape May. Some, like, Testa, split their vote between residences. He said his wife is a registered voter in Cape May. The group also set up a website and posted a description of events leading up to the petition. He said FAN ECM was successful in attracting volunteers of various backgrounds.

"When we circulated the petition there was approximately a 90 percent acceptance rate," he said. "Perhaps there is a general dissatisfaction with arbitrariness of the current government." Testa said there were two main issues related to the parking ordinances. "One is aesthetic and the introduction of standalone parking meters their inappropriateness for a historic and residential district," he said. "Clearly they don't look like they belong." Testa said the reason for parking meters is to clear spaces in a commercial district and are inappropriate in a residential district. Testa said the second point is, if the city depends on parking meter revenue and wishes to raise revenue through parking meters, they are going about it the wrong way.

"Just sling hundreds of outdated parking meters, which are troglodytic, shows they have a much bigger problem," he said. Testa said there is a bigger overall traffic and parking problem in Cape May and not just in the east end. He said the city should take a comprehensive look at parking cars and raising revenue from that. He said installing meters in a residential neighborhood is not an intelligent way to raise revenue and doesn't handle the problem. He said the city should be concerned with parking around the new Convention Hall, the Beach Theatre and the downtown. Additionally, he said the city should not be considering more meters but should move in the direction of fewer meters.

"They should be looking at alternate ways of paid parking and not dopping it ad hoc, without policy," he said. Testa said he also believes when people live in a residential neighborhood, one of the attributes is you do not have to pay for parking outside your home. He said property owners east of Pittsburgh are carrying an enormous tax burden and they should expect certain amenities for that, such as free on-street parking. Monzo said he is not sure the FAN ECM group has the right to petition for a referendum on parking ordinances.

"Certain ordinances are exempt from the referendum process, for example, land use ordinances are specifically exempted. Other types of ordinances are based on areas preempted by state law. Parking and traffic are legal systems dictated by state law under Title 39. Municipalities are given the authority to regulate local conditions as part of a comprehensive scheme of regulations," Monzo said. Monzo said there is case law saying parking and traffic regulations are exempt from referendum and initiative. "It's not an easy case to legalize. I have to sit with council and discuss legal issues to see if whether these ordinances are subject to referendum. It needs to be fully researched," Monzo said. Mayor Edward J. Mahaney Jr. said in a press release issued by the city that they believe these ordinances are not subject to referendum. He also said the ordinances were not rushed into place, as was indicated in FAN ECM's press release.

"Metered parking was discussed throughout the master plan reexamination process and the recommendation for parking meters was included as part of the master plan reexamination plan which was unanimously approved by the Planning Board and accepted by unanimous vote of city council," Mahaney said. Testa said he doesn't believe the master plan supports a commercial element intruding into a residential zone.

"Our belief is (the ordinances) are subject to referendum. Parking control is some of the aspects of these ordinances, but a revenue raising ordinance is not controlling parking, and it's clear to us that it's a revenue raising measure," he said. Testa said the number always being presented is the meters would raise \$150,000 from the new meters. He said when pressed to say if there was a survey done upon which they based that conclusion the city won't disclose the information. He said FAN ECM believes the rate of evasion, parking somewhere to avoid the meters, would be high and revenue will be low. Asked why the group included an ordinance creating back-in angled parking was included in the referendum, Testa said those spaces would be covered by meters.

"It creates denser parking and the extra capacity provides nothing more than the opportunity to put in more meters," he said. The association intends to air the issues and candidates' positions on its website, www.eastcapemay.org.

FEMA

Continued from page A1

to reduce the impact of future disasters. Individuals may also receive referrals to voluntary agencies to help with immediate unmet needs. "We also help with information on how to better prepare for future disasters, including how to deal with mold. Mold can become an issue after flooding," said Powell. According to Powell, once it is determined that damage from a storm was incurred, FEMA will send a contractor to the property to assess the extent of the damage. These

inspectors have approved FEMA identification badges that include their name and photo and the name of their company under contract with FEMA. The inspectors will ask for a name, address and FEMA registration, but will not ask for a Social Security number or payment. The FEMA inspection, which takes approximately 30 to 40 minutes, is free. As of the close of business on April 12, Powell said statewide 3,056 households registered for FEMA assistance. "We have an obligated \$3.1

million for individual and household losses. We have 100 contracted inspectors out on the field," Powell said. Powell said it's important for people to get themselves into the system. "We will be here as long as people need us," he said. "The duration is really driven by the amount of traffic." The Atlantic County DRC is open Monday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, call one of the numbers listed above or visit www.disasterassistance.gov.

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Clash Of The Titans 3D PG13: 12:00, 3:15, 5:00, 8:00, 10:15
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