

# CAPE MAY COUNTY CHAMBER



## NEWSLETTER || AUGUST 2025

### *From the President's Desk:*

**Dear Members,**

August marks the height of our summer season, a time when Cape May County is alive with visitors, events, and the economic energy that fuels so many of our businesses. Thank you to each of you for your continued dedication and excellence in showcasing the very best our region has to offer.

Behind the scenes, the Chamber is actively engaged in several critical advocacy initiatives that will shape Cape May County's future. We are working closely with state partners to help draft a bill that would incorporate our county's unique needs into the New Jersey State Plan. Cape May County's seasonal economy, geographic isolation, and infrastructure challenges are unlike those in other parts of the state - and it's time Trenton recognizes that.

In addition, by working with our County Commissioners, and municipalities, we are

carefully monitoring the NJ PACT REAL (Resilient Environments and Landscapes), a state initiative focused on coastal resilience, land use, and sustainability. Cape May County must have a voice in shaping policies that directly affect our shoreline communities, tourism economy, and long-term livability.

As we continue our work on these strategic fronts, I encourage you to stay engaged and informed. Leadership Cape May County registration is now open, and we invite you to help cultivate the next generation of business and civic leaders. The deadline to register is August 15<sup>th</sup> - [sign up here](#).

Thank you for your ongoing support. Together, we are ensuring that Cape May County is not only heard, but truly understood.

**Warm Regards,**  
*Barbara Stafford*  
*Jones,*  
**President**



### ◆ UPCOMING EVENTS \*

8/21/25—Annual Legislative Update w/ Congressman Jefferson Van Drew—South  
9 Bar & Grille

8/27/25—End of Summer Networking Mixer w/ Ocean City Regional Chamber—  
The Point, Somers Point

9/10/25—Evening Mixer w/ AJ Meerwald & Stowaways—Cape May Lewes Ferry  
Terminal

9/18/25—Membership Luncheon w/ NJ Legislative District 1—The Flanders Hotel

9/19/25—Sunset Cruise w/ Animal House Band—Cape May Whale Watcher

9/23/25—Osprey Health Insurance Seminar—Chamber Office

## Chamber & Legislative Updates

- ◆ The Cape May County Chamber Education Foundation announced open registration for Leadership Cape May County. This program is designed to develop informed, committed, and qualified business, community, and civic leaders for the benefit of our area. Leadership Cape May County is a nine-month immersive program that combines in-room course work with field study. Applications are due by August 15. [Learn more and apply.](#)
- ◆ The Chamber will host its August Membership Meeting on Thurs., August 21, at South 9 Bar & Grille, sponsored by Triad Associates. This presentation will feature Congressman Jefferson Van Drew for the Annual Legislative Update. The Legislative Update offers highlights on recent challenges and accomplishments that benefit Cape May County. [Learn more and sign up.](#)
- ◆ The Chamber is proud to support the upcoming *TEDxCapeMay Salon* series, featuring two thought-provoking events at Atlantic Cape Community College. On August 21, Ryan Benz will present “Why Being Yourself Takes Courage—and How to Find It,” followed by Louis Bezich’s “Unleash Your Emotional Force to Live Healthy and Happy” on September 18. These Salons lead up to the main *TEDxCapeMay* event on October 5. [Learn more.](#)
- ◆ In July, the Chamber celebrated grand openings and ribbons cuttings for three new businesses in Cape May County: Three Little Birds and Stainton’s Kids Co., both located in Ocean City, along with Taqueria El Azteca’s new location in Wildwood. [Read more.](#)
- ◆ The Chamber has been closely monitoring the ongoing development of the NJ PACT/NJ REAL regulations issued by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). On July 14, NJDEP announced its intention to adopt the Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL) coastal flood rules proposed in 2024, with significant changes in response to public and stakeholder feedback. The flood elevation requirement for new and substantially improved coastal buildings has been reduced from 5 feet to 4 feet above FEMA’s base flood elevation. A Notice of Substantial Change outlining these revisions was published in the July 21 edition of the New Jersey Register, followed by a 60-day public comment period and a virtual hearing on Sept. 3. [More details and a recorded webinar can be found on the NJDEP website.](#)
- ◆ A recent virtual meeting with the Chamber, County officials, Legislative District 1, and the NJ Office of Legislative Services addressed the County Aid formula. The current formula, which is based on population rank and county road mileage, disproportionately benefits more populated counties and those with extensive rural roads. Cape May County, which faces unique infrastructure demands due to seasonal population surges and contributes significant state tax revenue, remains underfunded. A revised formula was proposed for consideration, and the Chamber will continue to monitor developments.
- ◆ The Chamber is closely monitoring and has signed a letter opposing the NJ Department of Labor’s proposed changes to the ABC Test for determining independent contractor status. While the proposed rules aim to clarify worker classification and prevent misclassification, drawing from court decisions and the NJ Supreme Court’s guidance, they raise concerns for many employers and independent contractors across the state. [Read more.](#)
- ◆ The 2026 Jersey Cape Vacation Guide is now accepting advertisers for its 59th edition, highlighting the best of Cape May County with engaging content on attractions, dining, accommodations, and activities. This year’s package includes expanded digital marketing opportunities like a visitor-focused website, email blasts to 7,000+ subscribers, an e-newsletter, and social media features. Lock in the best rates by the early bird deadline of September 19. [Learn more. View the digital version online.](#)
- ◆ The Personal Preference Program (PPP) is a New Jersey Medicaid program that provides a much-needed service for individuals in need of home health aides. The program provides a monthly budget from Medicaid to employ parents, spouses, friends, relatives, or neighbors as the individual’s personal caregivers, instead of using a home health care agency. [Read more.](#)



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### In Memoriam

**Daniel Lockwood**, former Mayor of Middle Township, passed away on June 22. Lockwood had a lifelong interest in public service and a passion for government which led him to be involved with Middle Township committees since the early 2000’s. [Read more.](#)

# Chamber Event Highlights

## July Membership Meeting – July 17



The Chamber hosted its July Membership Meeting at Avalon Links Restaurant, with generous sponsorship from DeBlasio & Associates.

Attendees heard from department heads at the South Jersey Transportation Authority, including Executive Director Stephen F. Dougherty; Dan Corrigan, Chief Engineer & Director of Engineering; Karen Coughlin, Director of Tolls; Dominic D'Amico, Director of Transportation Services; and Tim Kroll, Airport Director at Atlantic City International Airport.

Each representative provided valuable insights and updates on their respective areas of responsibility, including infrastructure projects, tolling operations, transportation services, and airport development. The meeting concluded with an engaging Q&A session that fostered meaningful discussion around regional transportation concerns impacting Cape May County and the broader South Jersey area.

**Our next luncheon is Thursday, August 21, 2025 with Congressman Jefferson Van Drew for the Annual Legislative Update. Networking and check-in begins at 11:30am with the program to start at 12:00pm.**

## Evening Networking Mixer—Whale Tale Brewery

The Cape May County Chamber partnered with the Middle Township Chamber of Commerce to co-host our July Evening Networking Mixer at Whale Tale Brewing Company in Cape May Court House. Members from both Chambers came together for a fun and relaxed evening of craft brews, tasty bites, and meaningful connections. A heartfelt thank you to the Whale Tale team for their warm hospitality and for sharing their beautiful, welcoming space with us.



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## Chamber Member of the Month: *DiPalantino Contractors*

DiPalantino Contractors is a family-owned hardscaping design and build company based in Cape May Court House and a proud member of the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce since 2009.



Founded on a legacy that began in 1929 when Michael Di Palantino's grandfather immigrated from Italy and established the family's masonry business in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, the company continues to uphold its tradition of quality craftsmanship. Today, Michael, a third-generation masonry and paving expert, and his wife Karen have been serving the South Jersey region since 1997, creating stunning outdoor spaces with concrete pavers, natural stone, and custom concrete work. Specializing in everything from patios and pool decks to outdoor kitchens, retaining walls, and lighting, DiPalantino Contractors combines professional design with expert installation to transform properties and enhance home value. With over 20 years of experience, the company remains dedicated to superior service, lasting client relationships, and the Cape May County community they call home.

*Learn more at [www.thepaverguy.com](http://www.thepaverguy.com).*

## *Out on the Town with Our Members*



The Chamber team recently attended a legislative breakfast hosted by the **New Jersey Restaurant and Hospitality Association (NJRHA)** at Founder's Grub & Pub in Wildwood. The event featured an engaging panel discussion with Senator Michael Testa and Assemblyman Antwan McClellan of Legislative District 1, along with NJRHA President & CEO Daniel Klim and Vice President of Public Affairs Amanda Stone. Topics included timely and impactful issues such as Tip Credits, the Heat Bill, the State Budget, the Kids Menu Bill, plastics legislation, and more—key concerns for the restaurant and hospitality industry. The discussion aligned closely with the Chamber's ongoing legislative efforts, making this a valuable and insightful event for all in attendance. With many shared members between our organizations, it was a productive morning of collaboration and advocacy. If you're in the restaurant or hospitality business, we highly recommend exploring the resources and support NJRHA offers.

***New Jersey Restaurant and Hospitality Association headquarters is located in Trenton. Please visit their website at [www.njrha.org](http://www.njrha.org) for more information.***

Members of the Chamber team and their families recently enjoyed a wonderful evening at the **Borough of West Cape May's** Farmers' Market, held every Tuesday from 3:00-7:30 PM at Backyard Park behind the municipal complex on Broadway. A beloved summer tradition running from mid-June through the end of August, this market is truly a seasonal staple. We had a great time exploring a diverse selection of local vendors, picking up fresh, seasonal produce, and savoring delicious bites from the food trucks. Live music added to the charm, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere perfect for unwinding and connecting with the community. Whether you're shopping, dining, or simply soaking in a beautiful summer evening, the West Cape May Farmers' Market offers something for everyone!

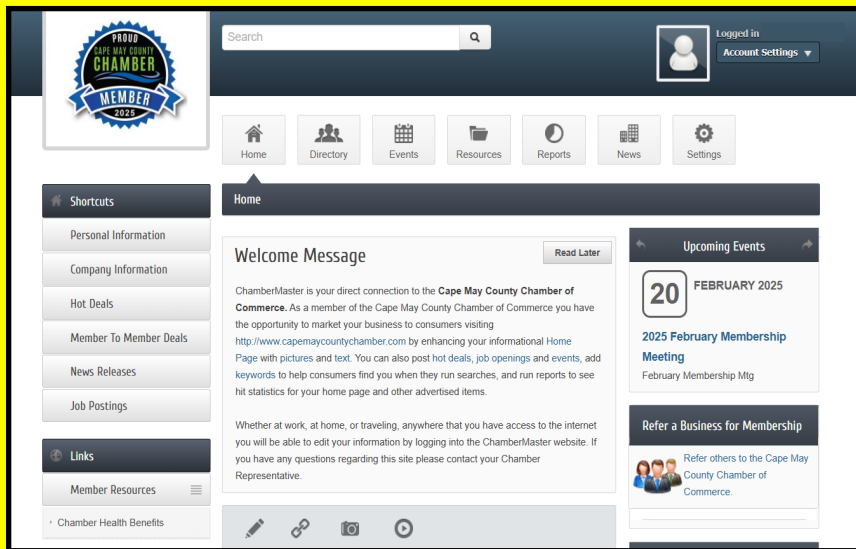


***The Borough of West Cape May hosts many community events throughout the year. Please visit their website at [www.westcapemay.us](http://www.westcapemay.us) for a complete lineup.***

# Maximize Your Membership: Share, Connect, and Shine!

*Did you know your Chamber membership gives you a platform to amplify your business?*

- **Spread the Word:** Post your events, news, job openings, and special offers directly on the Chamber's website and membership portal—it's easy and effective!
- **Boost Your Visibility:** Keep your member profile updated with your products, services, hours, and more to help potential customers find you.
- **Shop Local & Save:** Discover products, services, and exclusive member-to-member deals and discounts from fellow Chamber members.



*Don't miss out—make the most of these benefits and let your business shine!*

**LOGIN NOW.**

## 2025 Jersey Cape Vacation Guide & Calendar of Events



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online, and visitors center near you!***

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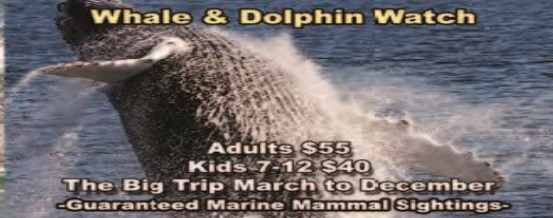
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