

# Ministry through music

By SUSAN DECOTEAU-FERRIER

VENTNOR — A toe-tapping audience, dancing in the aisles to the sound of wailing guitars, a thumping bass, a roof-raisin' harmonica and soulful vocals; it sounds more like Saturday night at the House of Blues than a Sunday evening at church. That is unless you happen to be in the sanctuary of the Ventnor United Methodist Church.

The church has been providing live music in the form of Jazz Vespers the first Sunday of each month since 1988. However, Vespers was just the beginning of the church's outreach program. According to Reverend Clarence Wilson, better known to his congregation as Rev. Clancy, "the music has helped the church grow...and the music has created some nontraditional ministries."

In September, the Ventnor UMC finished building a fully-digital recording studio. According to John Mulhern, studio engineer and builder, the concept came in the form of "divine intervention." "Rev. Clancy has helped me establish this studio in his church and to bring a music ministry," he said.

With the addition of the new studio, the church is able to offer musicians more than a venue to showcase their talents. Tucked away on church's upper-level, the facility provides artists an affordable alternative to high-priced recording studios. And artists have the option to record live. Sessions are not limited to Christian music. The facilities are available to anyone but according to songwriter and producer, Ralph Dino, "there's no hate music, we are trying to bring a message of hope."

Frank DiNunzio Blues Band's decision to use the sanctuary for its Nov. 24, live performance and CD recording had nothing to do with finances. According to bandleader DiNunzio, "I like live recording...and the acoustics are good." The Ventnor United Methodist Church is located at 7117 Ventnor Ave.



Susan Ferrier

John Mulhern, studio engineer and builder, at the controls in the fully digital recording studio that makes its home in the Ventnor United Methodist Church.

## Calendar of events through Christmas

- Sunday, Dec. 7 – 5 p.m. - Singer, Lorry Young
- Sunday, Dec. 14 – 5 p.m. - Singer, Kathy Varallo
- Sunday, Dec. 21 – 5 p.m. - Joe Schafer and Friends, "Bob, Tom and Brother Joe"
- Wednesday, Dec. 24 – 7 p.m. - Christmas Eve Service - Lisa Tee, Piano / Geri Rizzo, Flute / Jodi Rose, Vocals

## Ventnor firemen treat seniors to the movies

Sign up if you're 65 or older

By PETE BAKER  
Staff Writer

VENTNOR — How does an afternoon movie matinee for free sound? If you are age 65 or older, you are in luck. Ventnor firefighters are treating local seniors to the movies. They are getting a movie on the house, the firehouse, that is.

The Ventnor Firemen's Mutual Benevolent Association Local No. 38 is offering one free admission for Ventnor seniors to any movie matinee at the Ventnor theatre.

The VFMBBA contributes in various areas of the community including scholarship programs, fire prevention programs, Ms. Ventnor, the Ventnor swim team and the city Easter Egg Hunt on the beach. The association also instituted a free annual blood pressure screening for Ventnor seniors.

Tom Flynn, president of the VFMBBA, said the members felt their contributions were becoming a little lopsided by contributing more to the younger generation and not enough to seniors.

"Nothing was directed right to the seniors; we do a lot for the young kids," said Flynn. "We had a senior call one time and say that it's great you do all these things for the kids but how about doing something for the seniors."

The VFMBBA thought of

ideas to entertain the local seniors. "It really does get slow around here in the winter time. We thought we would give them something to do so here are three opportunities in a week's time to go to a matinee on us," said Flynn.

The VFMBBA president also said he wanted to contribute to a "struggling local business," the Ventnor Twin Movie Theatre.

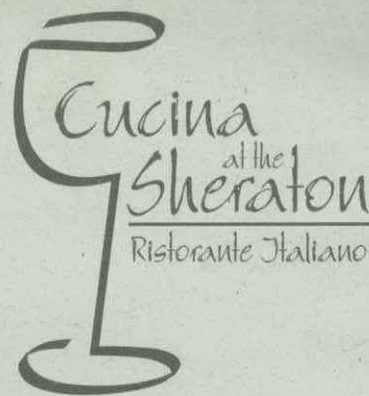
"The theater sat empty for many years and was facing the wrecking ball," said Flynn. With the opportunity to help seniors, VFMBBA also wanted to involve and contribute to a local business.

"This program not only benefits Ventnor's senior citizens, but helps our business community as well," added Flynn.

"If everything goes well, we will continue with this in the future," said Flynn.

The Ventnor Movie Theatre is located at 5211 Ventnor Ave. The bearer of the ticket must be age 65 years or older and a resident of the city of Ventnor.

Passes are available at the firehouse or the mayor's office. Tickets will be available from Labor Day until Memorial Day. Matinees are on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. The movies "Time Line," and "Master and Commander" are now showing at the Ventnor Theater. Proper ID and proof of residency is required.



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