

MUA to locate, add water valves to lessen effect of outages

By **BETTY WUND**
Special to the Star and Wave

VILLAS — Water valves are a major concern of the Lower Township Municipal Utilities Authority, since service can be cut off if valves are in need of repair.

To evaluate the condition of the valves, the MUA has contracted with Utility Service Co. to find the ones not mapped so that they may be inspected. Additional valves will be placed to create smaller groups of valves so that water will not be shut off totally in an area in the event of an emergency.

During a meeting of the MUA Board of Commis-

sioners on April 5, engineer Marc DeBlasio included details of the East Villas Water Main Improvement Project Phase I. The project is almost complete, he said. Work will start on replacement of water mains on Roseann Avenue after completion of that project. The contractor will notify residents of the work schedule, DeBlasio said.

It was also reported that the master water permit is in place. This will allow the MUA to make changes in the East Villas Water Main Improvement Project Phase II without going back to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for approval. It will be a time-saver in completing the

project without delays, according to DeBlasio.

The engineer's report also included ongoing studies on the water storage system and the waste water management system. Executive Director Mike Chapman said this is the ideal time of year for study of the waste water management system, so a report will be available soon.

"This year, we are doing a detailed study on the water tower improvement plan and a really detailed cost study: water distribution, wells, sewer. With that tool, by the middle of this year, we should be able to sit down and map out the future as far as what rates are, capital needs are and

have a good model for the next ten years," Chapman said.

He reported USDA stated that there will be a delay in financing the East Villas Water Main Improvement Project Phase II. Chapman said he has contacted the New Jersey Infrastructure Trust Fund. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is recommending this route, he said. This type of loan will have a lower interest rate and save money over that period of time according to Steve Testa, CPA, financial consultant for the MUA.

The first pump station to be refurbished in house is working well, according to Chapman. By not using

a contractor the MUA is saving more than half the cost of the process. He said he anticipates that two more pump stations can be refurbished this year. Chapman also reported a new underground sewer inspection camera has

been received. Training will be taking place soon and four of the crew will take a certification course. Hydrant flushing will take place in May he added, in reply to a question from Vice Chairman Jacqueline Henderson.

Ferry to put focus on community this spring

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NORTH CAPE MAY — Visitors and local residents use the Cape May-Lewes Ferry for its convenience and to appreciate the beauty of Delaware Bay. Linking Cape May and Cape Henlopen, Del., it offers not only convenient travel but activities that make for a special outing on either side of the 14-mile ride.

Each year a new event is planned. They are chosen because of local interest and increase the season from spring to fall. They are geared to visitors as well as permanent and weekend homeowners and visitors, according to Director of Marketing Rhonda Bronson.

Spring events at the terminal are focused on community involvement, Bronson said. The Cape May Ferry Terminal is hosting a Breakfast with the Bunny on Saturday, April 15. It is the second time for this event. Seatings are at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. The price is \$25 for adults and \$14 for children. Reservations are full for the 11 a.m. seating. Check with the ferry for availability for the 9 a.m. seating.

In May, the Cape May terminal will salute the Coast Guard with a breakfast Sunday, May 7, after concluding events and ceremonies for the Coast Guard Festival. It is open to all. Reservations are being accepted now. Seatings are at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. The cost is \$24 for adults and \$14 for children. The event will also include a classic car show on the grounds and special awards. Its focus is to get the coasties off the base and make them feel the community support as well as to introduce residents to members of the Coast Guard Bronson, said.

On Thursday, May 11, from 1 to 3 p.m., there will be an opportunity to meet the author of "The Girl in His Dreams" at a "Tea and Romance" event. The first of its kind, it will give the public an opportunity to meet the author of this Cape May based real-life story. The cost is \$15 for tea and \$25 for tea and a signed copy of the book. Reservations are required.

A Mother's Day Breakfast has been part of the event planning for a few years. On May 14, a buffet style breakfast will be available in the salon. The cost is \$25 per adult and \$13 per child.

There are two events in

May that may interest day-trippers from Cape May to Lewes. On Sat., May 6, there will be a British car show at the Lewes Terminal. It is sponsored by the Lewes, Del., Chamber of Commerce. Foot passengers will be charged \$20 round trip. Admission to the car show is \$3 to view more than 100 classic cars.

Maritime Day at the Lewes Terminal will be held Saturday, May 20. Admission is free to view table top exhibits celebrating the history and vibrancy of the Delaware Bay according to Bronson. There will be a special event fare that day.

"We are always encouraging business owners and groups to take the ferry and experience it for themselves so they can more easily recommend the experience for their own customers. We have special group fares for larger parties and organizations," Bronson said. "During the spring, we like to encourage local residents to take the ferry to enjoy the experience for themselves as everyone is so busy in the summer being great hospitality providers and it is generally warm and sunny. It also gives residents an opportunity to take a well-deserved breath of fresh air for themselves."

Spring fares are \$18 roundtrip for adult foot

passengers. A car with driver is charged \$72 roundtrip. In summer this will increase to \$82. Shuttles from the Lewes Terminal to the town of Lewes are running this spring. The ferry is at the southern end of Route 9, referred to as Ferry

Road, in Lower Township. Early evening travelers can catch the sunset over the bay as well as look for dolphins and sea turtles. More information is available at cmlf.com. For reservations and information about the events, call (800) 643-3779.

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Beach

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mit would be required from the DEP that can cost as much as \$30,000 for one minor item. He advised the city combine a number of tasks it wished to do with the beach into one permit.

Deputy Mayor Shaine Meier said he has received complaints from property and business owners along Beach Avenue about overgrowth of vegetation on the dunes. He said he consulted with the city's Shade Tree Commission, which referred to the maintenance as vista pruning, just cutting back a bush or tree.

Meier said restaurants pay a lot of property taxes and those who wish to sit on the Promenade on benches want to enjoy the view, which is being blocked. He asked that pruning be included in the beach maintenance permit application.

Thornton said he would review current regulations of a general permit and report his opinion to council.

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