

Cape May Star and Wave

163rd YEAR NO. 32

CAPE MAY, N.J.

SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2017 75¢



House of the week

Real Estate Resource



Lower Twp. marks National Night Out

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

About 35 children from the Camden Neighborhood Center were treated to a day at the beach by the Cape May United Methodist Church. They were given lunch, beach towels, pails and shovels before heading out to the surf.

Camden youngsters get outing on sunny beaches of Cape May

By JACK FICHTER

Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Pizza, ice cream, a new beach towel, a pail and shovel and an afternoon on the beach — what could be more fun for a child from the city of Camden?

Ask the 35 children who spent an afternoon on the beach here Aug. 2. They screamed for ice cream and at the slightly rough tide at the water's edge.

"The United Methodist Church is a partner with the Camden Neighborhood Center along with a number of other groups in supporting them in their quest to break the tide of poverty by providing children in the Camden area with art programs and

'They get so excited. They have their beach clothes on already. They have their hair all done and the boys have their water shoes on and we're ready to go.'

—Jasmine Taylor, communications director

camp programs and days like this when they go on field trips," said Arlette Wright, director of the Day at the Beach event.

Cape May United Methodist Church hosted the event, serving lunch in its fellowship hall and draping pews in the sanctuary with beach towels for the children to take to the beach and lining the aisle with pails and shovels donated by Haddon Heights United Methodist Church.

The children and their chaperones arrived on a chartered school bus at noon. Lunch was served before departing for the beach.

Food was donated by local pizzerias, ShopRite, Acme and water bottles from Joe Canal's. The Kiwanis Club of Cape May and Cape May United Methodist members provided the array of colorful beach

Camden youngsters, Page A3

Officer alleges retaliation, sues Sheehan, others

Claims superiors created hostile work environment after disciplinary hearing

By JACK FICHTER

Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Police Patrolman Douglas Henderson has filed a civil suit against the city of Cape May, police Capt. Robert Sheehan, the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office, county Prosecutor Robert Taylor, Assistant County Prosecutor Robert Johnson and 25 "John Does."

According to the complaint, Henderson is seeking damages for lost wages, emotional stress, physical illness, bodily harm and injury, promotion economic damages, back pay, loss of benefits and health care coverage, consequential damage to reputation, punitive damages and legal fees in relation to the creation of a hostile and retaliatory work environment.

Henderson's complaint

states Sheehan, as his supervisor, unlawfully combined or acted in concert with the city of Cape May to engage in "unlawful and discriminatory misconduct" during his employment with the city. The complaint also states Taylor and Johnson unlawfully combined or acted in concert with the city to "engage in the unlawful and discriminatory misconduct."

According to the complaint, Henderson was employed by the city as a special officer in 1992 and a full-time patrol officer in 1995. He was assigned to the detective's office in the beginning of 2009 and remained there through May 2015. Henderson oversaw the police department's firearms program since 2003. He was assisted by Officer

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City considers joint public safety center

By JACK FICHTER

Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council approved establishing a Public Safety Building Advisory Committee to study the feasibility and option of constructing a new facility to house the fire department, rescue squad, police department and Office of Emergency Preparedness.

During a council meeting Aug. 1, Councilman Roger Furlin asked the enabling resolution include a requirement the committee produce a final report for council.

Members of the committee are: Chairman Jerry Gaffney, Vice Chairman Barney Dougherty, Fire

Chief Alex Coulter, Police Chief Anthony Marino, Office of Emergency Management Coordinator Rick Lundholm, tax assessor Louis Belasco, Volunteer Fire Department President James Matthews and Deputy Mayor Shaine Meier as liaison to council.

Residents on the committee are Scott Griffith, Robert Lamendola, Roseanne Traficante and Kathleen Wyatt.

The resolution notes the fire and police departments, rescue squad and Office of Emergency Preparedness "are housed in inadequate, outdated, crowded, hazardous and, in some cases, toxic

Public safety, Page A5

Township Council approves Beach Drive sidewalk project

By JACK FICHTER

Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — In a unanimous vote Monday, Lower Township Council approved a \$2.8 million bond ordinance for the construction of a sidewalk along Beach Drive in North Cape May.

Before the vote, council listened to an hour of mostly negative comments from residents opposed to the project.

The goal of the project is to

improve pedestrian and cyclist safety extending from Lincoln Drive to Fernwood as well as make the sidewalks ADA compliant. The project will also improve drainage issues, repair current sidewalks and help limit sand migration onto the roadway.

The project includes installing a 6-foot-wide sidewalk on the west side of Beach Drive with curbing and improving existing sidewalks on the east side.

Sand that must be removed to complete the project will be relocated back onto existing dunes and any vegetation will be replanted.

The new roadway will be 32 feet wide, including the existing parking lane.

Resident Kevin Vrieze said he had a copy of a letter sent to Mayor Erik Simonsen from the county Planning Department concerning Open Space funding, outlining a number of reasons

why they were deferring any action on the project. He said the county was requesting a traffic study, a detailed maintenance plan and an anticipated budget. Vrieze asked council to shelve the project.

Township Manager Jim Ridgway said county Open Space had a traffic report for the project.

"We're ready to go back in front of them with those particular items that were addressed," he said.

Resident William Harron asked for a voter referendum on the project.

"Let the voters decide on it, not just the mayor and council," he said.

Resident and former township manager Joe Jackson said the project should have been undertaken four years ago.

A.J. Ernst said residents in his age bracket with young

See Beach Drive, Page A5

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