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Fishermen: no need to shell out for turtles

■ Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) may finally be coming to New Jersey and commercial fishermen couldn't be more upset. Critics of the TEDs say they are unnecessary and reduce the catch.

By RICHARD DEGENER
Staff Writer

The federal government, in an attempt to prevent endangered marine turtles from dying in fishing nets, may require mid-Atlantic commercial fishing vessels to use "turtle excluder devices."

The so-called TEDs, which are essentially escape hatches built into the nets, are already required on some fluke and shrimp trawling vessels from Virginia south into the Gulf of Mexico. They now may be required on trawlers working as far north as Long Island.

Widely criticized down south for reduc-

ing the catch, adding to costs and presenting dangers to crewmen, the possibility that TEDs may be required in southern New Jersey is bringing harsh reactions.

"That will be a major pain in the butt. Fishing is a vital part of southern New Jersey and the way these regulations are coming into effect it will make it hard to survive," said Port of Cape May fisherman Mark Gettovese.

Charlie Bergman, of the Axelsson & Johnson fish dock in Lower Township, said TEDs may work with shrimp but won't with one of the main trawl catches here, squid. "If they require TEDs on the nets we use in the ocean you can forget any squid fishery. A TED leaves a hole in the net. Squid will find the hole, shrimp don't," said Bergman.

The government is considering measures to reduce the number of turtles taken by several different types of fishing, including:

■ Gill netting, in which a net is placed in the ocean and catches fish by the gills;

■ Longlining, in which a line with many hooks is put into the ocean;

■ And trawling, in which a net is towed behind the boat.

Officials with the National Marine Fisheries Service, the agency drafting the regulations, say they don't yet know what measures will be taken on gill netting and longlining but for trawling TEDs may be required.

The proposal should be out by February, according to Colleen Coogan, a biologist with the NMFS Protected Species Program. Coogan said there would be a public comment period and hearings before a final rule is proposed.

Phil Williams, acting chief of the Endangered Species Division of the NMFS, said the agency hopes to have something in place by this summer.

"We have no proposed rule out yet. We've been talking to fishery managers in the states," said Williams.

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Help for sea turtles

Excluder devices, shown here with a trawl net, provide an escape hatch for sea turtles caught in fishing nets.



Finfish deflector: Filters out fish

KRT graphic



Sam Siligato, left, sits at trial Tuesday as his attorney Louis Barone argues a point in Siligato's case against State Police.

Witnesses deny state claim



Nicholas Calli testifies he never saw Siligato kill a woman in the Silly Gator.

State Police dug up Siligato's Silly Gator Bar in Hammonton and Elm Delf in Winslow Township in search of corpses.

Siligato is suing the State Police for damages to his properties, saying they did not have enough evidence to do the excavations.

Cop case contradicted by men they say saw Hammonton murders

By ELAINE ROSE
Staff Writer

ATLANTIC CITY — State Police have claimed four people saw Sam Siligato kill a woman in 1980, but two of them testified Tuesday they witnessed no such thing.

A third was unable to testify Tuesday due to illness, but his 1980 statement, that he did not witness a murder was read in court.

The fourth man, reputed mob associate James DiNatale Sr., died in 1983, two years before State Police dug up Siligato's Silly Gator Bar in Hammonton and Elm Delf in Winslow Township in search of corpses.

Siligato is suing the State Police for damages to his properties, saying they did not have enough evidence to do the excavations. He claims authorities had it in for him because he was friendly with reputed organized crime figures.

State Police claim they had information from confidential sources, that Siligato had killed the woman, who was supposedly pregnant with his child, and buried the body under an addition being built onto the bar. Informants also said

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O.C. police still search for woman who left home wearing pajamas, socks

By MEG TORNETTA
Staff Writer

OCEAN CITY — Police are continuing their search for a 35-year-old woman suffering from an anxiety disorder who ran away from her sister's Ocean City home Saturday night wearing only pajamas and socks.

Renee Lamanna of Fresh Meadows, N.Y., ran out of her sister's Wesley Avenue house in the bone-chilling cold about 7 p.m., according to police.

Lamanna had been admitted earlier in the day to a Queens hospital for psychiatric evaluation after she was found walking the streets of New York, barefoot and disoriented, a family member said.

Lamanna is described as non-suicidal and police do not suspect foul play in her disappearance, but they are concerned about the woman's mental state and her exposure to the extremely cold temperatures.

She is described as five feet, two inches tall, 58 pounds, with a sallow complexion and shoulder-length brown hair that was greasy and straggly when she was last seen.

Police said Lamanna was brought to her sister's Ocean City home after being discharged from the hospital and the two had had dinner together.

Shortly after they finished dinner, Renee Lamanna decided to leave and ran out of the house.

She left wearing no shoes and dressed only in red silk pajama pants, a white oversized sweatshirt, a bathrobe and white crew socks, according to Capt. James Nickels.

Nickels said police were called to the area immediately, but a search team of local police, the U.S. Coast Guard and dogs from the Cape May County Sheriff's Office, turned up no clues.

The extremely cold temperatures and windy conditions made the dogs less effective, he said.

The woman's bathrobe was found about a half a block away, Nickels said.



Renee Lamanna, 35, suffers occasional anxiety disorder.

A bartender at the Waterfront Restaurant in Somers Point reported that she saw Lamanna, dressed in a black and red flowered shirt, about two hours after she disappeared from Ocean City, police said.

Nickels believes Lamanna may be in the Ocean City-Somers Point area, the Queens or Manhattan area, or the Philadelphia area, and police are continuing to investigate the incident as a missing persons case.

The woman's family described her as suffering from panic attacks, which at times leave her extremely agitated and paranoid.

However, she is also described as being very calm at other times. Lamanna is a Muslim and holds three college degrees, including a master's degree. She is currently studying nuclear medicine technology in New York, according to her sister, who asked that her name not be used.

The family is posting flyers with Lamanna's picture in the hopes that someone may recognize her.

Anyone who may have seen Lamanna or has any information about her whereabouts is asked to contact Ocean City Police at (609)399-9111.

New information center under way in Sea Isle

By STEPHEN R. LEVINE
Staff Writer

SEA ISLE CITY — Tourists coming over the bridge this summer will find something all new and all knowing about the resort — an information center.

A new center is currently under construction along with a second basketball court and rest room facilities being built on Kennedy Boulevard, Commissioner James Iannone said Tuesday.

Up until now, Iannone said, the job of an official information center was filled by part time workers at a city beach office.

"There is no public information center on the island other than the beach office," he said. "It doesn't have the exposure that this other one will have."

"Envision it as being staffed for consistent hours, with maybe a poster outlining events. It would be a new crowd of mostly everybody entering the city."

Iannone said work on the new center is expected to be completed by spring.

Though he didn't have a figure for the full cost of the work, Iannone said it is mostly being funded with money set aside by the city's recreation department. Members of the department who work in the construction trades are donating their time to keep labor costs low, he said.

Whatever isn't covered by the recreation fund will be picked up by the city.

"For accounting purposes a fund was set aside from the city's general fund. If we're short in that area we can supplement it with our own revenue," Iannone said.

Because work had already begun on a new basketball court and restrooms, Iannone said it made sense to add the information center now.

"While they were doing the work it's certainly less costly to build the new center now than at a later date," he said.

Two still critical from Atlantic City jitney crash that injured six

By JOIE LAPOLLA
Staff Writer

ATLANTIC CITY — A week after a jitney carrying six people crashed head-on into the wall of an underground tunnel, two victims — including the driver — remain in critical condition.

Two passengers have been released from the Atlantic City Medical Center City Division and another is in guarded condition.

One passenger is listed in satisfactory condition at Cooper Hospital-University Medical Center in Camden.

Rael Myles, 38, of Atlantic City, was the first victim to be released from the hospital. He was discharged Sunday, he said.

"I'm feeling a little better," said Myles, a slot supervisor at Harrah's Casino Hotel in Atlantic City. "But I'm still feeling a lot of

pain all over my body."

Charges have not been filed in the crash, said Sgt. Ernest Jubilee. Police have not been able to interview the driver — Joseph Baccari, 34, — since he remains in critical condition at the hospital. Jubilee said,

Investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board and the local police are continuing an investigation into the

crash, Jubilee said.

Jitney Association President William Pennam called the accident the "worst" in the association's 70-year history. He also said the driver backed out while at the wheel, causing the jitney to travel off its regular route and into the tunnel at the Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort.

Myles said he remembers the

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