

## Dollars

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tory and \$9 million for tourism.

“It’s unheard of in any other state in the union that we commit a tax to support an industry as large as the industry we have here for both culture, arts, history and tourism,” Guadagno said.

She said the state has a new campaign called “That’s New Jersey” which markets southern New Jersey as a tourist destination for visitors from Pennsylvania, New York and as far away as Canada.

Guadagno said Christie has garnered attention nationwide for his direct manner in handling New Jersey’s budg-

et and public sector employees. She said the focus on Christie combats negative stereotypes and media portrayals the state long suffered in the past.

“People are talking about something other than Snooki and they’re talking about something other than The Sopranos,” Guadagno said.

Guadagno said for the first time in five years, New Jersey opened two international offices, in Shanghai and London to promote the state. She said overseas trade increased to the state by 18 percent over the last 16 months.

## Wind

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screening and landscaping that will blend into the natural setting of the existing environment as much as possible.

Kaithern said revisions to the ordinance would have to be made if these wind turbines were allowed to be used within the municipality.

“We would like to make wind energy a little more reachable for people in the community,” she said.

Kaithern said considering the wind energy industry has evolved so much in recent years, she felt the ordinance needed to be updated anyway since it was adopted in February 2009.

“We need to bring it up to current speed,” she said.

According to Kaithern, one borough resident has already said he would like to install them on his property. She said if the ordinance is revised, there is a chance the borough building would use these turbines as well for lighting the parking lot. She said many of the lights will not turn on at night due to the deterioration of wiring run-

ning underneath the pavement over the years.

Burke said since these wind turbines are much smaller and less noisy, there would be less concern from neighbors and members of the community. He said when wind turbines were much larger, there was always worry about them falling over and damaging property.

Not only are these particular wind turbines much smaller, they start producing energy during winds as low as 4.5 mph and the helix blade configuration efficiently captures wind from any direction. Kaithern said it would be nice to be more energy efficient in West Cape May.

She said the Planning Board sub-committee will look into these wind turbines more deeply and would give the Board of Commissioners recommendations as they pertain to changing the ordinance.

# Who is visiting Cape May County?

By ERIC AVEDISSIAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE – The tourism industry has to adapt to the post-recession economy by offering values and bargains for cash-strapped customers, according to experts at the 2011 Cape May County Tourism Conference, held May 4 at the county administration building.

The conference updated business owners and community leaders on the “new normal” in tourism, an atmosphere with rising gas prices, political unrest and lowered airfares are changing the face of the industry.

Cape May County Tourism Department director Diane Wieland told attendees the county’s tourism revenue increased 5.4 percent – one of the few counties in New Jersey where revenue was up.

She said reports of reservations and rental bookings were up by 5 percent to 20 percent from last year as well.

According to Wieland, tourism expenditures in Cape May County rose by 5.4 percent with \$5.27 billion generated in 2010, an increase of \$270 million, the highest increase in the state. Rental income also increased in 2010 by \$100 million with a record high of \$1.7 billion collected in Cape May County.

Wieland said today’s families are looking for bargains and values while on vacation. She said in the new normal on tourism, value is key.

“There’s no do-over. If they come here on vacation and it doesn’t meet their expectations and they don’t get that experience they wanted, they’re not coming back,” Wieland said.

### Surveying Guests

Over 90 percent of vacation

planning is done via the Internet, Wieland said.

According to a pre-season Internet survey released in April, 55 percent of those surveyed said the recession did not impact their vacation plans for 2011. The survey indicated 89 percent of participants were planning on vacationing in Cape May County.

Fifty percent of those surveyed were staying at a hotel or motel, 34 percent were staying at a rental property, 7 percent were staying at a campground, 6 percent were staying with friends or relatives and 4 percent owned a second home in the county.

The survey revealed 60 percent of women make the vacation decision for the family compared to men at 35 percent.

According to the survey, the average Cape May County visitor is 45 to 55 years old, has a full-time job and has an annual income of \$90,000 or more.

Visitors gave high marks to Cape May County’s quality of attractions and services, customer service, professionalism and safety.

### The French Connection

Wieland said according to Canadian consulate in New York City, 70 percent of half a million Canadians who visit New Jersey are visiting Cape May County.

“It is not the Ontario market. It is the French Canadians from the province of Quebec,” Wieland said. “They love this area.”

She said the exchange rate of the Canadian dollar is a strong factor for an increase of Canadian tourists.

“We are now paying them a nickel on every dollar to come to the United States. I won’t say our dollar is weak, we’ll say their dollar is stronger,” Wieland said.

The average Canadian stays

ten days, she said, adding it helps the county combat the “mid-week slump,” where attendance weakens in the middle of the week.

Wieland said per person expenditures for Canadians are higher than American visitors. She said Canadians come to the county for the beach and outdoors as well as the shopping.

“In Canada you’re paying about 19 percent sales tax and everything they can charge a tax on. They can come here and take back about \$400 per person that they can claim that is taxed and duty-free,” Wieland said.

Cape May County promotes itself to the Canadian market, with advertising in French targeted toward the Quebec audience.

### Social Networking

Fairleigh Dickinson University International School of Hospitality and Tourism Management Associate Director Donald Hoover explained the various social media local businesses could use to inform the public.

Hoover said Facebook, a social networking site with 500 million active users is “where you want to be right now.”

Fifty percent of Facebook users log onto the site every day and download 30 billion pieces of content each month, he said.

Hoover said Facebook users install 20 million applications (apps) every day.

“We baby boomers are the fastest growing segment on Facebook,” Hoover said.

He said QR (Quick Response) codes, an electronic matrix barcode, can be scanned with camera phones and linked to websites, videos and driving coordinates is something businesses can also use.

Foursquare is another social networking site businesses can use to reward customers who frequent their businesses, Hoover said.

He said businesses should take advantage of many social networking sites their cus-

tomers use as another way to connect with them.

“It’s where we’re headed and as hospitality and tourism professionals we’ve got to understand where we’re going,” Hoover said. “Use Facebook, use Twitter. Take a leap out there. There are ways to use technology and a lot of them are free.”

### The New Normal

Richard Higginson, director of research of Public Mind at Fairleigh Dickinson University,

outlined the results of a casino destination survey recently released.

The nationwide telephone poll surveyed 711 adults age 18 and above, asking them about their preferences for casino destinations.

According to the survey, Las Vegas was the overwhelming choice at 47 percent, followed by New Orleans at 10 percent and Atlantic City at 8 percent.

Of those polled, Atlantic City received 22 percent favorable response from those polled in the northeast, 4 percent in the north central, 6 percent in the south and 2 percent in the west.

Higginson said reasons for not picking Atlantic City included preference to other destinations (11 percent), Atlantic City was too far (10 percent), or that it was dirty, high crime rate or a dislike for New Jersey, (each at 2 percent).

Asked why they didn’t pick Atlantic City, 24 percent responded they didn’t know.

Higginson said of those who chose Atlantic City as a first or second destination, 26 percent responded it was because of the ocean or beach while 11 percent cited the casinos as a reason.

Higginson said new normal in tourism is reflected by a the beach and ocean ranking high in the survey

“You really have to go out and understand the customers. You don’t want to be surprised by consumer perception,” Higginson said. “The only way to understand consumer perception is to go out and talk to them.”

This summer interns will perform surveys with communities in the county about visitors and collect information to local businesses so they could form marketing plans to cater to the clientele.

Another county tourism conference has been planned for Oct. 18 and 19, with issues exploring the art of branding and the 20 ingredients for a successful downtown.

## File

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Permit Extension Act is clear – the Franks’ first demolition permit was not extended, and the City was not prevented from arguing that it had expired just because the City solicitor initially concluded it had not. In short, the City agreed to settle a trivial lawsuit by giving the Franks everything they asked for, and the public should be told why the Council deliberately chose to lose a winnable case.”

Jackson continued, “It’s clear to us the Franks brought their suit because their case in the ZBA was foundering against the weight of scholarship upholding the provenance of the 1950s era Theatre. So, we were shocked at how the Council could have ignored the overwhelming record compiled in the ZBA hearings and input to the Council itself, that included scores of experts, witnesses, and citizens and mounds of documentary evidence showing the Theatre merited the recommendation of the two noted boards. Instead of aligning itself with preservation and community values on which the tourism and economic lifeblood of the City depends, the Council served a home run pitch to the Franks, aligning itself with those responsible for the derelict state of the Theatre.”

Jackson concluded, “We hope to pursue our action so that the historic nature of the Theatre is recognized. We understand that, as owners, the Franks have the right to do what they’d like with their property. Our purpose has never been to stop that, but the law requires them to try to market it at a fair price first – hopefully to someone interested in preserving it – before they just knock it down.”

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