

Cape May Star and Wave



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HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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Commitment to customer service – what does it mean?

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - Seven or eight years ago, Curtis Bashaw was a board member for the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA) and he was able to bring former Disney executive Doug Lipp to talk about customer service.

"That's when we did our Summit on the Shore," Bashaw said. "We talked to everyone about customer service."

Held at Congress Hall, Lipp's talk was open to any business owner or manager and their employees. Those who attended received a certificate of completion, but that doesn't mean attention to customer service was over.

"I think you can't talk about that stuff enough," Bashaw said, adding that he goes over it with his staff every year. He said the companies that are known for customer service constantly reinforce that value. Bashaw said they have customer service talks at three levels.

"We have orientation for all new hires, and one for returning employees as well. We also go over core principles with long-term employees. We've enacted a program of training and review services

and standards through our HR department every year," he said.

On Tuesday, Bashaw himself delivered his "Five Core Principles" of customer service to summer hires (See related article, page A7).

"This certainly helps. I know no one is ever perfect, but in places that are really committed to (customer service) you can see the difference."

"We try hard to put a real emphasis in treating the customer well and giving good service," Bashaw said. "At the shore it is sometimes easy to forget what we are doing when having 3,000 check-ins for the summer. You might have a couple and their kids who just drove for hours to get here and they are spending their hard-earned money. We have to be professional about this."

Bashaw said, by analogy, he will tell his employees if they were having brain surgery the last they would want is a surgeon who is bored or tired on the day of their surgery.

"I tell them, the customers are coming for a family vacation. They are trusting us with one of the most important times of the year," Bashaw said. Mark Allen, who is the



Christopher South/Cape May Star and Wave

Above left, Curtis Bashaw, co-managing partner for Cape Resorts Group speaks to summer hires, above right, at Congress Hall about the importance of customer service. The employees have been hired to work in various functions at CRG properties, including Congress Hall. Bashaw speaking to the employees each year is part of his commitment to customer service.

tournament director at South Jersey Marina was short and to the point when asked about customer service.

"It's everything," he said. "We can provide resources, but it's the people who make a difference in this town –

people who drive the shuttle, meet you at the front desk, answer telephones – in the kind of business we are in, it's how you communicate with customers."

Allen and South Jersey Marina recently announced

the opening of the Salt Water Café and a workshop on customer service, which is open to anyone working in retail or the service industry.

"We want people to come out and learn about the restaurant so when people come

from out of town they can tell people about us," Allen said. "If you work in town affiliated with the tourism industry, if you are not selling Cape May 24 hours a day, you are

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School funding study is presented in CM

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - "If we can't help you, you can't be helped," Vito Gagliardi told council when describing the feasibility study he and his team compiled to investigate ways to alleviate Cape May's financial burden toward the Lower Cape May Regional School District.

Gagliardi, with his team of experts, attended the June 18 regular council meeting to present the feasibility study publicly, which cost the city \$48,000. Councilman Jack

Wichterman, who has been spearheading the effort of trying to reduce the amount Cape May residents pay to fund the regional school district, said the cost of the study is nothing compared to the money the city could save if all goes as planned.

According to the report, Cape May is currently charged almost \$80,000 per pupil sent to the district, nearly double what was spent six years ago. Taxpayers in Lower Township, which has the majority of the students

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Shared parking still being discussed

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - Following their first meeting in May, members of the recently established Shared Parking Advisory Committee contacted officials from other municipalities in the region and asked questions regarding shared parking concepts and parking ordinances in those communities.

Municipalities contacted regarding shared parking

included Ventnor, Margate, Haddonfield, Point Pleasant, Beach Haven and Rehoboth Beach, Del. Committee Chairman, Deputy Mayor William Murray said it was important for members to decide whether Cape May should establish a shared parking ordinance or simply allow businesses and institutions in the city to request parking variances. At the May meeting, Shared Parking

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Complaints about bars give council pause

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - Frequent police calls, noise complaints and a violent confrontation made city council hesitant to approve the renewal of two liquor licenses in the 400 block of Beach Avenue.

At its June 18 regular meeting, council agreed to approve two resolutions renewing the liquor licenses for the Cabanas on the Beach and Martini Beach bars at 429 Beach Avenue and Carney's bar and restaurant at 411 Beach Avenue under the condition of heightened security and other regulations that must be followed.

City Solicitor Tony Monzo said in the past year, there was a fight involving three individuals outside the establishments on Beach Avenue between Jackson and Decatur Streets. He said when the police arrived on scene to resolve the issue, the three individuals began fighting with the officers.

"One in particular, was charged with assault on a police officer. All three were arrested for resisting arrest and charged. The two others were charged with obstruction," he said.

Monzo said since 2010, there have been 33 calls from the establishments made to the police for various sort of misconduct complaints. He



Cain Chamberlin/Cape May Star and Wave

Above, the 400 block of Beach Avenue, home of night spots such as Cabanas, Martini Beach and Carney's have been the target of complaints about noise and violent confrontations. Council demanded better security before re-approving their liquor licenses, June 18.

said there is also an additional number of complaints not specific to either of the establishments, but took place in the 400 block vicinity of Beach Avenue.

The city has set three conditions which the establishments must follow now that the licenses have been renewed. Monzo said a doorman for security at each establishment is required daily from Memorial Day

to Labor Day between the hours of 8 p.m. and closing. He said additional security is also required on week-ends.

The second condition, which is already a state law, says the establishments cannot serve anyone who is already intoxicated or visibly appears to be intoxicated. The final stipulation, due to the frequency of police calls in the past

related to Carney's, Cabanas and Martini Beach, gives the city the right to charge an administrative fee for excessive calls to the department that require police presence. Councilwoman Deanna Fiocca addressed this particular stipulation.

"I think we need to be a little more specific," she said. "They shouldn't be afraid

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