

OVER THE BACK FENCE

By Jack Fichter

Too old for neighborhood but just right for Kangaroo

A new movie about children's television host Mister Rogers opens this Friday.

"A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood," starring Tom Hanks as Fred Rogers, promises to be a film that may soothe our souls in this world filled with hatred, violence and a general lack of ethics and morality.

Rogers has been getting a lot of attention during the past three years with two documentaries produced for public broadcasting and theater release. "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood," focuses on a magazine journalist's assignment to interview Rogers.

I was a little too old to fully enjoy Mister Rogers Neighborhood when it came on the air in 1968. My children's television host of choice was Robert Keeshan, best known as Captain Kangaroo. The captain went on the air on CBS in 1955. I came into this world the following year.

Every weekday morning of my life, well into the 1960s, started with me watching "Captain Kangaroo." To this day, occasionally at 8 a.m., I'll say to myself "It's time for the captain."

If you didn't grow up with the captain, your children probably did and you watched along with them. If so, you are familiar with the spectacles-wearing rabbit who played a small piano and did everything he could to trick the captain into giving him carrots.

You would also be familiar with his friend with antlers who liked knock-knock jokes and delighted in dropping ping pong balls on the captain. A lot of us learned about animals from Mr. Green Jeans, who ran a farming operation on the show and appeared as other characters such as Mr. Bainter the Painter and the Old Folksinger, who played an upright bass on his lap like a guitar.

Cosmo Allegretti was the puppeteer behind Bunny Rabbit and Mr. Moose. He also portrayed Dancing Bear and the inept Dennis the Apprentice, and was the artist behind Magic Drawing Board.

The captain passed away in 2004. A few years ago, many of Keeshan's personal possessions began appearing for sale on eBay. There were dozens and dozens of items including original scripts from the show, color slides, contact sheets of photos, song lyric sheets and even the captain's hat, which had a starting price of \$10,000. I have to conclude Keeshan saved everything from the show throughout his life and at some point, his children cleaned out his house or sold all of it as one lot. I was tempted to spend \$300 on a box of original scripts from the show on eBay but I couldn't justify the expense.

A sweater bearing an embroidered Mr. Moose from Keeshan's estate is listed on eBay currently for \$300. Keeshan smoked off camera, and four of his personal cigarette lighters are also listed on eBay for \$300. A couple of handwritten notes from Keeshan are priced at \$750.

My takeaway from the captain was learning to be polite and a love of reading. Do you remember the captain reading aloud "Stone Soup," "Caps for Sale" or "Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel"?

I feel sorry for the current generation of youngsters who don't have the captain to watch. We grew up on commercials for cereal and sneakers, not pills for heart conditions, depression and diseases that seem to have been recently invented.

While you can't find "Captain Kangaroo" on television any longer, he does have a presence on YouTube. See if you can get your grandchildren to watch it. It will only do them good.



YOUR VIEWS

Three- to four-hour council meetings getting out of hand

To the Editor:
Over the years I have read with interest the "Our View" articles in your paper. Well, here is my view — and it could be overdue.

My friend, and everyone's friend, Patricia Harbora, the city clerk, and her deputy, Erin Burke, both of whom are very capable individuals, are getting worn down by needless work.

Three- and sometimes four-hour City Council meetings are getting out of hand. One has to ask "Why?" and who is to blame. If you happen to have attended recent council meetings, as I have, the answer is right before your eyes. Many times it is the council, though not always their fault, and many times it is the public. Yes, it is a joint problem.

The council members, who are

supposed to come to the meeting prepared to address the items on the agenda, have not been properly informed or, in some cases, not informed at all. What we have now is World War III between council members, and the city attorney appears to be caught in the middle. A lot of time is lost.

Under the Faulkner Act, State Statute 40:69A-95, Council-Manager form of government, the powers and duties of the manager (G), recommend to the municipal council for adoption such measures as may be deemed necessary, or expedient, to keep council advised of the financial condition of the municipality, make reports to the council as requested by it, and at least once a year, make an annual report of his work for the benefit of the council and the public.

Boy! If that were done it would save a lot of time.

And now to the public, including myself. Come to the council meetings with the intention of getting your point across in a timely fashion. Speak clearly, concentrate on why you are there and speak into the microphone. Keep in mind that there may be other citizens who have an issue they would like to address. The worst thing is having page after page of notes that are repetitive. Be specific and stay on your subject matter. If we, the public, and the city manager are willing to make a try of "My View," maybe, just maybe, things will improve for Patricia and Erin. Let's hope. Five minutes (of comment) is time enough.

Wister Barney Dougherty
Cape May

WAVES FROM THE PAST

Hotel Cape May, future Admiral sold

The Cape May Star and Wave, the nation's oldest weekly resort newspaper, has been published since 1854. Each week we revisit stories for our 165-year publishing history. This week we return Sept. 4, 1930, when the Hotel Cape May, which would later be known as the Admiral Hotel and the Christian Admiral, was sold for \$125,000:

Frederick Atansio, of the Paramount Investment Corporation and Associates, raised bid from \$75,000 to \$125,000. Judge Runyon in the United States District Court Wednesday approved the recommendation of Frank D. Schroth, receiver, that the Hotel Cape May be sold to Charles W. Harlow Jr., for \$125,000.

At the public sale last Friday, the city of Cape May bid \$95,000 while William E. Bates, of Atlantic City, and Leslie and Howard Tenenbaum, of Cape May, in a combination, bid \$90,000. Harlow bid on the ground that it was submitted after the public sale. Sen. Rusling Leap, representing the city of Cape May, protested

the acceptance of the \$90,000 bid and pointed out that the highest bid meant \$35,000 more for the city.

Neither the N.Z. Graves nor the Seymour interests were represented.

Judge Runyon directed that the property be sold to the highest bidder. The receiver was represented by Carlyle Garrison of Jersey City.

In the sale last Friday, the city by agreement was permitted to use tax titles in lieu of cash. The order of sale also provided that if a higher bid, agreeable to the District court, be made at the hearing on Wednesday, the high bid would be considered. At the Friday sale, mayor and council decided that in-as-much as the city holds approximately \$150,000 in titles the city should be over the \$90,000.

Associated with Mr. Harlow is Frederick Atansio, of the Paramount Investment Corporation, and other north Jersey capitalists. The corporation thru Mr. Atansio has purchased and now owns many thousands of dollars

worth of tax liens the bulk of which is in the East Cape May section. In the association also is Mr. Houghton, who has built and operated Colton Manor, in Atlantic City, and two years ago took over the President Hotel which he has successfully managed since.

At a meeting which is to be held in Trenton next Monday further details of the transfer will be worked out. It is expected that there will be provision made for additional substantial payments beyond that required by the order of sale.

It is understood that the purchasing interest will also acquire sufficient land adjacent to the Hotel Cape May to build an 18-hole golf course as part of the project.

Waves from the Past is researched and prepared by the Museum of Cape May County. The museum is located at 504 Route 9 in Cape May Court House. For information, call 609-465-3535 or visit cmcmuseum.org.

THE OTHER SIDE

Locals can share water story at event in North Cape May

By MARK ALLEN

If you are a regular reader of The Other Side, then you know that the focus of this column has always been Cape May Harbor.

The harbor is so much more than a body of water; it is the source of so much of Cape May's commerce, wealth and recreation, as well as the source of so many legends, stories and history. Cape May Harbor truly shapes the community in which we live, as has the Atlantic Ocean, Delaware Bay, Cape May Canal and so many other local water ways.

If you live here, we bet that you have a water story of your own. After all, we all have a story, don't we? Now is your chance to share your story and have it preserved for all time by the state.

So then, what is your story? The New Jersey Council for the Humanities (NJCH) in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution wants to know and they're coming to Cape May to hear it.

Since April, the NJCH has been hosting hour-long public discussions in every county to capture personal anecdotes about the different ways water matters to New Jerseyans. And water matters, doesn't it?

If I've learned one thing from writing this column, it's that water is especially important to those of us who live in close proximity to any waterway, body of water or water source.

For some locals, water provides their livelihood. For others, it's their playground or the cause that they champion. Who among us has not discovered peace and contentment while sitting by the water's edge? Maybe, like me, you've found yourself awed by the fury and chaos of a winter nor'easter or enthralled by the colors of a summer sunset.

Face it, if you live in Cape May County, you necessarily have an affinity for water. Down here at the end of the Garden State Parkway, we live in a county that juts about 20 miles into the sea, so we are literally bordered on three sides by water. Need a reminder? Just look at a Cape May police officer's patch. And then, remember, like all humans, we are at least 60 percent water.

On Monday, Nov. 25, it will be our turn to share our own unique water stories as the council will be coming to Cape May County to hear "What is Your Water Story?" Mark this

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Cape May Star & Wave

Ocean Wave, Est. 1854 Star of the Cape, Est. 1868
Cape May Star and Wave, Est. 1907 USPS519-020
P.O. Box 2427, Cape May, NJ 08204
Phone: (609) 884-3466 Fax: (609) 398-6397

David Nahan, Publisher

Jack Fichter, Managing Editor

Craig Schenck, Associate Editor Rob Elder, Advertising Director
R.E. Heinly, Columnist Elaine Krajicek, Advertising
Mark Allen, Columnist Rosanne M. Borgo, Business Office
Sam Hutchins, Graphics Ginny Leith, Graphics

Visit the office at 1252 Route 109 in Cape May

Contact us via email:

Editorial: cmstarwave@comcast.net

Advertising: cmstarwaveadvertise@comcast.net

Visit our website at: www.starandwave.com

How to Contact Your Representatives

U.S. Senate

Sen. Robert Menendez, 528 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510, (202) 224-4744; Go to www.menendez.Senate.gov/contact.

Sen. Cory A. Booker, 141 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510, (202) 224-3224; Go to www.booker.senate.gov/contact.cfm.

U.S. House of Representatives
Congressman, District 2, Jeff Van Drew, 331 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington, D.C.

20515, (202) 225-6572; (202) 225-3318 (fax), website vandrew.house.gov; District Office: 5914 Main St., Ste. 103, Mays Landing, NJ 08330, (609) 625-5008.

Governor

Gov. Phil Murphy, State House, Trenton, NJ 08625, (609) 292-6000.

Legislators, District I

Sen. Robert Andrzejczak (D), Assemblyman Bruce Land, (D), Assemblyman Matt Milam (D) — Contact state legislators at: 21 North Main St., Cape May Court House, NJ 08210; Phone: (609)

465-0700; email: SenAndrzejczak@njleg.org, AsmLand@njleg.org, AsmMilam@njleg.org.

Local Government

Cape May: Mayor Chuck Lear and City Hall, (609) 884-9535, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Cape May Point: Mayor Robert Moffatt, Borough Hall, (609) 884-8468, ext. 20, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lower Township: Mayor Erik Simonsen and Township Hall, (609) 886-2005, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

West Cape May: Mayor Carol Sabo and Borough Hall, (609) 884-1005, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

HAVE SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND?
PUT IT IN A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF
THE CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE
Email to: cmstarwave@comcast.net
Include your name, address, daytime phone.