Ferry traffic up, new buildings in the works at county airport

By JACK FICHTER

NORTH CAPE MAY — The Cape May-Lewes Ferry recorded a second consecutive year of year-over-year passenger growth in 2015. Last year, the ferry service transported 280,149 vehicles and 762,413 passengers, compared with 282,015 vehicles and 79,209 passengers who used the Delaware Bay service in 2014. The vehicle and passenger numbers increased nearly 8 percent and more than 5 percent respectively since 2013.

“Those numbers were particularly pleasing with 2015 results,” said Gehrke, director of ferry operations. “We work hard every day for our customers. To know it would be a challenge to beat our year-over-year numbers. The results are a testament to our employees’ hard work and dedication.”

According to Shanna Benson, director of marketing, the ferry’s digital marketing efforts were also a factor.

“Travel and hospitality marketing is increasingly digital as customers go to mobile and online sources for research and self-service. We have a variety of digital tools, we have developed channels that reach close to a quarter-million customers monthly for visiting the bay and using for the ferry to enrich their experiences,” said Benson.

Ferry service officials also attributed the ferry’s success to enriching their experiences.

NORTH CAPE MAY — Law-enforcement officers with the Lower Township police, county Prosecutor’s Office and FBI are continuing to investigate a robbery of Crest Surrey Bank of 309 Smyth Road that took place at 12:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 25.

Upon arrival of police, bank employees stated a male wearing a ski mask and holding a dark-colored handgun entered the bank at 12:30 p.m. and demanded money. After obtaining an unidentified amount of cash, the male fled across Bayshore Road and into a wooded area. The suspect is described as a Hispanic male about 5 feet, 10 inches tall, weighing about 145 pounds and wearing all dark clothing.

Residents reported seeing a man running near Villa Woods Road as well as in a wooded area beginning about 3:10 p.m., Lower Township police had closed Bayshore Road between Breakwater Road and Fire Lane for several hours as a search for the suspect continued.

Lower Township police, state Police, Cape May County Sheriff’s Office, Cape May County Prosecutor’s Office and a helicopter from the State Police searched wooded areas from Bayshore Road to Cape Woods to Mickel’s Run.

According to a news release, a maroon of Rehoboth Cape Woods, Mickel’s Run and Sheridan Lane were unsuccessful in locating the suspect.

Lower Township police are asking anyone who has any information about the incident to notify the department at 609-884-2711. Texts may be sent anonymously by texting TIPLTD followed by your message to 888777, or go to www.tipjane.com and submit a tip.

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NORTH CAPE MAY — Allen Hathe- way, who is recognized as one of the world’s foremost experts on cleanup of former manufactured gas plant sites, is questioning whether the remediation on sites at the Ponderlodge golf course and the Bayshore Road Development site, the latter of which was recently acquired by JCP&L, was sufficient.

Former owners of the Ponderlodge golf course, which was purchased by the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Division of Fish and Wildlife, generated a large amount of hazardous material, according to a news release.

Hatheway said the clarifications process used at the Cape May plant would have used cooler water to get the part out of the gas. He said each plant had a dump site, most often located along the property or within blocks of the site.

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