



## House of the week

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## Twin Capes has new life under the sea

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164th YEAR NO. 28 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, JULY 11, 2018 \$1.00

# Panel: N.J. beaches back, better than ever

## Experts report full recovery from Sandy through replenishment, dune growth

There are healthy, beautiful beaches out there in New Jersey up and down the coast that are ready for the upcoming hurricane season, but also there for tourists to take advantage of. That vital infrastructure is being protected as well as the beaches are open and ready for all this summer.

—Keith Watson,  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

By ERIC AVEDESIAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

ATLANTIC CITY — Six years after Hurricane Sandy ripped through the region in 2012, New Jersey's beaches have been restored and are in some cases better than they were before, according to experts who spoke June 26 at Stockton University's Carnegie Center. The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy and the Coastal Research Center at Stockton Uni-

versity hosted the Jersey Shore Beach Report, which offered a snapshot of beach replenishment throughout the state.

Almost 163 million cubic yards of sand have been placed on the state's beaches at a cost of more than \$1.2 billion in federal, state and local funding.

Michael Klein, interim executive director of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy, said sound public policy and partnerships among scientists and government agencies brought

the beaches back from Hurricane Sandy.

"More than five years after Superstorm Sandy and its historic storm surge slammed into our coast, New Jersey beaches are back, and in some cases better than ever," Klein said. "They are all in great shape for the Fourth of July holiday and through the entire summer season."

He noted that the state recognized a need for scientific experts to evaluate damage from storms and make state and municipal

governments eligible for federal restoration funds following Hurricane Gloria in 1985.

The Coastal Research Center's New Jersey Beach Profile Network was established in 1986 to monitor seasonal shoreline conditions following storms. The network encompasses 106 sites along the Atlantic Ocean from Raritan Bay to Delaware Bay.

Informed by research, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the

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Edward O'Neill/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

## Proud patriots, pooch watch parade

Siblings James, Luke, Mary and Daniel Anderson watch Cape May's Independence Day parade perched atop a wall along Beach Avenue on July 7. See more photos on Page A7.

# Surfer rescues boy swimming without guard

By RACHEL SHUBIN  
Special to the Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — "I could see the fear in his eyes when I swam over to him," summer resident Austin Dandridge said of the boy whose life he saved while surfing June 28 at Poverty Beach.

Dandridge was surfing alone after lifeguards had left for the day when he heard the young boy in distress. He never expected that he would be making an after-hours ocean rescue, but that is exactly what happened. Dandridge, 34, said it was late evening when he heard the call for help.

"It was 7:30 p.m. and there were no other surfers in the water," Dandridge said. "I looked at the ocean for a second to see if I wanted to surf because the waves were 4 to 5 feet. The tide was coming in. I noticed a few different families with young kids playing in the shore break. I thought it was weird because the waves were big enough to not be letting your kids in

the water." Twenty minutes later, Dandridge heard a young boy in distress.

"I hear this kid screaming 'Help! Help! Help!' and I couldn't tell if he was messing with me," Dandridge said. "I was probably 100 yards from him. I started paddling closer to him and saw he was in danger and really struggling."



Dandridge

The strong Atlantic Ocean tides are constantly changing and are prone to rip currents. Visitors taking their eyes off their children splashing and playing in the breakers can have deadly consequences. Meer seconds can make the difference between life and death.

"He was probably 7 or 8 years old. He had two younger brothers still playing in the shore break and did not seem to realize that something was wrong," Dandridge said.

The Cape May Beach Patrol states that the overwhelming majority of drownings occur on unguarded

See Surfer, Page A2

# Man, 58, drowns swimming at lake

VILLAS — A 58-year-old man drowned in a lake in the Cox Hall Creek Wildlife Management Area, the former Ponderlodge golf course.

The Lower Township Police Department responded to the scene at about 4:24 p.m. July 8 to investigate a possible drowning in a lake located on the property. Investigation revealed that three friends were swimming in the lake. After one returned to his home in Villas, one of the two remaining swimmers left the water

and was unable to locate his friend, the second swimmer. The missing friend was identified only as a white male.

A multiagency response was activated with assistance from the Town Bank Fire Department's Dive Team, Villas Fire Department, Lower Township Rescue Squad, Cape May County Sheriff's Department K9 unit, as well as other Cape May County agencies. After a brief search, the man was located in the water near the

Man drowns, Page A4

# Treasure hunter finds valuables lost on beach

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — There is a childish proverb that states: "Finders keepers, losers weepers." For someone whose wedding band or engagement ring has disappeared into the sand of the beach or, worse yet, into the ocean, the weeping part may be correct.

But all is not lost for someone who loses a valuable item on a trip to the beach in Cape May. Jeffrey Laag, whose full-time job is serving as a lieutenant in the Cape May Fire Department, has developed an admi-

"I charge absolutely no fee because I don't believe in holding people's property for ransom. I don't know what everybody's financial situation is; it's unfair to not make the effort based upon what they have or don't have to give to you. What they lost might be the most valuable thing that they own."

—Jeffrey Laag, treasure hunter

nable sideline as a finder of lost rings and jewelry. His success rate is about 90 percent, and he's not in it for the money.

"I charge absolutely no fee because I don't believe in holding people's property for ransom," he said. "I don't know what

everybody's financial situation is; it's unfair to not make the effort based upon what they have or don't have to give to you."

"What they lost might be the most valuable thing that they own," Laag continued. He does accept tips

based on what the item's owner feels the recovery effort was worth to them, he said. So far, he has recovered about 90 rings.

Laag said when he used metal detectors as a hobby he would be approached by people who lost an item on the beach.

"It was one of those situations where they had no idea of who to turn to," he said. "I did some research and found there was a group that has a directory on the internet and by location you can find people who do this as a service."

Laag said few people of- See Treasure, Page A4

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