

REGION

Major music festivals may be coming to N. Wildwood

By THOMAS BARLAS
Staff Writer

NORTH WILDWOOD — The city is apparently close to making final arrangements on what local officials say could be the first of a series of major music festivals here.

The first festival is tentatively scheduled for Aug. 18 and 19 on the beach between 15th and 22nd avenues and will include music and comedy acts.

Some of the musicians and bands currently being sought for the festival include the Beach Boys, Crosby, Stills and Nash, Charlie Daniels, Tom Petty, Wil-

lie Nelson, and Poco.

The city recently entered into a contract with Phoenix Enterprises to put on the festival, according to Mayor Lewis G. Vinci. Phoenix Enterprises is headed by local resident Richard Martin, who is working with California promoters who have put together several other music festivals, he said.

Promoters estimate the music festival could draw about 50,000 people, which could boost the local tourism economy — along with that of the rest of Five Mile Beach and possibly some mainland communities — at a time

when the vacation industry is in a bit of a lull, Vinci said.

There is as yet no estimate of how much money the festival could pump into the coffers of businesses which depend on the tourism industry, he said.

"It's got to bring bucks in," Vinci said.

Additionally, the city will get \$30,000 from the promoters for the use of the beach, he said.

Further, Vinci said a successful music festival could provide national publicity for the city and surrounding area.

"It will put us on the national map," he said.

The city and Phoenix Enterprises hope to wrap up all the details surrounding the music festival during the next several weeks, the mayor said.

City Council must approve all the acts planned to perform during the music festival, Vinci said.

He said the city and Phoenix Enterprises will make an official announcement later as to final details — such as the performers, ticket prices and sponsors — surrounding the event.

Some of those details have apparently already been worked out.

For instance, Vinci said the

event will involve "family-oriented" music and comedy. The event will take place during daylight hours and no alcoholic beverages will be sold or permitted on the beach, he said.

Among other things, the promoters, at no cost to the city, will:

- provide security, fire and rescue personnel.
- install and remove a stage that can be used during good and bad weather and will face the ocean.

- install sound equipment.
- provide sanitation facilities.
- provide trash containers and clean up the area.

— fence off a section of the beach between 15th and 22nd avenues.

Vinci said city officials realize the festival must create traffic and parking problems.

"It's going to be hectic," he said. "But, we've got to try something."

Phoenix Enterprises reportedly has a five-acre site off shore that will be used for parking, Vinci said. Phoenix Enterprises is working with various bus companies in an attempt to work out a way to shuttle people to and from the city, he said.

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Wildwood death ruled accidental

Heart failure, exposure, intoxication killed woman

By THOMAS BARLAS
Staff Writer

WILDWOOD — Susan M. Negersmith, whose partially clad body was found behind a downtown restaurant during the Memorial Day weekend, died accidentally and not as the result of a homicide, authorities said Wednesday.

Toxicology reports show the 20-year-old Carmel, N.Y., woman died from a combination of heart failure, intoxication and exposure, they said.

The cause of death is officially being listed as "lethal cardiac arrhythmia and hypothermia ... due to alcohol intoxication and exposure," according to Cape May County Medical Examiner Dr. John Napoleon.

The blood alcohol content found in various parts of Negersmith's body ranged from three to five times that at which a person is considered to be intoxicated, according to a prepared statement released jointly by the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office and the local police department.

The determination regarding the cause of death is the result of "very extensive examinations and studies" made by the medical examiners' offices in both Cape May and Atlantic counties, the statement reads.

There was also additional analysis provided by the state Medical Examiner's Office, according to statement.

"After a multi-long investigation conducted by the Cape May County Joint Homicide Unit — law enforcement officers have found no physical or testimonial evidence contrary to the findings and conclusions of the medical examiners' offices," the statement reads.

"In light of these results and conclusions the matter is no longer being pursued as a suspicious death or homicide."

"However, for the benefit of the surviving family members, police will continue to attempt to ascertain if anyone possibly observed ... Negersmith immediately prior to this unfortunate occurrence," the statement reads.

Members of the Negersmith

family couldn't be reached for comment Wednesday.

The body of Negersmith, who was staying with friends in a local motel, was found around 10 a.m. on May 27 behind a restaurant in the 200 block of East Schellenger Avenue.

Negersmith told her friends the evening of May 26 that she was going out to party and that they should look for her if she didn't return the following morning, sources said.

Police at first treated the discovery as a suspicious death or homicide, although there were no visible signs of foul play — such as gunshot or knife wounds or bruises — on Negersmith's body.

A source close to the investigation said Wednesday that Negersmith was behind the restaurant and had "mutually consenting" sexual intercourse with a man.

The man then left and Negersmith fell asleep on the pavement, the source said.

Negersmith was "significantly intoxicated," Napoleon said.

Test results showed that the blood alcohol level in Negersmith's brain was almost three times that at which a person is considered to be intoxicated, according to the statement released by the Prosecutor's Office and city police. The blood alcohol level in Negersmith's stomach was five times that at which a person is considered to be intoxicated, it reads.

Alcohol consumption retards the retention of body heat and makes a person more vulnerable to the cold, Napoleon said. He said he was told the air temperature dipped to the low 50s between the time Negersmith last saw her friends and when her body was discovered.

Besides the fact that Negersmith's body was partially clad, she also was laying on "cold cement," he said.

Negersmith, who stood about 5 foot 6 inches tall and weighed between 125 to 135 pounds, had no history of health problems, Napoleon said.

Area man hospitalized after Cape diving mishap

By YVETTE CRAIG
Staff Writer

CAPE MAY — A 30-year-old Brigantine policeman who was on a recreational scuba dive on Wednesday was treated for "the bends" after his diving equipment got tangled in an underwater wreck.

The U.S. Coast Guard evacuated Charles Hott at about 9:45 a.m. from the wreck, a diving boat based in San Jose City, said Lt. Cmdr. Art Hanson of Group Cape May.

Hanson said the boat was located about 25 miles southeast of Cape May and Hott was 110 feet below sea level when his equipment got caught on the wreck.

Hott did what is called a "free ascent." Divers are supposed to surface very slowly but Hott surfaced very rapidly.

When a diver comes up too fast, air bubbles can get into the bloodstream and cause severe pain. This is known as having an air embolism or "the bends."

Some situations can be deadly if the air bubbles stop the blood from flowing through a blood vessel.

Hanson said he did not know whether Hott had to be helped out of the water.

"(Hott) said he felt pressure in his eyes," Hanson said. "And he had something in his arm and pains in his lower back. Those are all signs of the bends."

Passing youngster skims shells along beach enhanced by concrete reefs visible in background

Concrete reefs broaden beach

But Sea Isle still doesn't know how much sand can be saved

By CHRISTINE LAPUSHESKI
Staff Writer

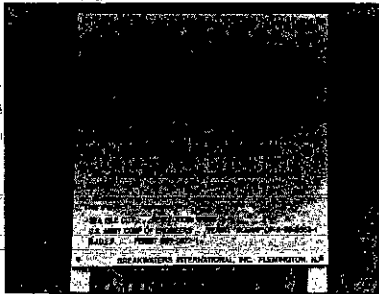
SEA ISLE CITY — Two experimental reefs designed to control beach erosion have widened a nearby beach by as much as 75 feet, but exactly how much sand can be saved with the manmade breakwaters won't be known for another nine to 11 months, officials say.

"The shoreline has been increasing and the elevation has increased also in the area behind the reefs," said Richard Creter, co-inventor of the concrete reefs, and president of Breakwaters International, Inc.-of Flemington. "That has not happened in the area north and south of the reef."

Creter on Wednesday unveiled interim results of a study in which research teams from Lehigh and Drexel Universities, led by Dr. Robert M. Sorensen of Lehigh's Inlet Hydraulics Laboratory, measured profiles of the 8th Street beach at wading depth, by boat and from the air.

The two concrete reefs, which weigh 16,000 pounds each, were placed 450 feet offshore in July under a grant from the New Jersey Shore Foundation.

Aerial photographs show that the reefs, which are valued at \$50,000, have widened 900 feet of beach at 8th Street off Landis Avenue and elevated the sand six to 12 inches higher than the surrounding beaches.



Sign on Sea Isle City beach at 8th Street explains reef project

According to a state Department of Environmental Protection spokesperson, however, it's too soon to tell what long-range impact the breakwaters could have on shore protection.

"It's still a little too early from our perspective as to whether

See Reefs, Page B2

Coast Guard helicopter rescues 3 after boat burns

By YVETTE CRAIG
Staff Writer

A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter rescued three people after the sport-fishing boat they were on caught fire Wednesday afternoon and sank 22 miles off the coast of Cape May.

The three people, who asked the Coast Guard to withhold their names, abandoned ship minutes after smelling the smoke.

The crew was headed for New York from Fort Lauderdale, Fla.,

transporting the 2-week-old 65-foot fishing boat, "Mr. Chaos," to its owner.

"The master of the vessel said he smelled smoke coming from the cabin area below the boat," said Lt. Cmdr. Art Hanson of Group Cape May. "When he opened the door of the cabin, flames shot out at him. That's when he called the Coast Guard for help and gave us his position."

Hanson said the boat captain

"reported that the vessel was on fire and the flames were so bad that they had to abandon the boat. He said if they got any worse, they were going to abandon ship."

The crew, which consisted of two men and a woman, tried to use fire extinguishers to douse the fire. The fire got out of control and the entire crew jumped overboard about two minutes later, Hanson said.

"The fire got out of control so

fast that the crew did not have enough time to get a life raft into the water," he said.

The incident occurred about 3:20 p.m. The crew was in the water for about 25 minutes before they were rescued by the Coast Guard, Hanson said. Crew members were wearing life jackets.

One by one, the crew was hoisted out of the sea by a rescue basket, he said. No one was seriously injured.

County farm program hit by questions of conflict

By RICHARD DEGENER
Staff Writer

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Several members of a Cape May County agriculture board that makes recommendations on which farms to preserve with county tax money have put forth

their own farms.

Is this a conflict of interest? Freeholder William E. Sturm Jr. has raised the issue while several other freeholders, at a meeting this week said it's fine that members of the county's Agricultural Development Board

have recommended their own farms.

One of the freeholders even complimented Jonathan Sayre, chairman of the county's Agricultural Development Board, for having members of that board wait for one year before applying

to the program.

"I compliment you for setting yourself aside to give others a chance," said Freeholder Director Herbert C. Frederick.

Freeholder Daniel Heyel said

See Farms, Page B2