



## Volleyball team gets rare shutout in historic victory

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## House of the Week

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169th YEAR NO. 41 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2023 \$1.00

# Panel: 'OK' summer result of inflation, gas prices, rain

## Stockton University School of Business hosts fourth annual Jersey Shoreview

'Spending is down, we know that, it impacts all of us, but if we can increase the number of people that come to Cape May County, we can offset some of that.'



—Diane Wieland, Cape May County Department of Tourism

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

ATLANTIC CITY — The summer was "OK" but not great in the region from a business tourism standpoint, due to some rainy weather, high gasoline prices and inflation taking a bite out of household budgets.

That was the picture presented during the fourth annual Jersey Shoreview, a

panel discussion of regional business leaders sponsored by the Lloyd D. Levenson Institute of Gaming, Hospitality and Tourism (LIGHT) in Stockton University's School of Business.

LIGHT's faculty director Jane Bokunewicz moderated a panel of hospitality industry experts that featured Sandy Chu, financial and professional services sector lead, strategic sector

development for the New Jersey Economic Development Authority; Sharon Franz, sales and marketing director of Steel Pier; Phyllis Lacca, president and owner of Masterpiece Advertising; and Diane Wieland, director of tourism for the Cape May County Department of Tourism.

Last spring, LIGHT held an event to forecast the coming tourist season with the

panel expressing concerns about high gasoline prices, inflation, the rising cost of labor and worker shortages in the hospitality industry.

Gross gaming revenue was up 11 percent in Atlantic City's casinos from June through August. However, brick-and-mortar gaming revenue was up only 1 percent.

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# City lost money on concerts but utility is solvent

## Mullock says tourism utility in better shape than in past

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — While the Capestock concerts on the beach lost more than \$51,000, the city's tourism utility remains solvent.

At a Sept. 19 meeting, Jules Rauch, president of the Taxpayers Association of Cape May, said he used the Open Public Records Act to obtain financial data for the three-day concert behind Convention Hall known as Capestock that features tribute bands playing the music of acts that were a part of Woodstock in 1969.

He said the city lost more than \$51,000 on the event from Aug. 18-20, a loss of \$150 per ticket sold.

Rauch returned to council Oct. 3 stating he had no concept that the city had been willing to accept losses on concerts year after year.

"Mr. Mayor, you commented that the \$52,000 at the point was not the largest amount that's been lost, that a number of them have exceeded

that," he said. "Has council ever recognized that you're looking at \$300,000 a year loss?"

Mayor Zack Mullock said the tourism utility is on budget for the year and is "in the black." A few years ago, the tourism utility was in the red, he said.

Ups and downs occur with each concert, Mullock said. Current contracts for concerts simply rent Convention Hall to promoters, so any financial liabilities are placed on the promoter, he said.

"We also thought that was a good way to motivate the promoters to get the best acts possible because, hey, you can make as much money as you want, get better acts and more people will show up," Mullock said. "In doing that, we have had far less losses."

He said the situation has improved from previous concerts that lost \$80,000 from the tourism utility.

"Overall, the staff at

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

## Frequent and bewitching flyers

A class of witches learning to fly was the theme of an entry in Scarecrow Alley at Cape May MAC's Emlen Physick Estate from the Garden Club of Cape May. Individuals, families, community groups, businesses and school classrooms are welcome to enter scarecrows in the contest.

# Shawcrest mobile park residents keep asking Lower for rent control

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Residents of Shawcrest Mobile Home Park are continuing to ask Lower Township Council to consider passing a rent control ordinance to quell steep increases in their lot rental fees.

At a Sept. 18 meeting, a number of residents filled the meeting room at Township Hall. At that time a resident said her lot rent for her mobile home had risen from \$750 to \$812 per month. Residents also complained of poor maintenance of the property after it was purchased by Legacy Communities LLC.

At an Oct. 2 meeting, Shawcrest resident Theresa Breslin asked if Township Council had given further con-

sideration to passing a rent control ordinance.

Township Manager Mike Laffey said he was evaluating the rents of all the mobile home parks in the township.

"But at this point, I know that we see it as a tenant and landlord contract and therefore at this point, I'm not saying, 'No, were not going to get into the rent control business,' but at this point, that's where our decision has been up to now," he said.

He said the township would continue its research.

"I'd like to see what other individuals are paying for that same type of land and I don't think any of the others are actually on the water like Shawcrest either," Laffey said. "I

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# Senate, Assembly county commission seats on the ballot

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — The Nov. 7 general election ballot for county residents will include a Senate seat, two Assembly seats and two openings on the County Commission.

Seeking re-election to a second four-year term in the First Legislative District is Republican Michael L. Testa, who is facing a challenge from Democrat Charles R. Laspata, a union electrician from Millville who has largely been missing from the campaign trail.

Testa, a member of the Senate since 2019, and is a partner in the law firm of Testa Heck Testa and White.

In the Assembly race,

Republican incumbents Erik Simonsen of Lower Township and Antwan McClellan of Ocean City are being challenged by Democrats Damita White-Morris and Eddie L. Bonner.

Simonsen has been in the Assembly since 2020. He is director of athletics and activities at the Lower Cape May Regional School District.

McClellan, a state assemblyman since 2020, is personnel director/confidential assistant/public information officer in the Cape May County Sheriff's Office.

White-Morris has dedicated her work for 15 years to supporting families and students within Bridgeton Public Schools.

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# Multiple project in works this autumn in Cape May

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city has a number of upcoming projects in the works, including paving streets, opening the new firehouse, beach replenishment and a future expansion of Cape May Beach Patrol headquarters.

City Manager Mike Voll told City Council on Oct. 3 that the county has begun reconstruction of Lafayette Street and Beach Avenue.

He said work would begin at 7 a.m. Monday through Thursday.

Underground utility work has begun on Beach

Avenue and will be followed by paving.

An elevator is installed and operating in the city's new firehouse, he said. Voll said the project experienced some supply chain issues but the firehouse should open in November.

"This is something you're really going to be proud of," he said.

City engineer Paul Dietrich said only Wilmington Avenue beach would receive sand replenishment this year. He said most of the sand would be placed on the U.S. Coast Guard base.

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# PIG AND PIGSKIN SPECIALS

EVERY Sunday at the Nail from 1pm-9pm. Score Big on Sundays at the Rusty Nail with Jimmy's Smokin' Pig Roast, \$10 Buckets of (6) Miller Lite Ponies, and \$2 off Wings, Nachos, Shrimp & more!

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