No tags, but also no lifeguards at some O.C. beaches

By MICHAEL MILLER

OCEAN CITY — Jennifer Candy and her family tried to avoid Thursday afternoon with chairs, an umbrella, towels, a cooler of drinks, flip-flops, toys and a book. The only thing missing were beach tags.

Some visitors and residents are taking advantage of Ocean City beaches where, because of enforcement policies or property ownership, they do not have to pay.

The city is on pace this summer to break last year’s record $3.8 million in beach tag sales. But while beach tags rules are strictly enforced along most of the city’s miles of coastline, visitors and bathers have found bargains on opposite ends of the island.

Residents on the south end for years have used ColetoInletStatePark, which is tag-free because it is state land. There the beaches are far less crowded, allowing families to play beach games, fly kites or build sand castles without annoying other beachgoers.

By MICHAEL MILLER

By Wednesday morning, Carol Fruegeman took her grandchildren for a walk in his honor on the Ventnor Boardwalk and, after a few blocks and a brief conversation with friends, decided to turn back. She’s a grandparent of 4, and 4 other kids.

Kevin Armstrong, left, 17, of Cape May Court House; Susanna Alyea, 16, of Cape May Court House; and Kristin Hughes, 13, of Del Haven, use a spray truck to cool off Friday during the Cape May County 4-H Fair in Cape May Harbor.

FRIDAY’S HIGH: 104 DEGREES; HEAT INDEX: 122

Temperatures by the hour

Heat melts away records

Expect no relief today despite dip of 8 degrees

By SARAH WATSON

It did not take long to break the daily high temperature record in Atlantic City on Friday. By noon, the temperature was 108 degrees, with a heat index of 119 degrees.

The old record of 90 degrees did not stand a chance as blistering heat coupled with humidity readily popped the region for a second day, with more of the same expected today. Friday’s heat topped out at 106 degrees, with a heat index reaching 122, National Weather Service data show. That made it the second hottest day recorded in Atlantic City since 1982.

According to Meteorologist Brian Tinsman, who said although today’s temperature will be 16 degrees cooler, that will not make much of a difference to local residents.

“It’s still going to feel pretty nasty outside,” Tinsman said, adding that the heat wave can be attributed to heat and humidity.

Kevin Armstrong, left, 17, of Cape May Court House; Susanna Alyea, 16, of Cape May Court House; and Kristin Hughes, 13, of Del Haven, use a spray truck to cool off Friday during the Cape May County 4-H Fair in Cape May Harbor.

To where cool off

Some local government buildings will be open this weekend so those without air conditioning have some place to go to keep cool. See a list of cooling centers on C3. See how the rest of the state did on C5.

Shipwreck holds family’s fascination, fate

The grandson of a man nearly killed in World War II on the Jacob Jones explores its wreckage off Cape May. By MICHAEL MILLER

CAPE MAY — Retired U.S. Navy Master Chief Joseph Tidwell returned to Cape May Sunday for the first time since he was recorded during a submarine attack off the coast in World War II.

Tidwell, 91, worked in the engine room aboard the USS Jacob Jones, a destroyer that was hunting German submarines off Cape May County.

He was one of 11 survivors in the

The US Navy Jacob Jones was torpedoed and sank 25 miles off Cape May on Feb. 24, 1942, killing 131 of the 142 men aboard.

Pfc. 2d Joseph Jacob Jones returned to Cape May because his grandson, Navy Cmdr. Eric Tidwell, died on the 50th anniversary of the attack.

The dive Friday marked an intersection of generations and careers.

By MICHAEL MILLER

One fewer free beach?

Wouldn’t official consider making a beach fee to generate revenue for the cash-strapped city?

Likewise, beaches on the north end near the Ocean City Lifeguard Station can attract visitors who have little to fear from tag checkers interrupting their reading or nap, because the city has chosen not to stuff those beaches with lifeguards.

On the downside, it makes Cape May Island, Long Island, N.Y., visitor Jennifer Cusack said Thursday as she carried her beach chair down the sandy road that leads to the state park’s beach on the south end.

PARKING

The free beach comes with several drawbacks, including less public.

Shut down FAA

Congress fails to approve funding to keep the Federal Aviation Administration operating, putting 639 people out of work in Egg Harbor Township but not affecting air travel.

By JOEL LANDAU

As many as 639 employees at the William J. Hughes Technical Center in Egg Harbor Township will be furloughed from their jobs today after federal lawmakers were unable to agree on a deal to fund the Federal Aviation Administration.

The shutdown will take effect tonight, after Congress failed to act on a compromise agreement that had been negotiated by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., and House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio.

Boehner quits debt discussion

President Obama calls congressional leaders back to the White House to continue talks today.

By SARAH MURPHY

If you like the way you’re living today, you might want to move on before it’s too late. This weekend will be the last chance this fall for residents to enjoy the Cape May County 4-H Fair in Cape May Harbor.

You can buy the ticket online, or you can pay the $75 Entrance Fee on site. The fair runs Thursday, Friday and Saturday, with the grounds open to the public from Thursday to Sunday.

By ERICA WERNER and LOLITA C. BALDOR

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama fulfilled a 2012 campaign pledge Friday and formally ended the ban on gays serving openly in the military.

“Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta and I, along with the chiefs of the joint staff, have determined that the United States is strong enough to fight our enemies, is good enough to win our wars, when we put our people in uniform, and that we should welcome all those qualified to serve in the military,” Obama said in a statement. “Service members will no longer be forced to hide who they are in order to serve our country.”

Obama’s action means that as of Sept. 20, gay service members will be able to come out of the closet and stay in the military.

Woman who killed self, baby had 4 other kids

A Pennsylvania woman who authorities said died by her own hand alongside her newborn baby in Egg Harbor Township on Friday morning had four other children. Her husband, who had not been seen in weeks, wants people to know that he had people to care for them. Story on C3.