



Christopher South/Cape May Star and Wave

Cape May Baby Parade

CAPE MAY – The annual Cape May Baby Parade took place on a sunny, hot August day, last Friday. Youngsters took part in the age divisions in the parade, including floats, as shown above. See more [Baby Parade Pictures on page A12](#).

After 37 years LT's Kammer will remember the people

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

LOWER TOWNSHIP – Claudia Kammer was barely out of high school when she went to work for Lower Township. She took business classes in high school – short hand, typing, accounting – and that led to her being hired in the tax office.

Thirty-seven years later she is retiring as the Municipal Clerk, a job she first ran for as an elected office.

Kammer was born in Heidelberg, Germany, and her father was an American army captain.

After the army he went to work for the federal government and he retired in 1970 or 1971. But in 1971, Kammer's family moved from Deptford Township to Lower Township. She graduated from Lower Cape May Regional High School, in 1975. Jack Sparks was mayor at the time and he had called the high school saying they needed someone to work in the tax office for the summer. She was recommended by her teacher, and was contacted by Joan Taylor to come into the tax office.

"We graduated on a Wednesday or Thursday or Friday, but whatever day it

was, I went to work the following Monday," Kammer said.

Kammer started out in the old municipal building, which is where Public Works is now. She said it burned down around 1977. Kammer said the municipal court was on the second floor and they

believe someone, perhaps disgruntled by actions in municipal court, threw a firebomb through a second floor window. A federal grant helped pay for the current Township Hall and Memorial School.

Kammer said she showed up at the tax office expecting to be interviewed but was put to work. At the end of the summer they kept her on in the tax office.

While working there she met a policeman named Jack Kammer. The tax office used to handle more cash than they do now, and they would take it to the bank with a police escort.

"Actually, we would call them and they would drive us to the bank," she said.

The Kammer's were married on May 12, 1979.

Claudia eventually took



Claudia Kammer

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Diving crew takes Texas man into the deep to dive the SS Manhattan

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Our lineage, ancestry and heritage – they define our family history, birthright and essentially, who we are. We often discover and research these pieces of the family puzzle looking through old photo albums, spending time at the public library or hearing stories from a knowledgeable grandmother. Morgan Bodie, however, encountered a piece of his family history 90 feet beneath the Atlantic.

Bodie, who was born and raised in Baltimore, Md., and currently resides in Fort Worth, Texas, traveled to Cape May for a scuba diving expedition with the crew of the Research Vessel (RV) Explorer to witness with his own eyes what remains of the SS Manhattan. Bodie's connection with the 225-foot iron hulled ship dates back to his great-great-grandfather, John Roach, whose famous shipyard built the SS Manhattan in 1879.

Bodie has been in contact with Rusty Cassway and Brian Sullivan of the

RV Explorer for the past few years, trying to make a dive to the sunken ship. After several failed attempts due to unfortunate weather and scheduling conflicts, he finally got his chance on Saturday, July 28.

The Manhattan sank 30 miles off the shores of Cape May in the early morning hours of Nov. 22, 1889 when it was struck on the portside by the coal schooner Agnes Manning. Bodie said the solid wooden bow of the Agnes split the riveted seams between the iron plates, compromising the hull of the Manhattan as it burst wide open. While the Agnes Manning was able to break free and make it to shore, the Manhattan sunk bow first to the ocean floor. There were three Manhattan passengers and 10 crewmembers killed in the sinking.

Over the years, the submerged vessel has been salvaged and explored by divers like Cassway and Sullivan, but Bodie simply wanted to dive because it was a part of his family heritage.

"When I dive the wreck of a ship built by my ancestor, I



Cain Chamberlin/Cape May Star and Wave

Above, local diver Rusty Cassway talks to Morgan Bodie of Fort Worth, Texas, after diving the wreck of the SS Manhattan.

am touching something that he poured his heart into for many months over 130 years ago," Bodie said before the journey out to sea. "For me, this dive is a tribute to the great accomplishments of John Roach."

Bodie, an FBI bomb technician and certified scuba diver, left Utsch's Marina aboard the RV Explorer with Cassway, Sullivan, John Copeland, Edward

Christopher Zeme, Bruce Leinen and legendary diver Bart Malone. Malone is also a curator at the New Jersey Maritime Museum. Each man who accompanied Bodie has made the dive to the Manhattan as well as to numerous other sunken vessels along the Jersey, Delaware and Maryland shores.

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Paramedic unit now based in township

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

LOWER TOWNSHIP – After about five months of discussion, Township Manager Mike Voll announced that a paramedic unit would be permanently housed at the Erma Firehouse.

"This council and the residents of Lower Township feel we deserve the best in emergency medical services," Voll said.

Jim Kilmer representing AtlantiCare and Medic 5 Chief Lou Raniszewski attended Monday's Lower Township Council meeting to announce the move, which offers advanced lifesaving services (ALS) to the township and surrounding municipalities. Voll said Medic 9 began operating out of the Erma Firehouse earlier this summer and from listening to the police scanner he can say they have already been very busy.

According to Kilmer, Medic 9 has been experiencing about 40 calls per week out of the Erma location. Medic 9 has the ability to respond



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Above, Lou Raniszewski of Medic 5 and Jim Kilmer of AtlantiCare spoke at Monday's Lower Township Council meeting. AtlantiCare based a paramedic unit at the Erma Firehouse.

to heat attack and stroke victims, or to traffic accidents where serious injury is likely. The paramedics are able to start IVs, give medication and respiratory support, among other medical services. Kilmer said the unit would also be participating in community events with educational presentations.

"AtlantiCare is committed to helping to keep the individuals of this community safe and injury free," he said.

Councilman Tom Conrad, a captain on the Lower Township Rescue Squad, said the addition of a paramedic unit was a big asset to the community.

"With AtlantiCare in the

township, the better care the residents will receive. More importantly, the response time will be improved by 5 to 10 minutes. That will give (medical personnel) the chance to save more lives and reverse the effects of heart attack and stroke," he said.

Several members of the public complimented AtlantiCare and Medic 5 for its work in the past. Resident Fred Long said his daughter-in-law had an incident last summer and the response of Medic 5 in getting her to the AtlantiCare Medical Center saved her life.

In other township business, the council authorized the application Small Cities Public Facilities grant and Housing Rehabilitation grant. Some of the funding would be used to construct an ADA accessible, unisex restroom in the Recreation Center. John Louderback asked that some of the money be used to rehabilitate classroom space in the Fishing Creek School for use as an early education center. Mayor Mike Beck said

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Coast Guard celebrates 222nd birthday at Training Center-Cape May

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – The longest continuing seagoing service in the nation, the U.S. Coast Guard, celebrated its 222nd birthday on Saturday, Aug. 4. In honor of the anniversary, Training Center Cape May held a special Sunset Parade on Sunday evening at precisely 7:37 p.m., welcoming over 450 guests.

The Coast Guard was founded in 1790 and is one of the nation's oldest government organizations, according to CWO Donnie Brzuska of Training Center Cape May. The Coast Guard is both a military force and a federal law enforcement agency dedicated to safety, security, and stewardship mis-



U.S. Coast Guard Honor Guard on parade ground

sions. For years, the military branch has been responsible for saving the lives of others, protecting the environment, defending our nation's

borders and enforcing federal laws on the rough ocean waters, inland waterways and coastal waters. Brzuska said the parade was an ideal way

to recognize those who are or have been a part of the U.S. Coast Guard.

"I think everyone walked away with a greater appreciation of the Coast Guard and the men and women who served before us," he said.

Brzuska said the parade on Sunday included impressive military displays of marching troops, the Honor Guard, the Coast Guard Recruit Band and the Recruit Precision Drill Team. He said the Cape Harmonaires performed at the ceremony and finished off their night with a rendition of "Semper Paratus," the Coast Guard song.

"It was a pleasure for them to donate their time and recognize the Coast Guard and entertain the crowd," Brzuska said.



U.S. Coast Guard rifle drill team performing at Training Center.

Around 30 students from the Junior Navy ROTC program at the Perth Amboy High School also appeared at the ceremony. Brzuska

said it gave the students a small taste of the military and hopes it was an inspiring

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