



# Community CONNECTION

WINTER 2006

A PUBLICATION OF THE DELAWARE RIVER &amp; BAY AUTHORITY

## ***Board approves 2006 Capital Plan***

As part of its 2006 budget, the DRBA Board of Commissioners approved nearly \$35 million in planned capital expenditures for the Delaware Memorial Bridge and the Cape May-Lewes Ferry system.

The Authority also approved approximately \$8 million for capital projects at its five aviation facilities.

The capital improvement projects funded in the 2006 budget include widening, repaving and modifications on the northbound approach roads to the Bridge; rehabilitation of the Bridge expansion joints; rehabilitation of the steelwork overcoat on the second structure; and rehabilitation of the approach roads and signage to the Cape May-Lewes Ferry on the New Jersey side of the Bay.

Included in the aviation projects are taxiway improvements at New Castle, taxiway reconstruction at Millville; taxiway rehabilitation at Cape May; and land acquisition at Delaware Airpark. The aviation projects are eligible for funding from the Federal Aviation Administration.

The Commission also approved an operating budget of \$70.5 million, an increase of 5.2% over the 2005 budget. The DRBA is expected to generate about \$98 million in revenues, more than 75% of which are derived from tolls on the Delaware Memorial Bridge.



## **Cape May-Lewes Ferry market study recommends fares, food changes**

The Delaware River and Bay Authority undertook a comprehensive market study of the Cape May-Lewes Ferry (CMLF) in 2005 to identify markets and customer preferences, how to reach untapped markets and to detail demographics and economic trends.

The completed report provides recommendations and strategies to position the ferry operation for passenger growth.

"After 40 years of service, the CMLF must adapt to meet a changing environment," remarked James T. Johnson, Executive Director of the Authority. "The detailed report contains more than 20 recommendations," he noted.

Among the recommendations are pricing, promotions, food service and scheduling. Mr. Johnson noted that the Authority is carefully reviewing the costs and benefits of each proposal.

Some of the recommendations, including a new fare category for passengers ages 6-13 and a review and replacement schedule for the trailblazer signage, were implemented in the 2005 summer season.

The report also contained a number of marketing and advertising proposals, including bus wraps, billboards and airplane advertising which were also incorporated into the Ferry's 2005 summer promotional campaign.

As part of the project, the consultant completed two on-board surveys, performed visitor/resident one-on-one interviews in both New Jersey and Delaware and conducted a telephone sampling to provide an accurate overview of the CMLF user and non-user.

Based on the findings, the consultant recommended various ways

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*Community Connection* is a publication of the Delaware River and Bay Authority. For further information, please contact the DRBA at PO Box 71, New Castle, DE 19720, or call 302.571.6300, fax 302.571.6367, visit our website at [www.drba.net](http://www.drba.net), or email us at [contactus@drba.net](mailto:contactus@drba.net).

MEET THE DRBA COMMISSIONERS

Thomas J. Cooper is chairman and chief executive officer of Cooper Realty Associates, Inc. and is a partner in Consultants Unlimited, Inc. He was a member of the Delaware Real Estate Commission, serving as chairman from 1993 to 1995, and has been a member of the Delaware Fish and Game Commission. Mr. Cooper is active in many civic and business organizations including service as a member of the executive board of the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce and a director of the Lewes Canal Front Project. He has served on the Kalmar Nyckel Foundation, the Delaware Small Business Alliance and the Delaware Business Industry Education Alliance. Commissioner Cooper is a graduate of East Tennessee University with a bachelor of science in marketing and economics.



Cooper



Favre

Niels S. Favre retired in 1996 from AT&T Network Systems/Lucent Technology after a 30-year career. He is also a former owner of Canterbury Cottage Inn and Canterbury Manor. Commissioner Favre was elected to the Cape May Municipal Council in 2002 and is now Deputy Mayor.

He received a bachelor of science degree in engineering from Miami University of Ohio and holds a master of science degree in management from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is a past vice president of the New Jersey State Council for the Arts, a member of the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts, and Captain of the Cape May Fire Police. Mr. Favre served in the U.S. Navy Reserve from 1958 to 1965.

Board welcomes new commissioner

On Tuesday, October 18, Gary F. Simmerman, a resident of Hopewell Township, Cumberland County, New Jersey, was sworn into office as a Commissioner of the Delaware River and Bay Authority by Chairman Warren S. Wallace.

A former Director of the Federal Reserve of Philadelphia, Commissioner Simmerman brings extensive financial knowledge and experience to the Authority. He served for 23 years as a regional bank president before retiring in 1997.

Mr. Simmerman is currently Cumberland County Treasurer, a posi-

tion he has held for the past 17 years. He has served as a Cumberland County Freeholder and as a member of the Bridgeton City Council. Active in the local community, he serves as chair of the South Jersey Health System, director of the Bridgeton Area Chamber of Commerce, president of the Bridgeton Rotary and member of the executive advisory committee of Rutgers University.

His term extends to July 1, 2008. He is Chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee and a member of the Projects and Audit committees.



Simmerman

## DRBA supports local non-profit groups

### Friends of Capitol Theater

In October, DRBA Vice Chairman Michael Parkowski and Chairman Warren Wallace presented a check to the Friends of the Capitol Theater, to benefit the Schwartz Center for the Arts in Dover, Del. The contribution will help to upgrade and repair the Center's air-cooling and heating system to make it more energy efficient, reducing operational costs which will free up resources for programming.

More than 30,000 guests attended events at the Center in 2005. The Center provides programming to diverse audiences. The Center exists to enhance the quality of life for everyone by providing a home for the performing arts,

educational activities and entertainment. The Capitol Theater is a historic 1904 building being renovated to provide a cultural center and it will be the only institution devoted to the performing arts for downstate Delaware.



IN THE PHOTO ABOVE, Vice Chairman Parkowski and Chairman Wallace present a check for \$6,000 to Destiny Kerstetter, Office Manager for the Schwartz Center for the Arts in Dover, Del. IN THE PHOTO AT RIGHT, Chairman Wallace presents a check for \$3,000 to members of the Marine Corps League at the Gloucester County (NJ) Courthouse in Woodbury.

### Woodbury Court House

Before the 2005 holidays, Chairman Warren Wallace presented a check for \$3,000 to members of the Marine Corps League in Gloucester County for their annual Toys for Tots community initiative. The League distributed 20,000 toys to approximately 7,000 children in the area.

The funds were used to pay rent for a temporary storage facility where the toys were collected; auto insurance for donated vehicles used for collection and distribution; purchase of distribution boxes and other transportation expenses.



## Commission approves Local 542 contract

The DRBA Commission unanimously approved a resolution which authorized a new, four-year collective bargaining agreement with the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE), AFL-CIO Local 542. The union represents approximately 150 full-time employees in tolls, maintenance, airports and food service at the DRBA.

The four-year agreement, which will expire on December 31, 2008, provides for an increase of 14.5% in

base wages during the contract term, excluding adjustments made to rectify pay parity issues.

The new contract, which focuses on a wide range of issues spanning benefits, compensation and operations, provides for shift differential pay for employees who work second and third shifts of 24-hour operations; maintains management rights; and contains no changes to the current pension structure or employee health care benefits.

## CMLF report completed

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to foster passenger growth, including:

- Develop a system master plan
- Increase tourism partnerships
- Improve food quality
- Replace the current ticketing and management information systems
- Adjust fare structures to attract larger parties and off-peak use
- Implement round-trip pricing
- Increase advertising and marketing
- Develop a customer advisory group to help identify service improvements and test strategies for new products or promotions.



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# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

## Giving to others at the holiday season

November and December are busy for everyone, but the employees of the DRBA spent time honoring the sacrifices of others and to ensuring that the holiday season was happy for those in need.

On Nov. 11, the annual Veterans Day Ceremony at the Authority's Veterans Memorial Park was attended by more than 600 men and women gathered to pay tribute to America's veterans. U.S. Senator Joseph Biden (in top photo) was among the speakers.

In preparation for the ceremony, the grounds of the Park were manicured by members of the DRBA's Garden and Grounds crew.

Later in the month, DRBA employees continued the tradition of helping those who are less fortunate by delivering Thanksgiving Care Packages to 100 needy families and

one orphanage. Shown in the middle photo are DRBA volunteers and representatives from the Brandywine School District's Parent Center following delivery of food packages.



Each DRBA volunteer received a "lifesaver" certificate for his or her efforts.

Early in December, DRBA employees launched a

"Hope for the Holidays" campaign aimed at making the holiday season brighter for needy families in the DRBA community service region. The effort provided new coats, hats, gloves, clothing, shoes, toys and food baskets to families in Salem and Cape May counties in New Jersey and in New Castle and Sussex counties in Delaware.

Through the generosity of the Authority and its employees, approximately \$10,000 was raised for the campaign which benefited more than 25 families with a total of 65 children.

The 25 members of the employee committee formed to oversee the holiday efforts were honored by the DRBA Board at its December meeting.

