

CAPE MAY COUNTY CHAMBER



NEWSLETTER || SEPTEMBER 2026

President's Message:

It is hard to believe that another summer season is beginning to wind down. For so many of our members, the past several months has meant long days, staffing challenges, crowded roads, demanding schedules, and doing everything possible to provide the experience our visitors have come to expect from Cape May County. Thank you to our business owners, their employees, our seasonal workers, first responders, healthcare professionals, hospitality teams, municipalities, and everyone who works behind the scenes to keep Cape May County moving during our busiest time of year.

Over the past several months, we have continued to make certain that the needs of Cape May County are being heard by decision-makers at the county, state, and federal levels. Transportation and infrastructure, workforce development, education, coastal resiliency, tourism, environmental regulations, and economic development have all been at the forefront of our advocacy.

Transportation, in particular, continues to demand our attention. We have been working closely with our educational institutions, healthcare partners, transportation officials, and other stakeholders to advocate for solutions that actually meet the needs of the people who live and work here. Transportation cannot simply be provided—it has to connect people to jobs, education, healthcare, and opportunity at the times they actually need it.

These conversations are important because Cape May County has unique challenges. We are a coastal and seasonal economy at the southernmost end of New Jersey. A solution

designed for another part of the state does not always work here. Cape May County deserves a seat at the table when decisions affecting our future are being made, and your Chamber will continue to make sure our voice is heard.

September also brings something I look forward to every year- the beginning of a new Leadership Cape May County class. Our 2026–2027 participants will begin an incredible journey this month, learning firsthand about county government, tourism, education, healthcare, business, public safety, the military, nonprofit organizations, and the many other sectors that make Cape May County work. Developing our next generation of leaders is one of the most important investments we can make in the future of this county, and I am excited to welcome this year's class.

We also have a very busy fall ahead. Our committees are working hard, our advocacy efforts continue, and we are preparing for several important programs, including our Annual Meeting and Installation in October. There will be many opportunities for you to participate, network, learn, and have your voice heard.

I have said this many times, but it bears repeating: this Chamber is only as strong as its members.

As we close another summer and begin what I believe will be an exciting and productive fall, thank you for your continued confidence in the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce.

Warm Regards,
Barbara Stafford Jones,
President/CEO



* **UPCOMING EVENTS** *

9/16—Leadership Cape May County 2026-27 Program Begins

9/16—Membership Meeting w/ NJ Legislative District 1—The Flanders Hotel

9/18—Sunset Cruise w/ Animal House Band—Cape May Whale Watcher

9/29—Evening Networking Mixer w/ NJLBA—Harpoon's on the Bay

Chamber & Legislative Updates

- ♦ 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. Reserve your space today and take advantage of early advertising discounts through September 30. [Learn more.](#) [Read the Digital Guide Here.](#)
- ♦ The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce will host its September Membership Meeting on September 16, featuring Senator Michael L. Testa, Jr., Assemblyman Antwan McClellan, and Assemblyman Erik Simonsen, all representing New Jersey's First Legislative District. The September Membership Meeting will be hosted by The Flanders Hotel and is proudly sponsored by Wiser Insurance Agency and Atlantic Title Agency. [Learn more and sign up.](#)
- ♦ The Chamber is proud to partner with Atlantic Cape Community College and TEDxCapeMay in support of this year's TEDxCapeMay theme, *Vital Signs*. Leading up to the main event on October 4, the Chamber is helping present the next TEDxCapeMay Salon event at Atlantic Cape Community College's Cape May Court House campus. Join Dr. Monica Amadio on Thursday, September 17, for *Choose What Matters*, at 5:30 p.m. Salon tickets are \$10 and include a \$10 discount toward admission to the October 4 TEDxCapeMay event. [Learn more.](#)
- ♦ Following the success of the Chamber's 2025 Sunset Cruise and strong interest from attendees, the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce will once again host its Sunset Cruise with Animal House Band aboard the Cape May Whale Watcher on Friday, September 18, from 5:30–7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$75 and include the cruise, catering by Lucky Bones, and live music, with a cash bar available. The event brings together local favorites while showcasing the beauty of the Jersey Cape and supporting the Chamber's ongoing initiatives. Proudly sponsored by Harris Technology Services and Lund's Fisheries. [Learn more.](#)
- ♦ The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Atlantic Cape Community College, is offering two upcoming FREE educational and networking opportunities for local nonprofit professionals. [The Organizational Leadership & Community Collaboration Seminar](#) will take place on October 1, followed by the [Fall Non-Profit Summit](#) on October 15. Both events provide opportunities to gain valuable knowledge, connect with fellow nonprofit leaders, and share resources and ideas to strengthen local organizations.
- ♦ 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 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. [Read more.](#)
- ♦ The Chamber is monitoring [New Jersey's ABC test](#) for independent contractor classification and proposed changes to the state's rules. The business community has raised concerns that the current requirements, particularly those addressing a contractor's "usual course of business" and independent business status, could make it more difficult for legitimate independent contractors to qualify. Stakeholders are calling for additional time to review the rules, a statewide task force to examine their impact, and potential reforms to provide greater clarity for businesses and independent workers. The Chamber will continue to monitor the issue and keep members informed of developments.
- ♦ Governor Mikie Sherrill signed legislation giving restaurants, bars, and other eligible businesses more flexibility to sell and deliver alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption. The law, [Senate Bill 4384](#), makes permanent rules first established during the COVID-19 pandemic allowing certain retail consumption licensees to sell mixed cocktails in closed and sealed containers for off-premises consumption. [Read more.](#)



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County & Member Updates

- ♦ All are invited to join the Cape May County Board of County Commissioners in the solemn memorial ceremony for the 25th anniversary of the attacks of September 11th, 2001. The Memorial Ceremony will be held from 12:00-12:30 p.m. on Friday, September 11th, at the flagpole at the County Administration Building. [Read more.](#)
- ♦ NJ TRANSIT is conducting the South Jersey Transit Market Study to better understand how residents, workers, and visitors travel throughout Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties and how public transportation can better meet the region's needs. A virtual public meeting will be held on Wed., Sept. 9, with sessions at 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Both sessions will feature the same presentation and provide an opportunity to learn about the study's progress and share feedback. Registration is required by Sept. 7. [Learn more.](#)
- ♦ SOAR Church recently organized two Unity in the Community Days, held in Wildwood and at the Cape May County Park & Zoo. The events brought together local organizations and community partners to support Cape May County families as they prepare for the new school year. Families enjoyed an evening of games, resources, family activities, and community connections, while students received free backpacks and school supplies. The events highlighted the strength of local partnerships and the community's commitment to supporting area students and families. [Read more.](#)
- ♦ New Jersey's Official Tall Ship welcomed former Governor Christine Todd Whitman on Aug. 14 to Cape May in a celebration of New Jersey's maritime history and environmental education. Nearly 30 years ago, the governor designated the newly restored Delaware Bay historic oyster schooner A.J. Meerwald as New Jersey's official Tall Ship. [Read more.](#)
- ♦ The VFW Auxiliary 386 in Cape May earned national recognition after receiving awards for its Host a Coastie Program and Buddy Poppy Program. The organization welcomed 110 Coast Guard recruits to Cape May during the 2025 holiday season through Operation Fireside and continues its work supporting veterans, active-duty military, and the local community. The Host a Coastie Program will return this fall for Thanksgiving and Christmas 2026. [Read more.](#)
- ♦ Franklin Bank is pleased to announce that Brian Timberman has joined the bank as Vice President Commercial Lender, strengthening its commercial lending platform and reinforcing its commitment to supporting the growth and success of businesses throughout the communities it serves. [Read more.](#)

Cape May County Veterans Connection

Following the success of its inaugural event, the Citizens/Veterans Advisory Committee (CVAC) will host its **Second Annual Veterans Benefits and Health Fair** on Wednesday, September 23, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Wildwoods Convention Center.

This **free** community event brings together veterans, active-duty military personnel, and their families with more than 80 service providers offering valuable resources and support. Featured services include Wills for Warriors, VA services and support, health screenings and free flu shots, veterans' benefits assistance, and more. Free lunch will also be available for veterans.

[Learn more.](#)



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Chamber Event Highlights

August Membership Meeting—August 20



The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce hosted a sold-out August Membership Luncheon on August 20 featuring Congressman Jefferson Van Drew for an Annual Legislative Update for Cape May County and South Jersey.

During the luncheon, Congressman Van Drew provided updates on secured funding and discussed key issues impacting Cape May County and the South Jersey region. He also took time to connect with members of the local business community and address their questions and concerns.

The luncheon was sponsored by Triad Associates, Cape May Seashore Lines, Wiser Insurance Agency, and Atlantic Title Agency.

The Chamber extends its appreciation to Congressman Van Drew for joining its membership, South 9 Bar & Grille for hosting the event, and the Chamber's members and sponsors for their continued support.

SUPPORTING ARTICLES:

- ⇒ **CAPE MAY STAR & WAVE:** Federal funds flowing in South Jersey, Van Drew says
- ⇒ **CAPE MAY COUNTY HERALD:** Van Drew Talks Federal Investments and a Country in 'Crisis'
- ⇒ **OCNJ DAILY:** Both a protest and a standing ovation greet Van Drew in Cape May County

Our next Membership Meeting is on Wednesday, September 16 at The Flanders Hotel with Legislative District 1. Learn more and sign up.

Evening Networking Mixer — August 26



The Chamber recently wrapped up the summer with an Evening Networking Mixer hosted by Cape Square Entertainment and Cape Kitchen & Craft. The event brought together members of the Cape May County Chamber and Ocean City Regional Chamber for an evening of networking, conversation, and community connections. The Chamber thanks Cape Square Entertainment and Cape Kitchen & Craft for their hospitality, as well as Wiser Insurance Agency and Atlantic Title Agency for sponsoring the event.

SAVE *the* DATE

**CAPE MAY COUNTY
CHAMBER**

82nd Annual Meeting & Installation Dinner

5:00-8:30PM

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2026

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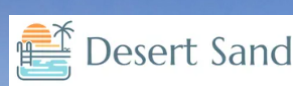
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Chamber Member of the Month: Desert Sand Resort

A proud member of the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce since 1985, Desert Sand Resort offers a family-friendly getaway in Avalon, conveniently located just one block from the beach. The resort features individually decorated one- and two-bedroom suites that accommodate up to eight guests, with fully equipped kitchenettes, private bathrooms, Wi-Fi, flat-screen TVs, and air conditioning. Guests can enjoy complimentary beach tags and parking, a heated indoor pool, outdoor pool and wading pool, and a spacious sundeck. Located near the Avalon and Stone Harbor border, Desert Sand is also close to local shops, restaurants, beaches, and family-friendly recreational activities, making it a convenient destination for a relaxing Jersey Shore vacation.



Learn more at www.desertsand.com.

Out on the Town with Our Members



A Chamber team member recently enjoyed Prime Rib Night at **Hemingway's** at The Grand Hotel in Cape May and had a wonderful experience from start to finish. The hostess, Restaurant Manager Bill, and their waitress were all incredibly attentive, friendly, and welcoming. With a fantastic selection of food and excellent pricing, especially on the specials, they were impressed by the value, particularly during the busy season. They were treated so kindly and enjoyed a delicious meal, and they are already

looking forward to returning during the off-season for more great dining experiences at Hemingway's!

Hemingway's at The Grand Hotel is located at 1045 Beach Avenue in Cape May. To see the full menu and store hours, please visit www.hemingwayscapemay.com.

A Chamber team member recently visited **Harbor Square Movie Theatre** in Stone Harbor to catch a newly released film and enjoyed a comfortable, classic moviegoing experience. During the summer, the theater offered a special \$9 ticket promotion for the first showing of the day, making it a great way to enjoy a blockbuster before heading to the beach. The friendly staff made purchasing tickets and concessions easy, and finding a seat was a breeze. As part of Square Theaters, with locations throughout Cape May and Atlantic counties, Harbor Square offers the latest movie releases in a relaxed, small-town setting, perfect for date nights, family outings, or a casual night at the movies.



Harbor Square Theatre is located on 96th Street in Stone Harbor. Please visit www.squaretheatres.com for showtimes and locations.



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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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