



## House of the week

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## Caper Tigers open football season

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165th YEAR NO. 37 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2019 \$1.00

## Plastic bag ban moving forward

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city is closer to banning merchants from using plastic bags, following the lead of a number of other coastal towns.

At a Sept. 3 City Council meeting, City Solicitor Frank Corrado said he had provided all council members in advance of the meeting with drafts of two possible ordinances to govern use of plastic materials in the city. He said he used ordinances from other towns as models for Cape May's proposed ordinance.

One ordinance would prohibit plastic bags while another ordinance deals with all plastic packaging, Corrado said.

"I want to make clear, I'm not offering council a binary choice between one or the other of these ordinances," he said. "This is a process."

Corrado said council could combine items from both ordinances as they wished. He said council needed to make a preliminary determination if

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## City waits to rule on generator

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Last month, City Council tabled an amendment to a lease agreement with New Cingular Wireless-AT&T for space for an emergency generator at the Madison Avenue water tower site until additional documentation is received clarifying noise reduction.

On Aug. 20, City Manager Neil Young said the amendment was to a current lease for antenna and ground space at the city's water tower. He said New Cingular Wireless-AT&T leased space under the water tank and wanted to add an emergency generator to ensure cell phone service during power outages.

Councilwoman Stacy Sheehan said the agreement stipulated the emergency generator would not create noise or vibration that penetrates the area. She said a diesel generator could be loud and no housing was being provided to cut down the noise.

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## Weather, day trippers make difference in Cape May

RACHEL SHUBIN  
and JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

It was perfect beach weather this summer in Cape May and along the southern New Jersey coast.

CAPE MAY — Up and down the Washington Street Mall, store owners reflected upon a strong season this summer. A variety of factors affected sales, including a consensus of too few rainy days for shopping.

Another element business owners discussed was the change in parking meter regulations. The city of Cape May raised parking meter prices from \$1 an hour to \$2 an hour along the Washington Street Mall, as well as extended the time the meters remain on, for Carpenter's and Lyle lanes.

"Since the crowds are thinning, we hope that the city of Cape May lowers the

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## STRONG SEASON

### Tourism director Wieland says Cape May County hasn't had this much summer business in years

By ERIC AVEDESIAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Summer 2019 was a record season for tourism, according to Diane Wieland, Cape May County director of tourism and public information.

Wieland said reports from businesses and accommodations revealed the county's overall tourism industry hasn't had this much business in years.

"We talk to our locals; parking lot revenue, meter revenue, beach tax revenue. All are saying it's up substantially," Wieland said. "We're anticipating it's going to be a really good year for Cape May County."

Wieland said the "outstanding" weather, coupled with a strong economy, helped bring people to the shore.

Cape May County ranks second in the state in tourism spending, behind Atlantic County. The total tourism spending in 2018 increased by 3.8 percent, a \$244 million increase.



Kristen Kelleher/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Celebrating the Fourth of July in Upper Township.

In 2018, the county generated \$2.6 billion from lodging, \$1.5 billion from food and beverage sales, \$1.2 billion from retail sales and \$711 million from recreation. In total, \$6.6 billion was generated from tourism in 2018, Wieland said.

There was a substantial increase in overnight stays in the first six months of 2019, measured by an in-

crease in Occupancy Tax collected. The Occupancy Tax is a 5 percent tax on hotel, motel and accommodation stays levied by the state. Money collected from this tax funds tourism promotions.

The total amount of Occupancy Tax collected in Cape May County from January to June 2019 is \$3.6 million,

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## 'Incredible' season for Somers Point as people discover all that it has to offer

By KRISTEN KELLEHER  
Cape May Star and Wave

SOMERS POINT — Whether they packed Somers Point beaches for a concert, sampled the area's eats or enjoyed the bay, a lot of visitors were in the gateway to the shore this summer.

Anecdotally, business owners, business association members, and a member of a city economic development commission reported a strong summer 2019 in Somers Point.

Chuck Westcott, president of the Somers Point Business Association (SPBA), described talking to a new business owner who said the summer was "incredible" and another owner of a long-standing business who reported being very busy.

"You look around, the shopping centers, the parking lots are always busy," he said.

John Davidson, a past SPBA president, described a restaurant whose owner said it was one of the best summers ever.

He also said the first show in the Somers Point Beach Concert Series was "probably the most packed I've ever seen."

In the past calendar year, the 4-square-mile city has gained several new businesses, which may have helped bring in people.

Some of these businesses include Josie Kelly's Public House, Somers Point Brewing Co., Goji Juice Bar, The Point, Motel 6, Republic Bank, Hidden Cove Tattoo and Gas Up Barber Shop & Shave Co.

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## Boardwalk merchants have 'outstanding' summer

By ERIC AVEDESIAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

OCEAN CITY — For many Ocean City Boardwalk businesses, summer is their time to shine.

With a majority of sunny weekends unfolding this summer, Boardwalk merchants had a bright summer.

Wes Kazmarck, president of the Ocean City Boardwalk Merchants Association, characterized summer 2019 as "outstanding."

"You really need the weather to be on your side to even have a shot at a great summer and the weather was just great this year," Kazmarck said.

Besides a patch of rainy days in July, the summer was mostly hot and dry, with August finishing on a sunny note, he said.

"The town seemed full. A lot of times the last few weeks of August are a little light but this year we finished strong to the end," Kazmarck said. "If Labor Day weekend projects the

way it usually does it'll be a great season. I would imagine the best for many."

Kazmarck, who owns the Surf Mall, said he had a prosperous summer.

"I sell a lot of T-shirts and I have fashion boutiques and the weather was perfect for that kind of stuff," Kazmarck said.

Though rain could kill outdoor activities on the beach and bay, this year the showers quickly passed. When the sun re-emerged, so did the people.

"We've had years where

the rain hit you with really bad timing on a Saturday night. When it rained this year it really didn't torpedo the day," Kazmarck said.

Boardwalk business owners Kazmarck spoke to reported heavy traffic on the Boardwalk.

Last year rain dampened the summer with hot and humid weather, Kazmarck said.

"People come to the shore for relief and there wasn't much relief last year. It was hot on the beach. They got that relief this year,"

Kazmarck said.

A problem with hungry gulls dive-bombing visitors and snatching food caused concerns and generated complaints along the Boardwalk. The city responded by hiring East Coast Falcons for \$2,100 per day to frighten the pesky gulls with raptors.

Falconers fly their falcons, hawks and owls every day from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. along the Boardwalk and island.

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COME JOIN LAST YEAR'S WINNER

LOUIE

AT THE RUSTY NAIL DOGGIE PAGEANT

SEE OUR 10 FINALISTS COMPETE TO BE THE OFFICIAL 2020 RUSTY NAIL MASCOT

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup>

BENEFITTING THE ANIMAL OUTREACH OF CAPE MAY COUNTY

