

Cape May police warn of rental scams

CAPE MAY — The Cape May Police Department is warning homeowners and vacationers of rental scams posted on Craigslist.

The department has received numerous complaints from homeowners stating that their homes have been fraudulently listed for rent on Craigslist. The perpetrators are posting ads showing a real home that is listed for rent on real estate websites such as Homeway.com, then present-

ing themselves as the owner of the property and requesting a payment, usually via email.

Police said anyone who discovers that one of their listings has been reposted on Craigslist should immediately "flag" the posting as "prohibited" and Craigslist will remove it.

That is the most effective way to deal with the issue, according to police. It is not advised to engage in an email dialog with the scammer, as that usually

encourages the scammer to continue the scheme.

Craigslist advises not to rent housing or purchase goods sight unseen, and to deal locally with people you can meet in person. The Craigslist safety page offers tips for recognizing suspected scams at www.craigslist.org/about/scams

Police encourage anyone with concerns regarding a possible rental scam to contact them at (609) 884-9500.



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE
Willow Creek Winery in West Cape May is one business that would benefit from a bill allowing wineries to hold special events, such as weddings. The bill awaits the signature of Gov. Chris Christie.

West Cape May Farmers Market opens for season

WEST CAPE MAY — The borough's Farmers Market opened June 24 on a sunny afternoon to a sizable crowd.

The market, located behind Borough Hall, features "Jersey Fresh" vegetables and flowers.

In addition, the market features local vendors offering

original art and photography, books for beach reading, T-shirts, honey, unique jewelry, vintage home and garden accents.

Shoppers will also find quilts, sunglasses and Tupperware.

Food, including baked goods, frozen treats, barbe-

cued chicken and pork, freshly ground iced coffees, crab cakes, empanadas, guacamole and squeezed lemonade, is all around the market. There is enough variety of food to provide a light picnic dinner.

Inside the gazebo, live bands entertain from 5 to 7:30 p.m.

The West Cape May Farmers Market is open at 2 p.m. Tuesdays, rain or shine. Limited free parking is available in front of Borough Hall and on adjacent streets.

The market is a short walk or bike ride from much of Cape May and West Cape May.

Teen boy caught in rip current, missing off Ocean City

By KRISTEN KELLEHER
Cape May Star and Wave

OCEAN CITY — A 14-year-old boy swept out by a rip current Sunday evening remained missing Tuesday morning, several hours after the U.S. Coast Guard suspended the search.

A news release from the Ocean City Fire Department stated that a group of individuals, including the boy, entered the water off 9th Street at about 6:45 p.m. Sunday, June 29, after the lifeguards had left for the day.

Ocean City's beaches are guarded from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. weekends and holidays.

The extended-hours program for the Ocean City Beach Patrol began Friday, June 27.

During the program, lifeguards are on duty at 8th, 9th and 12th street beaches until 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday until Labor Day.

When the group was swept out, several others attempted to help and were also caught in the rip current.

The Fire Department's Beach Patrol Rapid Response Team responded to a 911 call. They arrived within one minute and removed 14 people from the water.

It was then discovered that the boy was missing, the release stated.

The name of the boy is being withheld due to his age.

Philadelphia's 6 ABC Action News said the boy was identified by family as Corinthian Hammond, of the Hunting Park section of Philadelphia.

Ocean City Police Captain Steve Ang said the police department was not releasing the name of the victim at the request of the family. The boy was identified as Corinthian Hammond of Philadelphia.

A search team of firefighters and Beach Patrol members searched the water using ropes and rescue equipment, and the nearby jetty was searched with divers and swimmers.

The Ocean City Police Ma-

rine Unit, U.S. Coast Guard and the Fire Department also used personal watercraft to search.

The search continued for two hours, before darkness and unsafe conditions forced searchers to stop.

The search resumed at 6 a.m. Monday, June 30.

The Fire Department and police patrolled the coastline until 9:30 a.m., when the Ocean City Beach Patrol lifeguards returned for duty.

The search of the area continued Monday morning, when lifeguards swam and used lifeboats to search the waters.

Just before 4 p.m. Monday, the Coast Guard suspended the search.

By 9:45 a.m. Tuesday, the boy was still missing, OCBP Chief Tom Mullineaux said.

Mullineaux said he began searching at 6 a.m., and patrolled from the Longport Bridge to 14th Street beach.

All of the OCBP guards are aware of the situation, he said.

"I don't know when we'll get a resolution to this whole thing," Mullineaux said. "It's hard to tell where this individual is going to wind up."

Wineries

Continued from Page A1

official actions since she lives within 200 feet of the winery.

The county farmland-preservation program paid Wilde \$890,000 in 2003 for a deed restriction that requires 36 acres of the farm's 50 acres remain for agricultural use.

Bill A-1272 was introduced in response to another municipality, New Egypt, prohibiting the owner of Laurita Vineyard, a preserved farm, from hosting large social gatherings such as weddings and fundraisers. The SADC, which administers the farmland preservation program, ruled that the ability to host special events on preserved farms is not protected by New Jersey's Right to Farm Act because such events fall outside of the law's definition of agricultural use.

Assemblyman Paul Moriarty, D-4th, is one of the sponsors of the bill.

"We've taken great steps to preserve farmland in our state, but in an increasingly competitive economy, it's important that we give our farmers the tools they need to grow and

succeed," he said. "Allowing our wineries to entice visitors with special occasion events will help drive our economy."

Under the pilot program, such events would be permitted at a winery on preserved farmland provided that:

- The gross income generated by the winery from all special occasion events conducted for the calendar year account for less than 50 percent of the annual gross income of the winery;
- The event uses the agricultural output of the winery, to the maximum extent practicable, to promote agricultural tourism and advance the agricultural or horticultural output of the winery;
- The event is conducted on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday, or federal or state holiday; an event may be conducted on any other day of the week with the approval of the SADC, which may delegate its authority in that regard to a county agriculture development board.

Other restrictions include events must comply with municipal ordinances governing traffic and noise standards. Under the bill, a "special occasion event" is defined as a wedding, lifetime milestone event or other cultural or social event.

"We are pleased that the state Legislature is moving in a positive direction relative to agri-tourism in New Jersey with the ratification of Bill A-1272, which ensures every preserved winery's right to conduct celebratory events including weddings," Wilde said. "It has always been our position, and that of our legal team, that Willow Creek Farm and Winery's deed of easement issued with regard to the preserved portion of our farm has never precluded us from doing life celebratory events."

She said the primary mission of Willow Creek Farm and Winery remains agricultural education and the promotion of New Jersey agricultural products.

"A visitor to our farm for a celebratory event will spend money in area hotels, area restaurants and with our shopkeepers, artists and numerous other local businesses in West Cape May, Cape May and throughout the Jersey cape," Wilde said.

She said Willow Creek was proud to be a significant West Cape May contributory tax payer and "in this struggling seasonal economy to produce quality, upscale year-round tourism and most importantly, year round jobs."

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