Big snake spotted on loose in Villas
Animal control warns residents to call for help

By JACK FICTHER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — A large exotic snake native to New Jersey has been reported in Villas.

On July 27, Airport Road resident Susan Poretta graphed a large snake in a tree giving what appears to be a gull. The markings and size of the snake resemble a reticulated python, she said.

On the following Friday, a person reported another snake in the same area. The same snake that was spotted was spotted in a back yard on Arbor Road trying to eat a cat, she said. The Arbor Road home backup to Dune Court Yard.

“They heard the cat hit the glass and ran to call for help,” said Susan Poretta, who confirmed the sighting. “They want us to call Animal Control to get the snake out of the house. They worry about the children.”

Township Manager Mike Voll said that safety was a major concern for the township.

“With the young children and the individuals that are living in that area, it’s a safety concern,” he said.

Villagers were warned to call Animal Control if they see the snake or if they hear animal sounds.

Millman Center repairs in works

By JACK FICTHER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Following a one-car accident that knocked down two walls in the small meeting room of the newly renovated Millman Center in May, Lower Township Council approved a contract for repairs at its July 21 session.

The winning bid went to Joseph Aliano Construction, of Vineland.

The scope of the work includes construction plans, technical specifications and bidding documents.

Conrad said that from the beginning of the project, the township was going and how much it would cost. She said the township will abide by law to hold a bid but that her two questions have not been answered.

Simonsen said the county was completing a study of the structural integrity of the current public safety building in the report for possible improvements and needed to purchase a new building. The scope would include new police and emergency management offices. He presented a memo forward and spending taxpayer money before council approved the bonding of the new police building.

Bonding of the new police building would require four members of council to vote in the positive. All recent votes concerning the project garnered 3-2 votes.

“In order to obtain a more accurate price, we’re going to have to do the kind of work and hire the architecture, the engineer and do the design,” Beck said.

Beck said council has been debating replacing the public safety building for 10 years.

Beck said Conrad and Simonsen “want county to vote” for the project and get them out from underneath the project. He said bringing the police station to Villas was a safety issue.

Beck said the experience of the project is a major concern for the project.

“Equally, in the case of working to bring a new police station to Villas, we’re being asked to spend taxpayer money before a complete study is done. He said he is concerned about the cost of the project.

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The vote split along party lines, with council’s three independents, Mayor Michael Beck, Deputy Mayor Mary Stewart, and Conrad, voting to approve the contract. Republicans Erik Simonsen and Tom Conrad voted against the contract.

The contract with Engineering Manager, Joseph Aliano, of Vineland, is not to exceed $28,650.

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