

CAPE MAY COUNTY CHAMBER

NEWSLETTER || MARCH 2025

From the President's Desk:

Dear Members,

As we step into March, I want to take a moment to recognize the incredible momentum our business community has built in the first quarter of 2025. Your dedication, innovation, and resilience continue to drive economic growth and make our county a vibrant place to live and work.

Be sure to take advantage of upcoming networking events, business development workshops, and our advocacy efforts at the state and local levels.

I encourage each of you to engage with the Chamber, whether by attending events, sharing your insights, or leveraging the many resources we offer. Together, we can ensure that our businesses remain strong, and our community continues to flourish.

Thank you for your commitment to our local economy. I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events and working alongside you to make 2025 a year of growth and success.

*Warm Regards,
Barbara Stafford
Jones,
President*



* UPCOMING EVENTS *

3/7/25—Women in Business Conference—The Flanders Hotel

3/20/25—Membership Meeting—Yacht Club of Sea Isle City

3/26/25—Evening Networking Mixer—Harry's Cape May

4/15/25—Business at the Beach Expo—Wildwoods Convention Center

4/23/25—Evening Networking Mixer—Trio North Wildwood

4/30/25 - Evening Networking Mixer - Cape May Seashore Lines

Chamber & Legislative Updates

- ◆ The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce proudly presents the 20th anniversary of the Women in Business Conference, held at The Flanders Hotel on Friday, March 7, presented by OceanFirst Bank and 1st Bank of Sea Isle City. This year's theme, "Celebrating 20 Years of Moving Women Forward," highlights two decades of empowering women to overcome challenges and thrive in their professional journeys. This year's speakers are North Wildwood Police Chief Katherine Madden, Personal Power Speaker Maria Grande and Cooper University Health Care Senior Vice President and Chief Regional Officer Christine Winn, PhD., FACHE. Our panel discussion, "*Mentorship Matters: Learning, Growing, and Paying It Forward*," will bring together Cape May County Clerk Rita Rothberg, Debbie Bass from Cape May County Tourism, and Nancy Cleaver Bilderback of the Crest Savings Bank Board of Directors to share their insights on the power of mentorship. Closing out the day, Olympian, motivational speaker, and entrepreneur Priscilla Loomis will deliver an inspiring keynote to leave attendees motivated and empowered.

- ◆ The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce will host Cape May County Commissioner Director Leonard Desiderio at its membership meeting on March 20 at Yacht Club of Sea Isle City, sponsored by Triad Associates. Commissioner Desiderio will share updates on the state of Cape May County. **Learn more and sign up.**

- ◆ The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce's Annual Business at the Beach Expo, the premier networking event in Cape May County, is scheduled for April 15 at Wildwoods Convention Center. With an expected turnout of 400 professionals, this Expo presents an exceptional opportunity for networking and exploring a variety of business goods and services—all under one roof. This year's Expo kicks-off with a dynamic Keynote Presentation at 3:00 p.m. by Anita Zinsmeister, President of Dale Carnegie Training of Central and Southern NJ. Zinsmeister will give an enlightening presentation titled "*Storytelling For Impact: Elevate Your Leadership Presence*." **Learn more and sign up.**

- ◆ Education Foundation Scholarship Applications are now open for graduating high school seniors pursuing college or trade schools (deadline April 13, 2025). Since its establishment in 2015, the Foundation has proudly awarded over \$73,000 in scholarships to support students in achieving their educational goals across a range of programs. **Learn more about these opportunities and how to apply.**

- ◆ The Chamber is closely monitoring **Bill A5022**, which proposes the establishment of the "Occupational Heat-Related Illness and Injury Prevention Program" under the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. This legislation would require industries, including restaurants, to comply with new heat stress standards. If enacted, restaurant kitchens must implement these measures when indoor temperatures exceed 80 degrees, with non-compliance resulting in fines or stop-work orders.

- ◆ The Cape May County Board of County Commissioners has unveiled a historic 2025 budget, marking a third consecutive tax rate decrease and the county's first tax levy reduction in over 30 years. **Read more.**

- ◆ Cape May County ranks second in New Jersey for occupancy tax collection, generating \$23,066,528 in 2024, just behind Bergen County, which collected \$24,224,494. However, the formula used to distribute funding among the three entities—Tourism, Arts, and History—is flawed and does not comply with the allocation guidelines established by law. More than \$21.6 million in Occupancy Tax collected in Cape May County is being used to support programs in other counties or is diverted into the general fund, deviating from the original intent of the law. **Learn more.**

- ◆ Academy Award-winning director Steven Spielberg will be filming scenes for his new UFO-themed movie, reportedly titled *The Dish*, in Woodbine, from March 10-14, bringing excitement and economic benefits to the small town. Local businesses are already seeing an increase in activity, while Woodbine officials hope Spielberg's presence will further highlight the town's unique history and charm. **Read more.**

- ◆ FinCEN announced that it will not impose fines, penalties, or enforcement actions for failures to file or update beneficial ownership information (BOI) reports under the Corporate Transparency Act until new deadlines are established through an interim final rule. Expected by March 21, 2025, this rule will extend reporting deadlines, provide further guidance, and seek public input on potential revisions to minimize burdens on small businesses while ensuring BOI remains valuable for national security and law enforcement. **Read more.**

Chamber Event Highlights



February Membership Meeting – February 20

The Chamber welcomed New Jersey Department of Transportation Commissioner Francis O'Connor to our monthly membership meeting on February 20 at the Bellevue Tavern, sponsored by AtlantiCare. Commissioner O'Connor provided valuable insights into upcoming infrastructure projects in our region, including the Route 49 Bridge over Mill Creek in Upper Township (currently in concept development), the Route 50 Bridge over Cedar Swamp Creek in Upper Township (in preliminary engineering), and the Route 52 Causeway Accent Lighting project, expected to be completed by spring 2025. He also discussed the Cape May-Lewes Ferry Utility Duct Bank Project, anticipated to go out for bid in summer 2025, as well as the Cape May Approach Road, which is expected to be bid by the end of 2025. Additionally, the Spicer's Creek Boat Ramp Renovation is scheduled to take place in 2025. Commissioner O'Connor also spoke about his department's work with the North Wildwood Emergency Beach Replenishment project and its efforts to support coastal infrastructure resilience. Following his presentation, Commissioner O'Connor generously participated in a Q&A session, addressing members' questions and providing further insights into transportation initiatives affecting our region.

Our next luncheon meeting is Thursday, March 20, 2025.

Networking and check-in begins at 11:30am with the program to start at 12:00pm.

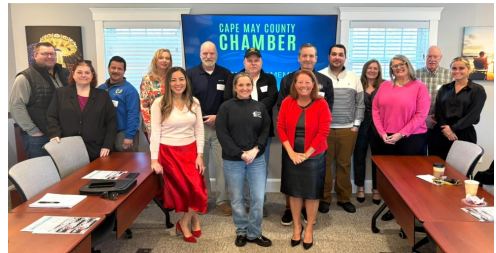
Non-Profit Summit—Feb. 4

The Cape May County Non-Profit Summit, hosted in partnership with Atlantic Cape Community College, Cape May County Chamber of Commerce, Acenda Integrated Health, Cooper University Health Care, and the Cape May County Women's Commission, was a resounding success, with over 70 organizations represented and a packed house at Atlantic Cape Community College's Cape May Campus, highlighting the strength and dedication of our local non-profits.



New Member Reception—Feb. 14

The Chamber hosted a New Member Reception, welcoming new members, board members and ambassadors to learn about the many benefits and opportunities the Chamber has to offer. Companies welcomed were 3R Premium Cleaning Services, 96 Shades, Allegra Marketing, Print & Mail, American Legion Post 184, Bright Light Design Center, California Apartments, Cape May County Herald, Cape May Stage Inc., Mulraney Training and Consulting, LLC, OceanFirst Bank, Sturdy Savings Bank, TD Bank, Tesla Payments, VCS Software, and VFW - Post 5941.



Gospel Brunch—Feb. 23



The Gospel Brunch, hosted in partnership with the Greater Cape May Chamber at The Grand Hotel of Cape May, was a memorable event filled with incredible performances by local talent, including Bernadette Matthews, Kenya Isaac, Shirley White, Amy Hufana, Michael Lloyd, Anthony Matthews, and Nate Kennedy. The spirit and legacy of Lois Smith were also felt, inspiring all in attendance. Proceeds from this event will support the Cape May County Chamber Education Foundation and the Greater Cape May Chamber, benefiting local students through scholarships and educational programs.

Evening Networking Mixer—Feb. 26

The Cricket Club in Cape May hosted the Chamber's evening networking mixer, bringing together a great turnout of members for an evening of connection and conversation. Guests enjoyed exceptional food and beverages in an elegant setting, making for a memorable experience.



Out on the Town with Our Members

One of the Chamber's staff recently visited **Nino's Family Restaurant** in Cape May Court House and had a fantastic dining experience, enjoying a warm and inviting atmosphere that perfectly complemented the delicious Italian cuisine. Visiting with a group of friends, they sampled a variety of dishes, including crispy fried calamari, pillowy gnocchi, classic chicken parmesan, and flavorful seafood fra diavolo. Every dish was expertly prepared, bursting with authentic flavors, and served in generous portions at a great price. From start to finish, the experience was exceptional, with friendly staff providing attentive service, making Nino's a must-visit spot for a true taste of Italy in Cape May County.



Nino's Family Restaurant is located at 16 South Main Street, Cape May Court House. They are open everyday, except Mondays, from 3pm-8pm. Learn more at www.ninosfamilyrestaurant.my.canva.site



A Chamber staff member had a fantastic shopping experience at the **Habitat for Humanity ReStore** in Cape May Court House, conveniently located near Big Lots. Originally searching for a new dresser and end table, they not only found both pieces but also scored beautiful home décor and dishes—all at unbeatable prices. The ever-changing inventory made every section an adventure, with unique treasures waiting to be discovered. Even more rewarding was knowing that each purchase helps fund Habitat's projects and initiatives, supporting local families on their journey to homeownership. The ReStore is truly a hidden gem for budget-friendly home improvement and design.

The Habitat for Humanity ReStore is located at 20 Court House South Dennis Road in Cape May Court House and is open Monday-Saturday 10am-6pm. Visit www.habitatcapemaycounty.org for more information their mission and on donating items.

A Chamber staff member recently enjoyed a fantastic dining experience at Cape May's iconic **Lucky Bones Backwater Grille** with family, savoring delicious food in a warm and welcoming atmosphere. The meal began with the classic "Lil's Last Stop Fries," a must-try starter, followed by a selection of freshly made pizzas, perfect for sharing. From start to finish, the service was friendly, and the experience was exceptional. In addition to their inviting dine-in experience, Lucky Bones offers weekend breakfast, takeout, and a diverse menu featuring everything from seafood and pasta to burgers and wood-fired pizzas, making it a go-to spot for any occasion.



Lucky Bones Backwater Grille is located at 1200 Route 109 South in Cape May. Visit www.luckybones.com for hours, menu and specials.


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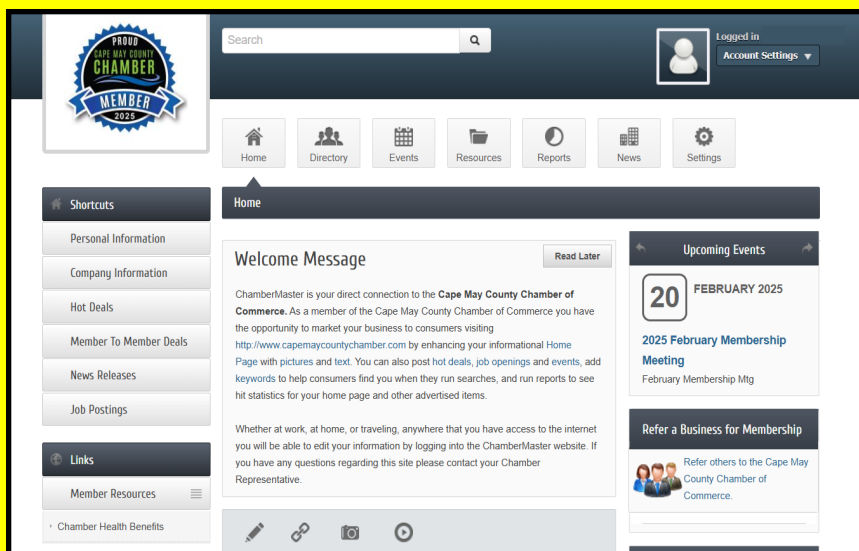
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Maximize Your Membership: Share, Connect, and Shine!

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.

ADVENTURER OCEANFRONT INN

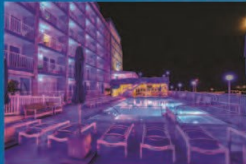
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Advertise in the 2025 Calendar of Events!

This high quality, four color, glossy calendar promotes Cape May County events, concerts and activities, with a distribution of 40,000. With affordable rates, this very popular calendar is a great way to promote your business to visitors and locals all year round.

**Contact Becky Kennedy,
Membership and Marketing Administrator
at (609) 465-7181 or email admin@cmcchamber.com
for pricing and availability.**

Hold your next business meeting, seminar,
workshop, board retreat, client appointment
at the Cape May County Chamber



Convenient Location | Free Parking | Wi-Fi access | Video Conferencing Capabilities
Complimentary coffee, tea and water | Comfortably seats up to 20 people

Conference Room Rates:

Regular Rate:	Non-Profit Rate:
Full Day - \$200	Full Day - \$100
Half Day - \$100	Half Day - \$50

Contact info@cmcchamber.com or call 609-465-7181 for more information and to book.

Cape May County Chamber of Commerce

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