



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Arrow of Light Award

Lower Township Council honors Joshua Smith, left, and John Payne of Cub Scout Pack 63 on May 4 for receiving the Arrow of Light Award, the highest honor in Cub Scouts.

Rio Grande teen charged with drug possession

VILLAS — Lower Township police Ptlm. Robert Fessler and Special Officer Michael Harkin arrested a Rio Grande teenager during a motor vehicle stop at about 1:30 a.m. May 2 on Bayshore Road and Ridgewood Avenue in Villas.

During the investigation of the driving infraction that led to the stop, it was discovered that the driver of the vehicle, Paul E. Henon, 18, of Rio Grande, was in possession of marijuana. Henon was arrested on scene and charged with pos-

session of a controlled dangerous substance, possession of a CDS in a motor vehicle and other violations related to the driving infraction.

After processing, Henon was released on his own recognizance.

Budget

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The 2015-16 budget totals \$32.5 million, an increase of 2 percent over last year. The local tax levy is increasing by .4 cents for a total of \$20.3 million.

Mallet said the budget's "other revenue" line is increasing by 55 percent from \$298,918 to \$463,265 due in part to an energy savings improvement plan rebate. Construction began on a \$2.8 million energy savings improvement project anticipated to reduce costs by \$3.5 million over a 15-year period. Upgrades include new LED-powered indoor and out-

door lighting, room occupancy sensors, high-efficiency heating and air conditioning with a building management control system.

Following union negotiations, the school district changed from the State Health Benefits Plan to Direct 15, which saved \$145,000, Mallet said. A switch from state health benefits to a health insurance fund saved \$120,000, he said.

Staffing continues to be reduced through attrition, with four teachers and staff members not being replaced upon their retirement.

Mallet said beginning in

2012, the district began purchasing 60 percent of its electricity from the neighboring solar energy farm along with using the Alliance for Competitive Energy Services for a savings of \$50,000 per year.

Under expenditures, instructional costs are up 2.6 percent with capital expenses up 64 percent for purchase of laptop computers and servers and a number of maintenance projects, he said.

State aid has been relatively flat for the past three years, he said, increasing from \$9.5 million last year to \$9.7 million this year, or 1.8 percent.

Roseann Avenue

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line is filled with material that limits the capacity of storm water drainage.

"A question was whether that material would be able to be disposed of at the county landfill," Sray said. "To determine that, we have to do material testing on samples throughout the pipe which we have to forward to the MUA prior to any disposition on their landfill."

He said an area of about 150 acres drains through a pipe in the Bayshore development on the west side of Bayshore as well as the Schooner Landing development on the east side.

Roseann Avenue resident Sally Yerk said she was concerned the study has dragged on for three years. She said she had pictures of her home from 1983 that show 6 inches of water behind her house.

"It's not gotten better, most of the people in our area have sump pumps," Yerk said. "We don't have basements, that's for our backyards."

She said the 200 block of

Roseann Avenue was full of potholes.

Sray said it was his intent to have the study completed with a report to council by August.

Resident Jim O'Reilly said the outfall pipe from Roseann Avenue into Cox Hall Creek was 75 percent under water.

Mayor Michael Beck said when the township spends money to alleviate flooding on Roseann Avenue, he wants to be assured it fixes the problem.

Roseann Avenue resident Edward Sherretta said he spent \$16,000 to solve some problems on his property.

"I think it's time for the township to step up to the plate," he said. "This is someplace they allowed to be constructed and you know the pipe has been a problem and it's time to fix it."

Beck said maps from 50 years ago show a lot of the land was on islands.

"There was water in there," he said.

Beck said some of the problem could be rainfall and drainage issues and some may be groundwater.

Another resident said the housing development never should have been approved.

Roseanne Avenue resident Paul Yerk said the street has been sinking for years.

Brian O'Connor, a county GIS specialist and chairman of Lower Township Municipal Utilities Authority, said the flooding problem was not with the tide gate at Cox Hall Creek, which drains into Delaware Bay. He said the gate works well and has been open since Hurricane Sandy.

O'Connor said the 48-inch pipe that sends water into the bay is not wide enough. He recommended cleaning out the Roseann Avenue trunk line and getting the water into Cox Hall Creek.

A culvert is needed under Clubhouse Road to speed water flow, O'Connor said.

Beck said he was not 100 percent sure the township could solve all of Roseann Avenue's flooding problems.

O'Connor said the township does not maintain storm water drains.

"You leave leaves on the street and all that stuff turns to grit," he said.

A resident suggested using check valves on storm drains since during heavy rain, water was coming back out of storm drains. He said he believed water was coming back from Cox Hall Creek since the outfall pipe was under water.

Sray said use of check valves would be evaluated.

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Cape May Star & Wave

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