

■ A Cape May Court House family finds that mobility is the key to affordable housing.

By RICHARD DEGENER
Staff Writer

What motor vehicle weighs about 40 tons, moves very slowly and takes up most of the road?

In Cape May County on Tuesday the answer to that question was a Mack truck towing a 2½-story Victorian house.

The six-mile move from Clement to Dennisville took the better part of a day and blocked traffic in spots, but it also allowed Tony and Jeanne DeVico to realize their dream.

The DeVicos, who currently live on Mechanic Street in Cape May Court House, wanted to live in an older home out in the country. With that in mind, they purchased a 36-acre tract in Dennis Township a few years ago.

The problem: Affording an older house large enough to accommodate them and their four children.

That's when they found a house built between 1890 and 1920 and slated for demolition and being given away. They still had to pay to move it, but that was cheaper than building a new house.

"It's cheaper than new construction. If you wanted to build a house of that square footage you couldn't afford to,"



Utility crews take down wires to permit passage of the DeVicos' new home as it lumbers down Route 83 Tuesday on its way to Dennisville.

noted Jeanne. The move, accomplished by J.L. Davis House Movers of Ocean View, is also quicker than building a house.

"It's a short-term project. It can be done in a couple of months," said Jeanne.

So the DeVicos, who didn't even know a house could be moved a short time ago, decided

to do it. There have been some drawbacks, including delays due to weather and a large bill from telephone, electric and cable television companies to move lines as the house passed by.

For now, the home will be rented to a tenant. Due to a depressed real estate market, they haven't been able to sell their Victorian home in Cape

May Court House. They also don't want to take their kids out of school during the school year.

Meanwhile, Tony said he would start fencing the property for horses and making improvements for when they do head to the country, in a tract next to Belleplain State Forest and the Dennis Creek Wildlife Management Area.

Speculating boat caused fatal crash, court told

■ An engineer who specializes in accident reconstruction testifies for the prosecution in the Patcong Creek collision that killed two passengers

By W. LEON ROBE
Staff Writer

MAYS LANDING — Douglas Rubertone's 14-foot jet boat was traveling at least 30 mph along Patcong Creek when it slammed into a barge, killing two of his passengers. A jury was told Tuesday.

The bottom line is that the barge did not cause or contribute to this accident," Alfred I. Cipriani, a registered professional engineer based by the state as an expert witness, told the Atlantic County Superior Court jury.

This accident was almost solely governed by the speed of the Eliminator," Cipriani, who specializes in accident reconstruction, said when questioned by Atlantic County Assistant Prosecutor Susan Curcio.

Rubertone, 31, of Cherry Hill, is on trial on two counts of manslaughter, two counts of death by vessel and one count of aggravated assault.

Cipriani said he reviewed statements witnesses to the July 4, 1992, accident had given to authorities and various other reports and reached his conclusion.

According to Cipriani, the statements and reports led him to believe that Rubertone's boat was traveling between 30 to 70 mph. The driver of the other vessel, Robert Krowiec, was traveling in the opposite direction between 20 and 25 mph, he said.

Cipriani, when questioned by Rubertone's attorney, Francis Hartman, said that his findings were not based on any one statement, but rather, adding that he didn't consider any single report or statement to be "the most im-

portant." The accident happened shortly after 6 p.m. about 100 yards east of the Garden State Parkway bridge when Rubertone, who was allegedly intoxicated, rounded a bend in the creek.

Hartman pointed out that in his report, Cipriani said that Rubertone was headed east on the creek. However, State Trooper Robert Kelly testified last week that he had made a mistake when he filed out his report and that Rubertone was actually headed east.

Cipriani commended the mistake by writing in his report that Rubertone was headed west. Still, based on the various accounts, Cipriani said he concluded that Rubertone and Krowiec had at the most 20 seconds to react once they spotted each other.

According to Cipriani, there was simply "too little time to react."

Rubertone testified earlier in the trial that when he spotted Rubertone coming toward him he turned left instead of right as called for under marine rules of the road in an attempt to avoid Rubertone's boat.

Rubertone's two passengers, Scott Golin, 27, of Cherry Hill, and Michael Mayer, 29, of Bensalem, Pa., were killed in the crash. An autopsy indicated that both men drowned.

Rubertone, 23, of Ocean City and his passenger, Robert Lumb, 23, of Philadelphia, also were injured and Rubertone lost his left eye in the accident.

The trial resumed today before Atlantic County Superior Judge Arthur Greenberg.

North Wildwood police charge man with 6 counts of burglary

By THOMAS BARLAS
Staff Writer

NORTH WILDWOOD — City police arrested a local man Monday for allegedly taking several thousand dollars worth of merchandise during a recent burglary spree.

A search of Emilio Rivera's home turned up televisions, radios, power and hand tools and other merchandise allegedly taken from six properties near his residence.

Rivera, 33, of 118 W. Sixth Ave., is charged with six counts of burglary, three counts of theft and a single count of possession of stolen property. He is lodged in the Cape May County Correctional Center in lieu of posting \$100,000 cash bail.

City police said they received a report on Monday at around 5:30 p.m. from a resident who reported seeing a man riding a bicycle down North York Avenue. The caller reported that the man on the bicycle appeared to be carrying a television set in a plastic

bag, they said. The man, who turned out to be Rivera, was stopped at 25th and New York avenues by Corp. Joe Catanzano and Patrolman Mike Ledner and found to be in possession of a microwave oven, police said.

"Extensive" arrest given by Rivera at the scene led to a further investigation by Detective L. George Greenleaf and Detective Cliff Massie. The detectives searched Rivera's house, police said, and found more than \$2,000 worth of allegedly stolen property.

According to police, three burglaries were reported earlier Monday in the 100 block of West Seventh Avenue. Additional property checks in the area around Rivera's house by detectives turned up three more burglaries, they said.

All the merchandise found in Rivera's residence turned out to have been taken from the six burglarized properties, police said.

Ocean City police still seeking woman missing since Jan. 8

■ Police say they have no leads in the woman's disappearance and the possibility exists that she "just doesn't want to be found."

By STEPHEN R. LEVINE
Staff Writer

OCEAN CITY — Despite a three-week search, a mentally distraught woman who fled her sister's home here remains uncaptured.

Renee Lamanna, 35, of Fresh Meadows, Queens, was last seen about 9 p.m. Jan. 8 at the Waterfront bar in Somers Point. According to police and family, Lamanna left her sister's house on a home-chilling Saturday wearing only silk pajamas, socks and a sweatshirt.

Prior to her arrival at the bar — to which she didn't drive herself — Lamanna had been at her sister's house for about an hour and has not been heard from since.

"We've conducted a house to house search in a large part of the city and we've found nothing," Captain James Nickels of the Ocean City Police Department said. "Our concern is if she got a ride from Ocean City, who gave it to her?"

Nickels said anyone who may have given Lamanna a ride, or seen her that night, can call the department collect at 369-9111.

"We're just seeking informa-

tion. Right now, it's a dead end," he said.

Nickels said there is no indication of foul play at this point and that the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which often becomes involved in crimes that cross state lines, is only being consulted.

He said the possibility exists that there was no crime at all. "Maybe the girl just doesn't want to be found," he said.

According to Lamanna's sister, who asked that her name not be used, Lamanna, a student at Bronx Community College, had been studying in her apartment the night before she disappeared. About 1 a.m., her sister said, "a Good Samaritan called the police" after Lamanna became anxious or depressed and was found wandering around outside.

"She was very distraught when they picked her up," she said. Her sister said Lamanna was taken to a Queens hospital where she was evaluated for 11 hours and released.

The sister said a family doctor picked Lamanna up at the hospital and drove her to Ocean City. This all happened Jan. 8, "the sister said.

Kean: Gormley picks up endorsement

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re-election. Gormley immediately declared his intentions to run.

LoBiondo said Kean's backing of Gormley won't deter him from running if he decides he wants to.

"It won't have any effect on my thinking," LoBiondo said.

But the ex-governor, whose popularity in polls statewide was shown to be intact when he flirted with running for the U.S. Senate last year, could lift organizational and financial support to Gormley.

"Bill Gormley told me he was running, and I think he would make a superb congressman,"

said Kean, president of Drew University. "He had one of the most original minds of anyone I worked with in the Legislature."

"He has the courage to be independent and has sponsored very important bills," Kean said. "I'd like to see him in Congress."

"I'm very pleased to get this endorsement, especially since it is very rare that (Kean) gets involved," Gormley said. "It shows him strong support for this candidacy."

Kean emphasized he was not criticizing LoBiondo, saying he did not know of LoBiondo's intentions to run. But even after being told, Kean still said he thinks Gormley offers the best hope for Republicans to recapture a seat held by the Democrats for 20 years.

"I'm not saying anything against Frank. My comments are totally positive for Bill Gormley," Kean said. "It'd be very good at it and I have no problem endorsing his candidacy."

"Bill Gormley runs very, very well with independents and

Democrats. He's got that kind of record of reaching across party lines, much as Bill Hughes has," Kean said.

"We as Republicans never came close to Bill Hughes. Gormley is the same sort of person who appeals across party lines," he said. "He's the kind of candidate who can win."

Gormley was among the first Republicans to support Kean when he first ran for governor in 1981 and was a close legislative ally during the 1980s. But Kean has steadfastly stayed out of Republican primary battles, refusing to make endorsements even after he left office.

He stayed out of the fray when Cary Edwards, his first chief counsel, attorney general and personal friend, ran for governor in 1989 and 1993.

Kean said the only time he endorsed in a primary was in 1992, when Assemblyman Rodney Frelinghuysen, R-Morris, challenged Rep. James Courner, R-12th. And Kean made an exception then because an in-

dependent Republican was being threatened.

Kean said he has reversed his non-involvement policy because a Republican is once again governor and he is no longer the GOP leader.

"In general, I think when the party leader steps in, that usually decides the matter. And I thought the people should decide the matter, not the governor," Kean said.

"I kept that policy the last four years because we didn't have a leader and I was the de facto leader as the last sitting governor," he said.

"But that's over now. We have a (Republican) governor and it's her responsibility now. And I can do whatever I want to do," Kean said, laughing. "I have no problem endorsing friends and doing what I want to do."

State-level Republican sources have said party officials don't want LoBiondo to challenge Gormley in a primary, but LoBiondo's supporters in southern New Jersey are encouraging him

to reserve the right to limit quantities but in the past we've never had to do that," said O'Connor.

This year's tree crop, all 97.46 tons worth, is the biggest ever. The program began in 1988 with 38 tons and has grown each year since. In 1989, only eight of the county's 16 towns were involved.

This year 14 towns took advantage of the voluntary program that only runs when the cost of collecting the trees. The MUA does not charge the towns to chip them. Only Middle Township, which has its own program, and West Cape May declined to join.

"Another change since the early years is a new chipping machine bought to turn wood pallets into a mulch for sale to the public. The 'RSI Industrial Tub Grander' does the job in one day of what the old chipping machines needed weeks to accomplish.

"We used to do it one tree at a time. This takes two dozen trees at once, 15 tons an hour," said O'Connor.

For more information about obtaining the mulch call 465-9026. For more information on using mulch call the county Agricultural Extension Office at 465-5115.

Mulch: County chips away at trees

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live on in the tons of mulch being produced free of charge for county residents. This is a good time to use the Yule mulch to save plants trying to survive one of the colder winters in years.

"Now that we have this really cold freeze it's more important to make sure everything is mulched," said O'Connor. "This is a good example of closed loop recycling. The trees saved during the Christmas season, they've been recycled into a new and useful product."

The free mulch is available here at the landfill and also at the MUA's Transfer Station in Burleigh.

"They should bring their own bag or container, or a truck. We

Dennis: Township opposes aid cuts

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ment for the tax revenue that could be received for state-held land like Belleplain State Forest and wildlife reserves.

About half the land in Dennis Township is government-owned, according to Van Dusen. New Jersey chips in \$28,816 for the land holds.

Whitman had promised during her campaign not to cut municipal aid but then said last month that everything was on the table. "She shouldn't fix what's not broken," said Republican James F. Paul, a Whitman supporter.

"The municipal aid package was good. I think municipal officials used it earnestly for what it was meant for."

The resolution passed last week parallels similar measures sent to former Gov. Jim Florio over the past two years, Paul said.

Wells: Township enters pact with utility

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ration of streets.

■ \$7,630 for company labor and engineering.

Also Tuesday night, Township Committee gave DEEC officials

the six contaminated wells. DEPEC will review the bids and eventually pay for the systems to be installed, possibly next week.

The first contaminated well was found by Cape May County Department of Health officials during routine water sampling in September. That prompted a series of other water testing in the area.

The results of tests on water taken from 82 properties in an area primarily south of Ham Avenue and between Dori and Chestnut Oak drives showed that:

■ Six wells were found to be contaminated, with trichloroethylene levels ranging from 0.06 to 1.40 parts per billion of water.

Ocean City police charge teen suspect in attempted robbery

From PHOENIX STAFF REPORT

OCEAN CITY — A 17-year-old woman was injured Tuesday when she was knocked to the ground by a would-be purse snatcher, police said.

The woman was walking in the 1300 block of West Avenue around 10 a.m. when the juvenile approached her from behind and attempted to take her purse, according to Lt. Robert Blevin.

The woman held onto her purse and was knocked to the ground. The juvenile never got her purse, Blevin said.

The woman was taken to Shore Memorial Hospital where she was treated and released.

An eye witness gave police a description of the juvenile. By 2:30 p.m., a juvenile fitting the description was arrested and charged with attempted robbery. Blevin said.

The 15-year-old Ocean City suspect was then released to the custody of his parent, Blevin said.

The case was investigated by Detective Steve Ang and Patrolman Peter Brescia.

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