



## Twelve Caper Tigers selected to CAL all-star team

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## House of the week

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169th YEAR NO. 24 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, 2023 \$1.00

# County enjoyed record tourism season in 2022

## Number of visitors up 1 million, generating \$800 million more in spending

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — If you thought traffic was heavy in the county last year, maybe it was due to the 11.3 million visitors — a 10.2 percent increase over 2021.

Cape May County saw its largest growth in visitor spending in 2022, not only recovering from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic but direct tourism spending surpassed 2019 by \$500 mil-

lion, recouping the losses of 2020 and 2021.

The county held its annual tourism conference June 6 at the county complex. Board of Commissioners Director Len Desiderio said last year the county saw record growth of nearly \$800 million in visitor spending driven by an increase of 1 million visitors.

“We went from \$6.6 billion to \$7.4 billion,” he said, amounting to an 11.5 percent increase in tourism dollars.

Desiderio said one in every 10

visitors to New Jersey visited Cape May County, which had a record tourist season in 2022 and is on pace for record growth this year. Occupancy tax revenue for the first quarter is up 70 percent over last year, which was a record year.

Desiderio said the county is seeing growth in overnight stays in fall and winter months, which is a sign of expanding tourism into a nine-month season.

“Second homeowners are returning with more frequency

during the fall and winter and businesses, and I think you will all agree, are staying open longer,” he said. “Fifty five percent of our visitors last year took two or more trips to our county.”

Reservations for hotels and campgrounds are indicating this year will be a great year with most weeks for house rentals booked in the high season, Desiderio said.

He said despite inflation challenges, people want and need to travel. More than 60 percent of

jobs in the county — a total of 39,430 — are directly or indirectly supported by tourism, he said, and more jobs are becoming year-round.

County Tourism Director Diane Wieland said the county was second in the state in generating tourism dollars (behind Atlantic County), generating a \$787 million increase in tourism dollars from 2021 to 2022.

“Everything we lost in 2020

See **Tourism**, Page A3

# Cape May trying to head off issues with unruly youth

## Violators risk six-month loss of driver's license, large fine

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council introduced an ordinance dealing with breach of peace to head off problems with groups of juveniles taking place in other towns in the county.

The ordinance states prohibited acts are the public consumption of alcohol and cannabis and prohibited acts related to noise and nuisance conditions. The ordinance notes city code prohibits exhibition driving which produced two fatalities in Wildwood last September during an unsanctioned, pop-up car rally.

The ordinance makes the named violations a breach of the peace which can result in a six-month driver's license suspension including postponement of the privilege of operating a motorized bicycle. Fines can be levied of no more than \$1,000 for each offense.

At a June 7 meeting, Councilwoman Maureen McDade pointed out the ordinance did not address

a curfew in existence for juveniles.

City solicitor Chris Gillin-Schwartz said the city had an 11 p.m. curfew for those under the age of 18 during the winter months and midnight for the summer season. She suggested a consistent 11 p.m. time of the curfew rather than varying times through the year.

Councilman Mike Yeager concurred with the 11 p.m. curfew.

Gillin-Schwartz said the city's code book states an exemption from the curfew for any juvenile who is gainfully employed, a student of a school of evening instruction, attending a function sponsored by a religious organization or school or attending a properly supervised recreational program during the time necessary to travel in between the juvenile's residence and the place of assembly.

“Some people may work and be riding their bike or walking home and that exemption is found through-

See **Unruly**, Page A3

# Neighbors report juveniles destroying sports complex

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Unruly juveniles continue to harass residents near the Clem Mulligan Sports Complex and vandalize the park and nearby homes.

At a June 5 Lower Township Council meeting, a resident who identified herself as “Kelly” said she lives across the street from the park and has witnessed the behavior. She said she previously met with Township Manager Mike Laffey and Lower Township Police Chief Kevin Lewis but “nothing's been done.”

Mayor Frank Sippel said

Lewis assured him police would be at the park at 9 p.m. when it closes. Sippel said a youth curfew of midnight is in effect for June, July and August.

Kelly said people are dealing drugs in the complex.

“You see people pull up all the time and they're handing stuff out the window, full bottles of alcohol, so drunk and then they leave and race down the road.”

Sippel said the township spent a lot of money to refurbish the park. He said residents should call po-

See **Juveniles**, Page A5



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

## Escape the Cape

DeiMo Sports held its 10th annual Escape the Triathlon on June 11 in North Cape May. The event features a 12-foot leap into Delaware Bay from the Cape May-Lewes Ferry MV Delaware.

# HCSV to host Military Timeline Weekend

COLD SPRING — Interested in the Civil War or World War II? Want to learn about the weaponry and tactics used in the American Revolution? Or maybe you are just a history buff who loves it all.

Historic Cold Spring Village will host its annual Military Timeline Weekend on Saturday and Sunday, June 17-18, which will feature encampments, weaponry displays and demonstrations from living history groups depicting various conflicts throughout the centuries.

Historic Cold Spring Village is a nonprofit, open-air living history museum that portrays the daily life of a rural southern New Jersey community of the Early American period. It features 27 restored historic structures on a 30-acre site. Historically clothed interpreters and artisans preserve the trades, crafts and heritage of “the age of home-



Courtesy of Historic Cold Spring Village

Military Timeline Weekend at Historic Cold Spring Village will feature encampments, weaponry displays and demonstrations from living history groups depicting various conflicts.

spun” Thursday through Sunday, from late June to mid-September.

The village is located on Seashore Road (Route 626) three miles north of Cape

May and a mile and a half west of the southern terminus of the Garden State Parkway.

Admission is \$14 for adults and \$12 for children

ages 3 to 12. Unlimited free admission is available with membership.

Call (609) 898-2300, ext. 10, or visit hcsv.org for more information.

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