

Cape May Star and Wave

155th YEAR NO. 16 CAPE MAY, N.J.

SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY

THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2009

50¢



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WEATHER ALMANAC

BY WAYNE ROOP

APRIL			
(Normals: 60°/44°, 3.51")			
	High	Low	Precip.
2	57°	48°	.26"
3	69°	50°	.48"
4	63°	48°	
5	65°	45°	
6	59°	47°	.77"
7	51°	39°	
8	55°	39°	

No change to Cape May school tax levy

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – John Thomas, business administrator for the Cape May City School said while the school budget is up by \$50,000, the tax burden on property owners would not go up.

"The increase comes out of the federal impact aid," Thomas said.

The federal impact money is paid to the school district because the Coast Guard base sends its children to Cape May City School.

Thomas said the levy would not increase from this year to next, with \$1,483,921 being raised by local taxes, representing about 8.8 percent of the total tax bill. At the rate of .663 per \$100 of assessed value, the owner of a \$500,000 home in Cape May would be taxed \$331.42 for the 2009-2010 school year.

The Cape May City School, Thomas said, continued to be debt free, with no funds budgeted for debt service.

The approximately \$3.3 million budget uses about \$300,695 from fund balance (surplus) in the 2009-10 budget.

The school continues with staffing cuts implemented in the 2006-07 and subsequent school years. The business administrator's position was reduced by 20 percent; a half time position was eliminated from the custodial staff; Superintendent Victoria Zelenek teaches 20 percent of her time; a full time secretarial position with benefits was replaced with a part time/no benefits position; the library and gifted and talented positions continue to be half time.

The only staff change is restoring the Technology position to full time due to the rapid changes and the implementation of the Technology Assessment at the Eighth Grade level. Special education staffing was increased from 1.5 to 2 positions because of an increased need. The increases account for only \$9,940 in the 2009-2010 budget and \$5,982 for the 2010-2011 budget.

The Cape May City School continues to educate its special education students rather than send them to the Cape May County Special Services School, where the cost would be higher.

In an effort to save money, the school board, superintendent and business

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Press pool photo provided Press of Atlantic City/Special to the Cape May Star and Wave
PO3 David Downham, a Coast Guard rescue swimmer, shows members of a Marine Board of Investigation how the survival suits of victims of the Lady Mary sinking allowed water in because the zippers were not up completely. Below, helicopter pilot Lt. Cdr. Tina Pena explains her role in the recovery of one survivor and two victims from the boat's crew of seven.

Lady Mary owner questions response of Coast Guard

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Royal "Fuzzy" Smith Sr., who lost two sons and a brother when his scallop boat Lady Mary sunk March 24, said the Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) on his boat worked as it should have, and suggested a slow response by the Coast Guard was what took the lives of his family members.

The United States Coast Guard convened a Marine Board of Investigation hearing Tuesday at 10 a.m. to find the cause of the sinking and the loss of life and make recommendations to prevent or reduce future loss of life.

Smith, who chose not to be represented by an attorney at the hearing, questioned the pilot about the Coast Guard's response to a signal from an unregistered EPIRB.

"Does (being registered or not) make any difference how fast you go out when you get an EPIRB?" he asked helicopter pilot Lt. Cdr. Tina Pena.

"Absolutely not. It just gives us more information and we could call out on the way," Pena said.

Pena piloted the MH-65C Dolphin helicopter that recovered lone survivor Jose Luis Arias and the bodies of Royal "Bobo" Smith Jr. and Timothy Smith.

Pena testified she was part of the Ready Bravo Team on a 24 watch

Please see Lady Mary, page A2



Missing crewmember from Lady Mary misidentified

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – William Torres, who was listed among the missing and presumed dead from the scallop boat Lady Mary, which sunk March 24, was not on the boat, the Coast Guard said.

Petty Officer First Class Crystal Kneen confirmed the

Coast Guard is looking for Torres, who was scheduled to leave with the rest of the crew, but for some reason was replaced by Jorge Ramos, who is believed to have perished with the other missing crewmembers. Kneen said the Coast Guard would like to interview Torres

Please see Identity, page A2

Jazz Festival should make people dance

Packed weekend kicks off tonight with party at Mad Batter

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Recently appointed executive director for the Cape May Jazz Festival Sal Riggi believes this Jazz Festival is going to make people get up and dance.

"I wouldn't be surprised if people would be up dancing," he said.

Riggi said the main headliners for Friday and Saturday night appearing at Lower Cape May Regional High School should get people excited.

"I think, first, they will be surprised with the blues theme, especially at the high school, especially with James Cotton," he said.

Cotton is a Grammy Award win-

ning "harp" player, referring to the mouth harp or harmonica. Cotton was inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame in 2006, and has played with a host of blues and rock musicians. "I listened to his CD, 'Celebrating 35 Years,' and it just blew me away," Riggi said.

Before Cotton takes the stage for two shows on Saturday night, however, the B Swingers Big Band starring Steve Butler will take the stage at the high school. Butler and the band will be playing a tribute

Please see Jazz Festival, page A2

'We have our usual spread with all kinds of genres of jazz ... I think people will take to it. We're taking some risks, but that's the only way to grow – to try new things.'

–Sal Riggi, festival director

Concern over on-street parking permits

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Cape May City Council heard from its solicitor, Anthony Monzo, who said there was some concern expressed over the number of on-street parking permits being issued, and non-resident property owners obtaining them for renters.

The idea of an ordinance creating designated on-street parking spaces for some residents was to give them parking near their home during the busy season. Some Cape May homes do not have off-street parking

or the ability to create off-street parking, and the residents are afraid to give up parking spots for fear of losing them.

City council passed an ordinance establishing an on-street parking permit for qualified property owners, charging \$300 for permits to offset the lost revenue from parking meters.

"The idea was to accommodate a resident who could not leave their home because they would lose their spot," Monzo said. "This was expanded to non-resi-

Please see Parking permits, page A2



Christopher South/
Cape May Star and Wave

Cape May celebrates Easter holiday

Easter events took over town last weekend in Cape May, including the Easter Fashion Stroll, above. Lizzy Bader and Nina Martini pose with the Easter bunny after showing off their holiday dresses. Left, Mary Smith and Richard Hemenway sport their bunny ears.

