



**House of the week**  
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**Old-fashioned burlesque show at Elaine's**  
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## Tourism spending up slightly, stronger in fall

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

WILDWOOD — Tourism spending in the county saw a 1.4 percent increase in 2017, with the occupancy rate increasing 4.5 percent.

Cape May County Tourism Director Diane Wieland presented her annual tourism report May 8 at the Wildwoods Convention Center during a Small Business Summit, providing numerous facts and figures from 2017. Once again, tourist traffic and spending increased over the previous year.

She said Cape May County ranks second in the state in tourism direct spending behind Atlantic County. "We just can't be beat,"

Wieland said. "There are many, many reasons for people to come and a lot of different people are returning to the area year after year to experience what we have in Cape May County and in the region."

Tourism expenditures in Cape May County in 2017 break down to \$2.5 billion in lodging, \$1.4 billion in food and beverages, \$1.2 billion for retail, \$704 million in recreation and \$467 million in transportation, for a total of \$6.3 billion.

Second homes in the county account for \$2 billion in tourism spending, Wieland said.

Tourism spending in Cape May County in 2017 increased 1.4 percent over 2016, a \$90 million increase.

The occupancy tax rate in the county in 2017 was up 4.6 percent, or \$11.7 million. Recreation showed a 1 percent decrease but still was No. 1 in the state. Cape May County outpaced all other counties in food and beverage, retail, recreation and second-home ownership.

The state's four beach counties combined saw an increase of \$355 million over 2016, with rental income up \$171 million, or 4 percent.

Tourism growth in the county included a \$31.6 million increase in lodging, \$40 million increase in food and beverage, a \$20 million increase in retail and a \$28 million increase in second home rentals, but a \$6 million decrease in

recreation. Total increase for the county including second home rental income was \$120 million.

Surveys showed the beach was the major draw to the county, with 80 percent choosing the sandy strands as the primary attraction. A total of 67 percent of respondents said dining was an attraction, 58 percent mentioned a boardwalk, 35 percent mentioned the county zoo, ecotourism and birding was mentioned by 33 percent, fishing and boating at 23 percent, culture and heritage was named by 21 percent and special events were mentioned by 15 percent.

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE  
Cape May County Tourism Director Diane Wieland presents the annual tourism report during the Small Business Summit on May 8 at the Wildwoods Convention Center.

## Republican congressional primary: Four seek nomination



SAM FIOCCHI

**Fiocchi touts his experience as freeholder, assemblyman**

By ERIC AVEDISSIAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

After serving as a county freeholder and one term in the state Assembly, Samuel Fiocchi has his sights set on Congress.

He's running in the June 5 Republican primary against a field of candidates vying to win the Nov. 6 general election and take U.S. Rep. Frank LoBiondo's seat representing the 2nd Congressional District.

LoBiondo, who served in Congress since 1995, announced he would not run for reelection in 2018, setting off a scramble in the Republican Party for a replacement.

To get to Washington, Fiocchi, 65, a retired businessman from Vineland, has to triumph in the primary against political newcomer Hirsh Singh of Linwood, former FBI agent Robert Turkavage of Brigantine and attorney Seth Grossman of Atlantic City.

"I want to continue to serve people. My goal as an elected official was to serve the people. It was my passion," Fiocchi said. "I thought the best way to give back to the people in the community was to serve as an elected official. ... When Frank LoBiondo decided not to run again, I thought I was the best and most qualified candidate so I decided to run."

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SETH GROSSMAN

**Grossman hopes for a return to great America of his youth**

By ERICA AVEDISSIAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

Seth Grossman sits at his desk in his Somers Point law office, surrounded by the trappings of a 43-year legal career and political involvement.

There are law books, framed photographs and political memorabilia. In one corner is the New Jersey flag, perched atop it a Phrygian cap, a conical hat based on the pileus, worn by Roman slaves who were granted their freedom.

For Grossman, 69, the symbols and state motto "liberty and prosperity" illustrate a deeper meaning.

"Liberty is almost like a culture where everybody is treated equally by the law and the rules apply to everybody, and that brings prosperity," Grossman said. "One of the things we often talk about is how in New Jersey they say if you want prosperity you have to destroy liberty by calling it 'economic development.' Economic development means you give certain favored groups of people lower taxes, they don't have to follow the same laws, they get loans nobody else gets."

Grossman, of Atlantic City, is a Republican candidate for Congress, and hopes to capture his party's nomination in the

See **Grossman**, page A4



HIRSH SINGH

**Business connections would boost job market, Singh says**

By ERIC AVEDISSIAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

Hirsh Singh said he gets his desire for public service from his family.

His great-grandfather was a colonel in the British Army during World War II and both grandfathers served as members of Parliament in India.

Now Singh, 33, a Linwood resident and engineer, wants to continue the tradition of public service in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Incumbent Republican U.S. Rep. Frank LoBiondo, who has represented the 2nd Congressional District since 1995, is not running for re-election, igniting a race for his seat.

Singh is vying for the GOP nod in the June 5 primary, battling Republican hopefuls former assemblyman Sam Fiocchi, attorney Seth Grossman and former FBI agent Robert Turkavage.

Whoever wins the June 5 primary will face the Democratic candidate in the Nov. 6 general election.

Democrats running in the primary include state Sen. Jeff Van Drew, attorney Will Cunningham, farmer and activist Nathan Kleinham and educator Tanzie Youngblood.

See **Singh**, page A10



ROBERT TURKAVAGE

**Years with FBI gave Turkavage broader picture of the issues**

By ERICA AVEDISSIAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

Robert Turkavage recalls his upbringing from blue-collar roots in Frackville, eastern Pennsylvania's anthracite coal region.

His mother worked as a seamstress, his father in a steel plant and later coalmines.

For Turkavage, 63, of Brigantine, his origins of hard work led him to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the private sector and finally to seek a seat in the 2nd Congressional District, where he hopes to win the June 5 Republican primary and Nov. 6 general election.

According to Turkavage, he was 12 when he started working: first paper routes, then a lawn-cutting business and finally in his mother's factory during the summertime in high school.

After graduating, he went to Washington and started working for the FBI in 1972 during the day and attended night school.

He graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration (accounting) from Southeastern University in Washington, D.C., in 1977.

What followed was a 32-year career with the FBI, handling fugitive, bank robbery and fraud investigations. He served as a

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