



Newsletter || October 2026

President's Message

October is always an exciting month at the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce - a time to celebrate our accomplishments, recognize outstanding members of our community, and look ahead to another year of working together on behalf of Cape May County.



On October 21, we will gather at the Wildwoods Convention Center for our 82nd Annual Meeting & Installation Dinner. This special evening gives us an opportunity to recognize our 2026 award recipients, thank our outgoing leadership, and welcome the officers and directors who will guide our Chamber in the year ahead.

It has been an incredibly active year for your Chamber. We have continued to advocate on issues that directly affect our members and our region, including transportation and infrastructure, workforce development, tourism, coastal resiliency, energy, and the regulatory challenges facing New Jersey businesses.

We are also investing in Cape May County's future. Our new Leadership Cape May County class is underway, and we continue to strengthen partnerships among business, education, government, healthcare, workforce development, and community organizations.

October itself reflects that spirit of collaboration, with our Annual Meeting, the Education Foundation's Funding the Future of Cape May County event, and the South Shore Summit all taking place this month.

With more than 965 members, our strength comes from you. Thank you for participating, serving, sponsoring, advocating, and believing in the work of the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce.

As we begin another Chamber year, we will continue to be a strong voice for business and a champion for Cape May County's economic future.

I look forward to celebrating with many of you on October 21!

Warmest Regards,

Barbara Stafford Jones,
President/CEO



UPCOMING EVENTS

10/11: Gospel Brunch - The Inn of Cape May

10/15: Non-Profit Summit - Atlantic Cape Community College

10/21: 82nd Annual Meeting & Installation Dinner - Wildwoods Convention Center

10/22: Funding the Future of Cape May County Education Foundation Event -
Union League Whitebrier

10/28: South Shore Summit Casino Expansion - Stockton University Atlantic City

[Click here to see all Chamber events.](#)

Chamber & Legislative Updates

The Cape May County Chamber Education Foundation is excited to announce the return of Gospel Brunch on October 11 at The Inn of Cape May. This annual fundraising event brings the community together for an inspiring afternoon of live gospel jazz featuring The Eddie Morgan Trio with Mrs. Rachelle Moore-Lane, while raising critical funds to support the Foundation's mission. Proceeds directly benefit local students through scholarships and educational programs, helping create opportunities for the next generation of Cape May County leaders. **[Read more.](#)**

The 2026 Cape May County Non-Profit Summit will take place October 15 at Atlantic Cape Community College's Cape May Campus, bringing local nonprofit organizations together to network, exchange ideas, and build meaningful partnerships. Presented by Atlantic Cape Community College, the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce, Cooper University Health Care, and the Cape May County Women's Commission, the free event will include opportunities to share organizational missions and initiatives. **[Read more.](#)**

The Cape May County Chamber is pleased to announce its 82nd Annual Meeting & Installation Dinner, presented by Rosenello & Bashaw, on Wednesday, October 21 at the Wildwoods Convention Center. Nearly 200 prominent members of the Cape May County business community are expected to attend. Guests will enjoy a lively social hour and elegant dinner featuring the installation of Officers and Directors, as well as the presentation of special awards recognizing exceptional contributions to the Cape May County business community. **[Read more.](#)**

The Cape May County Chamber and the Greater Atlantic City Chamber will once again partner to host the *South Shore Summit: Two Counties, One Future-South Jersey at a Crossroads* on October 28 at Stockton University in Atlantic City. The program will bring together state lawmakers, tourism officials, and industry leaders to discuss the potential impact of proposed North Jersey casino expansion on tourism, conventions, and economic growth in Atlantic and Cape May Counties. The program will feature presentations by Max Slusher of the Atlantic County Economic Alliance and Louis Belasco of the Greater Wildwoods Tourism Improvement & Development Authority, followed by a panel discussion with Senator Michael L. Testa, Jr.; Senator Vincent J. Polistina; Gary Musich, President & CEO of Visit Atlantic City; George Goldhoff, President of Hard Rock Hotel & Casino

Atlantic City and the Casino Association of New Jersey; Diane Wieland, Director of the Cape May County Department of Tourism; and Will Hanson, Director of the Cape May County Planning Department. The panel will be moderated by Brian Tyrell, Executive Director of Stockton University's Lloyd D. Levenson Institute for Gaming, Hospitality and Tourism (LIGHT). **[Read more.](#)**

The Cape May County Chamber is working with regional partners to better understand transportation needs throughout Cape May County and connections to Atlantic County. We are particularly interested in whether the current SJ Connects micro-busing service meets the needs of employers, employees, students, patients, and residents, and what changes could make the service more useful and increase ridership. Your responses will help the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce advocate for transportation services that better reflect the needs of Cape May County's employers, workforce, students, healthcare providers, and residents. **[Take the Survey.](#)**

Sponsorship opportunities for 2027 with the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce are now available. Businesses and organizations can partner with the Chamber through a variety of events, including signature programs such as the Annual Dinner, Women in Business Conference, Business at the Beach Expo, and the Annual Golf Tournament, as well as through mixers, seminars, and monthly membership meetings. Sponsorships are also offered for Education Foundation events and programs. These opportunities provide valuable visibility while directly supporting the Chamber's mission and ongoing programs that strengthen the local business community. **[Learn more.](#)**

Advertising is underway for the 2027 Jersey Cape Vacation Guide. Reach thousands of visitors planning their Jersey Cape getaway by promoting your business in one of the region's most trusted travel publications. The deadline to book ads is November 30. **[Read more.](#)**

The Chamber continues to monitor proposed changes to **[New Jersey's ABC test](#)** for independent contractor classification, which are currently scheduled to take effect October 1. The business community has raised concerns that the changes could make it more difficult for legitimate independent contractors to qualify and create additional costs and compliance burdens for businesses. Business groups are calling for a delay to allow additional time to review the rules and address outstanding concerns. The Chamber will continue to follow the issue and keep members informed of developments.

The Chamber recently sent a letter to the legislative delegation and state officials advocating for increased investment in coastal infrastructure and a more equitable approach to transportation funding. Citing a recent Rutgers University report highlighting the vulnerability of South Jersey's roadways, bridges and evacuation routes to future coastal flooding, the Chamber is urging the State to consider a revised County Aid funding formula that accounts for seasonal tourism populations and flood-vulnerable roadways. The proposed approach would help support critical infrastructure needs, including bridges and evacuation routes, roadway elevation, drainage and stormwater improvements, and long-term resiliency planning. The Chamber supports responsible resiliency measures while emphasizing the importance of balancing environmental preparedness with economic sustainability and the continued accessibility of Cape May County's coastal communities.

The Chamber is closely following A7127, sponsored by Senator Michael L. Testa, Jr. and Assemblyman Erik Simonsen, which would expand New Jersey's urban aid law to allow Wildwood and Woodbine to qualify as urban aid municipalities. The legislation recognizes the unique financial challenges facing both communities and would provide an additional avenue for State assistance to support municipal needs. Designation as urban aid municipalities could also make Wildwood and Woodbine eligible for additional State programs and benefits tied to the designation, helping place both communities on more comparable footing with other financially distressed municipalities.

The Chamber is collecting new diapers to support families facing diaper needs. According to the Community FoodBank of New Jersey, many low-income parents must choose between diapers and food, as diapers aren't covered by programs like SNAP or WIC. The Chamber office is serving as a drop-off location for anyone wishing to contribute. [Learn more.](#)

The Small Business Readiness for Resiliency (R4R) Mitigation Grant Program helps small businesses prepare for and recover from natural disasters by combining disaster preparedness training with financial support for risk-reduction efforts. Sponsored by Verizon and administered by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, the program gives eligible small businesses that complete a Disaster Resilience course through Verizon's Small Business Digital Ready platform the opportunity to compete for grants to help strengthen their businesses against future disasters. Taking steps to prepare now can help businesses remain operational and recover more quickly when challenges arise. [Read more.](#)

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) provides disaster assistance to help businesses, homeowners, renters, and nonprofit organizations recover from declared disasters. Assistance may include low-interest disaster loans to repair or replace real estate, equipment, inventory, and other business assets damaged by a disaster. Businesses are encouraged to learn about available resources and prepare in advance so they can respond and recover more effectively when disaster strikes. [Learn more.](#)



County & Member Updates

The Cape May County Board of County Commissioners recently recognized Robert Church, Jr. as he retired after 29 years with the County Engineering Department, including the past eight years as County Engineer. Following Church's retirement, the County has appointed David Maillet, P.E., of Remington Vernick Engineers as Interim County Engineer through a shared-services arrangement with the Cape May County Bridge Commission. [Read more.](#)

The Cape May County Office of Emergency Management, under the leadership of Director Chris Leusner, is launching the "Know Your Zone" hurricane evacuation program to help residents, visitors and property owners understand their risk and act early if evacuation is ordered. The program uses four lettered evacuation zones (A through D) developed with state and federal partners and aligned with New Jersey emergency planning. [Read more.](#)

Cape May County created an ad-hoc committee to plan a public parking partnership for the Wildwoods. The Board of County Commissioners named the County, the City of Wildwood, GWTIDA, County Counsel and the South Jersey Transportation Authority to advise on design, operations, financing and a shared-services model for a revenue-producing parking facility serving the Boardwalk, beaches, Convention Center and downtown.

In the same meeting, commissioners introduced a \$4.2 million bond ordinance to acquire a vacant beach-block site on Cedar Avenue before it is lost to private development. [Read more.](#)

Cape May County and 13 of our municipalities just renewed the shared-services agreements with the County Animal Shelter and Adoption Center to provide compassionate care for lost, stray, and homeless pets. This partnership has been in place since September 1, 2003. Instead of each town running its own shelter, Avalon, Cape May, Dennis, Lower, Middle, North Wildwood, Stone Harbor, Upper, West Cape May, West Wildwood, Wildwood, Wildwood Crest and Woodbine send animals to one professionally staffed County facility in the Crest Haven Complex. A separate, shared services agreement with Sea Isle City was approved in June. [Read more.](#)

Public flu vaccine clinics begin October 1 at locations throughout Cape May County. Clinics are open to individuals 6 months and older, and no appointment is needed. [Read more.](#)

The Atlantic Cape Community College Foundation and Cape May County Women's Commission will host the 2026 Women of Wonder Awards Luncheon on November 12 at The Flanders Hotel in Ocean City, honoring Ronnie Town, Stephanie A. Thomas, and Katherine C. Madden for their outstanding contributions to the community. All three honorees have strong ties to the Cape May County Chamber, with Madden serving as the Chamber's 2025 Women in Business Keynote Speaker, Thomas currently serving as 2nd Vice Board Chair, and Town having served as Chamber Chairperson from 2008-2009. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Women of Wonder Scholarship Endowment Fund, supporting students attending Atlantic Cape Community College. [Read more.](#)

Ocean City attorney and Chamber member Brandon D. Walcott has been honored with the Carnegie Medal, the highest civilian honor for heroism in the United States and Canada. Walcott was recognized for his bravery in rescuing a family from a dangerous rip tide. The Chamber congratulates Brandon on this well-deserved recognition and his extraordinary act of heroism. [Read more.](#)

The Wetlands Institute has unveiled plans for a reimagined campus, designed to strengthen its role as a leading center for coastal research, conservation, and environmental education while creating a more resilient and welcoming gateway to the marsh for the community. The vision for the future campus marks a significant step toward transforming the Institute's half-century-old facilities into a modern hub for research, conservation, and public engagement. The campus redesign was developed in collaboration with leading design and research partners and is based on a site plan concept developed in partnership with the University of Pennsylvania. It reflects an innovative approach to integrating marsh restoration, resilient design, and natural habitat restoration to confer resilience. [Read more.](#)

Atlantic City Electric's Energy Solutions for Business program helps businesses of all sizes improve energy efficiency and reduce operating costs. Through a variety of programs and

resources, businesses can upgrade outdated equipment, optimize existing systems, and train employees to better manage energy use. The program connects businesses with solutions designed to support long-term energy and cost savings. [Read more.](#)

Cape May Brewing Company has just been named New Jersey's largest independent craft brewery, a significant milestone for the Cape May County business. Since opening in 2011, the brewery has grown from a local operation into a leading name in New Jersey's craft beer industry, while continuing to build a strong presence in the community. [Read more.](#)

Tide Hall at Surf Dog Bar & Grille in Woodbine offers an intimate and versatile event space designed for weddings, celebrations, and special gatherings. With an elegant indoor/outdoor setting that can be customized to reflect each event's unique style, Tide Hall provides a beautiful backdrop for meaningful and memorable occasions. The space is ideal for small weddings, rehearsal dinners, bridal showers, birthday parties, intimate gatherings, and more, with catering services also available to help create a seamless experience. [Read more.](#)

Cape May County Veterans Connection

- Five people will be honored by the **Citizens/Veterans Advisory Committee (CVAC)** at its **9th Annual Recognition Luncheon** on Thursday, October 22, at Duffinetti's Restaurant. The honorees will receive CVAC Valor Awards for service that strengthens the organization's mission and creates a brighter future for local veterans in need. [Read more and sign up.](#)
- Volunteers are needed on Saturday, October 31 at 9:00 a.m. to help place flags on the graves of veterans at the Gerald M. Thornton Veterans Cemetery, located at 129 Crest Haven Road in Cape May Court House. Community members are encouraged to join in honoring and remembering those who served our country.




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Chamber Event Highlights



September Membership Meeting - September 16

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce hosted its September Membership Meeting on September 16 at The Flanders Hotel in Ocean City, bringing together members of the business community for a timely discussion with representatives of New Jersey's First Legislative District.

The panel featured Senator Michael L. Testa, Jr., Assemblyman Antwan L. McClellan, and Assemblyman Erik K. Simonsen. Victor Faison of Coastal Broadcasting/The Shore.TV moderated the discussion, which focused on a range of issues affecting businesses, residents, and communities throughout Cape May County and the region.

Topics discussed included state funding, the economy, energy, workforce development, affordability, housing, and other issues of importance to the local business community. The conversation provided Chamber members with an opportunity to hear directly from their state legislators and gain insight into current priorities and challenges facing the region.

The Chamber extends its appreciation to Senator Testa, Assemblyman McClellan, and Assemblyman Simonsen for participating in the discussion, as well as to Victor Faison for moderating the panel.

The Chamber also thanks its event sponsors, Wiser Insurance Agency, Atlantic Title Agency, and Harris Production Services, for their generous support.

[Our next meeting is the 82nd Annual Meeting and Installation Dinner on Wednesday, October 21, 2026 at Wildwoods Convention Center. We will install the 2026-27 Board of Directors and present our Annual Excellence Awards.](#)

Leadership Cape May County 2026-27 - September 16



The Leadership Cape May County Class of 2027 officially began its nine-month leadership development program with its first class of the year.

The opening session was led by Maria Grande, who guided participants through a leadership and personality assessment designed to help them better understand their individual leadership styles, strengths and approaches to working with others.

The day also included a fun Cape May County scavenger hunt, giving class members an opportunity to explore the community while getting to know one another. The first session concluded at The Bellevue Tavern, where participants gathered for food, drinks and conversation.

2nd Annual Sunset Cruise w/ Animal House Band - September 18



The Cape May County Chamber wrapped up the summer with a memorable evening aboard the Cape May Whale Watcher during its second Sunset Cruise featuring Animal House Band on September 18. Members and guests enjoyed live music, delicious food from Lucky Bones, and a beautiful evening on the water. The Chamber extends its sincere thanks to event sponsors Avalon Yacht Club, Lund's Fisheries, and Harris

Technology Services, as well as Captain Jeff and the entire Cape May Whale Watcher team, for helping make the event a success. The Chamber looks forward to another Sunset Cruise next year!

Evening Networking Mixer - September 29



The Cape May County Chamber and the New Jersey Licensed Beverage Association recently joined forces for a successful mixer at Harpoon's on the Bay in North Cape May. Members of both organizations had the opportunity to connect, network, and enjoy great hospitality while taking in a beautiful sunset over the bay. A special thank you to Brady and the entire Harpoon's team for hosting us and for helping

make the evening such a memorable one. The Chamber also extends its appreciation to Wisner Insurance Agency and Atlantic Title Agency for sponsoring the event.



Chamber Member of the Month: **Live Well Chase Health Chiropractic**

New Chamber member in 2025, Live Well Chase Health is a Cape May wellness practice dedicated to helping individuals achieve their health and wellness goals through personalized care. Located in North Cape May, the practice offers chiropractic care, acupuncture, and massage therapy, with treatments tailored to each individual's needs. Their holistic approach focuses on managing pain, improving mobility, and promoting overall well-being. Live Well Chase Health was also recently named a 2026 Best of the Jersey Shore Gold winner for Chiropractor, Massage, and Alternative Therapies.



Out on the Town with Our Members



A Chamber staff member and friends recently attended the *Second Annual Caviar and Cocktails Endless Summer Soirée* at the **Washington Inn & Wine Bar** in Cape May, which was truly an unforgettable way to close out the summer. The evening offered an elevated experience from start to finish, with exquisite King Caviar Farm caviar, Champagne Telmont, Beluga Vodka cocktails and tastings, elegant passed hors d'oeuvres, live music and friendly crowd and staff. The sophisticated setting and attention to detail created the perfect atmosphere for an evening of indulgence, conversation, and celebration. The Washington Inn holds curated events such as these throughout the seasons and it is worthwhile to check out!

Washington Inn & Wine Bar is located on Washington Street in Cape May. To learn about dining and events, please visit www.washingtoninn.com.

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A Chamber staff member attended *Dining in the Dark*, an event hosted by **Bestwork Industries for the Blind** at the Camden Aquarium, an experience that offered a unique and memorable perspective on navigating an everyday activity without sight. Participants were blindfolded throughout the dinner, providing a small glimpse into what it can be like to complete a familiar experience without the ability to see. Simple tasks that are often taken for granted required greater thought, patience, and reliance on the other senses. The experience offered a greater appreciation for the challenges individuals who are blind or visually impaired may face each day and served as a reminder not to take one's own abilities for granted. More than simply being blindfolded, the evening focused on awareness, understanding, and inclusion. The Chamber is grateful to Bestwork Industries for the Blind for providing such a meaningful experience and for highlighting the important work the organization does in the community.

Bestwork Industries for the Blind is located in Cherry Hill. To learn about their mission and supply center, please visit www.bestworkindustries.org.



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Are You Getting the Most Out of Your Chamber Membership?

Now is the perfect time to make sure you're taking advantage of everything your Cape May County Chamber of Commerce membership has to offer. With more than 965 members and growing, there are countless opportunities to get involved.

Promote Your Business

Share your events, news, job openings, and special offers through the Chamber website and member portal.

Keep Your Profile Current

Make sure your business listing includes updated contact information, hours, services, photos, and links.

Build Your Network

Attend Chamber membership meetings, networking mixers, educational programs, and signature events held throughout Cape May County.

Get Involved

Join one of our Action Committees and help shape initiatives that support the local business community while expanding your professional network.

Celebrate Your Success

Planning a grand opening, anniversary, renovation, or expansion? Let us help you celebrate with a Chamber Ribbon Cutting.

Increase Your Exposure

Take advantage of sponsorships, advertising opportunities in the Jersey Cape Vacation Guide, and dedicated email blasts to showcase your business to our members and visitors alike.

Use Chamber Resources

Need a meeting space? Members have access to our newly renovated conference room, complete with modern video conferencing technology and seating for up to 20 guests.



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Whether you own a restaurant, retail shop, hotel, attraction, service business, or entertainment venue, this is your opportunity to put your business in front of visitors who are ready to explore.

Why Advertise?

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