DeSatnick donates six beach wheelchairs

By JACk FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

WILDWOOD — The DeSatnick Foundation has donated six beach wheelchairs with large tires able to navigate soft sand to Cape May, the Wildwoods and Ship Bottom.

At a ceremony to “unlock the doors” May 24 in Wildwood, the foundation donated two wheelchairs to Wildwood, one to North Wildwood, one to Wildwood Crest, one to Ship Bottom and one to Cape May.

While surfing Poverty Beach during Hurricane Humberto in 2001, DeSatnick Foundation founder Chad DeSatnickuffered spinal cord injury in his cervical C5 and C7 vertebrae, having 11-hour surgery to repair the shattered C6 and C7 vertebrae. DeSatnick was told he may never walk and certainly would never surf again. During an extensive rehabilitation program, which still continues today, he realized the number of spinal cord injuries in Cape May was increasing as a result of Hurricane Sandy.

He began lobbying Cape May City Council to bring awareness to the issue. A program was created to educate local municipal staff and board members about the challenges and benefits of living in a coastal community, signs indicating the existence of dangerous shore breaks were posted at every beach entrance and media across the tri-state area covered the campaign.

DeSatnick said providing the public and private collaboration to assist those in need with access. DeSatnick Foundation has helped numerous individuals in wheelchairs at their home, lifts to get in and out of bed, adaptive vehicles and purchased power wheelchairs for those in need.

“From the very first day,” DeSatnick said, “We will line up at the beginning of hurricane season again to access the public and help them.” DeSatnick noted the Wildwoods have hosted “They Will Surf” for 12 years. The event is to help those living with paralysis.

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CAPE MAY — Members of the new master plan committee are Chairman Harry Sheehan and Zack Mullock and Councilors Rich McManus and Andy Barber.

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VILLAS — Helen Eppehimer, a 98-year-old CPR instructor who holds more than 4,000 certificates, has received a proclamation honoring her for more than 60 years of dedicated service to Lower Township.

“For the first 20 years, Helen taught with her late husband, William, a World War II veteran, and past president of the Lower Township Police Department. In 1999, Helen celebrated her 90th birthday and continued to dedicate her time assisting her daughter teaching larger classes than when she needed.