

2012

Continued from page A1

College, agreed that Atlantic City was segregated from the rest of southern New Jersey.

Busler said that while efforts were being made to change Atlantic City's image as a gaming/dining destination, downbeach locations, which draw family vacationers, are in a stronger position than Atlantic City for the summer.

Busler was cautiously optimistic that the region would have a stronger summer season than last year, but he told the audience to be prepared if things slowed.

Regionally, Busler said that

the fourth quarter of last year's GDP grew at about 3 percent of the annual rate. The economy's growth looked like it was slowing, Busler said, and many economic forecasts for the next year were negative.

A lower unemployment rate could compensate for the negative predictions, Busler said. Nearly one million more people will be employed this summer than last summer, Busler said.

Consumer confidence, while lower than the historic average, is also up from last season, Busler said.

"I think there's a positive correlation between consum-

er confidence and the tourism season," Busler said. "As long as consumers feel good, as long as they don't perceive that gas prices are outrageous that should encourage a lot of vacationing. Some of the realtors I talked to told me in February that rentals have really started to be much stronger than they have been."

"Atlantic County always impacts us, but we're very optimistic," Wieland said of summer in Cape May County. "We're seeing a huge increase in hits on our website, people are calling in... gas prices have been an issue when it was bordering that \$4 mark,

but we're finding that gas prices are an issue all year. If you're spending more in gas, you're spending more before you even get to your vacation, so we're one tank of gas away. That's our message out there. Forty million people live within a 300 mile radius (of Cape May County), so we're concentrating on that."

Wieland added that the Canadian market also looked strong this summer because of an improved exchange rate and comparatively lower gas prices in the United States.

She estimated a 5 percent increase in tourism revenue this season.

Rise

Continued from page A1

"We're coming back to those 07-08 numbers," he said. "People started booking in the early and late fall right after summer ended."

Bezaire said Hurricane Irene ended the 2011 summer season early for many shore town businesses, but after the storm passed people immediately started booking for summer 2012.

Broker and owner of Jersey Cape Realty, Dee Lanzalotti, said the mild winter months and increased rental interest have been an enormous plus following Irene's threat to shore towns. The storm put a damper on the last few weeks of August 2011, but now Jersey Cape Realty is reporting a 29 percent increase in

rental income for 2012.

"We marketed ourselves a little more aggressively this year but no one expected a 29 percent growth," she said. "2011 was excellent aside from Irene, but this year is even better."

Lanzalotti said the growth might not have peaked yet since many summer visitors are booking last minute rentals. She said Jersey Cape currently has about 250 rental listings with four agents operating a 24/7-rental department.

"People who call for rentals get a lot of attention because those helping them aren't handling anything else," she said. "With the way things are going, everyone is thrilled in the rental department. Life is good."

Gail Wilsey-Morrison, owner of Wilsey Realty LLC, said her agency is also tracking better numbers than 2011. She is currently reporting a 7.2 percent increase in 2012, which may not seem like a large increase, but 2011 showed a 32 percent growth over 2010. She said real estate sales at her agency are up 49 percent this year as well.

Wilsey-Morrison opened her real estate agency in 2005. She said it has been a great experience despite a difficult economy, which now seems to be recovering.

"It hasn't been devastating. It was a slow growth, but now it's really taking off," she said. "I think people are finally okay with the economy struggling. They're now more comfortable with the situation and not holding off as much."

Wilsey-Morrison also attributed growing numbers to internet marketing and said it has had a big affect on customer traffic. She said she has a great sales team by her side and currently has 247 rental properties listed, mainly on Cape Island.

Ashley Sullivan, office coordinator for deSatnick Real Estate LLC, said the agency picked up 150 more rentals after merging with Tolz Realty in January. She said she has only been in the real estate business since the market took a hit so it feels great to see it doing so well again.

"We've booked a lot of properties and it's going really well," Sullivan said. "It's been a lot busier. We're getting around 50 to 60 check-ins per week."

Charity Clark, a real estate agent for Chris Clemans Sotheby's International Realty said rental bookings at her agency are definitely experiencing a growth. She

said even during the peak of the recession, the numbers stayed fairly strong with the exception of higher end rentals.

"The nicer, more upscale properties took a hit, but now they are filling in equally with other rentals," Clark said.

She said there are more last minute renters coming in than there used to be as well, which makes it difficult to predict how well an agency will do compared to the year prior until the summer actually begins.

"Around 15 years ago, people would book in January, if not sooner," she said. "We still get some of that but not as much. Schedules are so busy nowadays and people aren't booking until later."

She said Chris Clemans Sotheby's International Realty has around 700 rental listings in the area and agrees the mild winter helped the sale market. She said property owners took the brunt of the Irene evacuation, as people were forced to cancel their rentals last August.

"Late August and September were really affected by that," she said.

She said even though Irene ended the summer season early for Cape May in 2011, the city still did better than other shore towns from a real estate standpoint. Clark hopes the success will continue and believes business owners and residents of Cape May as a whole need to make the city look like the premier destination that it is.

"We need to make ourselves more attractive and compete on a state, national and world-wide level," she said.



Special to the Cape May Star and Wave

Cape Regional Medical Center volunteer Edythe Edwards.

Cape Regional Medical Center celebrates their volunteers

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE - In recognition of National Healthcare Volunteer Appreciation Week, Cape Regional Medical Center hosted a special luncheon during National Volunteer Week at The Grand Hotel in Cape May in honor of its dedicated volunteer team. With more than 180 volunteers and hospital staff in attendance, the luncheon spotlighted volunteers in their various service roles. The attendees included several Bumper T. Caring Clowns as well as Brealey, one of Cape Regional Medical Center's four pet therapy dogs.

The volunteers were congratulated by their peers for total service hours ranging from 100 hours to 17,500 hours. The service of seven volunteers was especially recognized and their names added to the esteemed roster of the "Five and Twenty Club" which includes those with total service hours

equaling or exceeding 5,000 or total length of service at 20 years or more.

"On behalf of the entire Cape Regional Medical Center family, we thank each and every volunteer for the tremendous gift of their time," said Joanne Carrocino, FACHE, President and CEO, Cape Regional Medical Center. "Their dedication and caring service truly makes a difference in the lives of patients and their families every day."

Edythe Edwards, of Cape May, was named the 2011 Volunteer of the Year. Since joining the Cape Regional Medical Center Volunteer team in July 2008, Ms. Edwards has received praise from her fellow volunteers and countless staff members for her dedication and commitment to the Medical Center and its mission. Ms. Edwards was honored as Volunteer of the Quarter for the fourth quarter of 2011. The Volunteer of the Year recipient is selected from the listing of the year's quarterly awardees.



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Jazz Trio Thursdays from 8:30 pm (no cover)
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This week's live music line-up:
Thursday 5/24 - Barry Miles - solo piano from 5:30-8:30; **Jazz Trio** from 8:30 adding **Tim Lekan bass, Bob Shomo drums**; **Friday 5/25 Matt Hayden** solo piano 5:30-10:30 **Saturday 5/26 Lisa Tee** solo piano 5:30-11:30 **Sunday 5/27 Frank Vanella** - solo piano 5:30-7:00, and with **Tim Lekan, bass** from 7:20-10:30; **Monday 5/28 - Lisa Tee** solo piano 5:30-10:30; **Tuesday 5/29 - Jon Pruitt**, solo piano from 5:30-10:30; **Wednesday, 5/30 - Judi Glover** solo piano from 5:30-10:30.

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS:
May 31 - Jazz night celebrating the release of **Paula Johns-George Mesterhazy CD "Well, We Finally Did It"** from 8:30
June 3 - Concert at NEW Convention Hall - "Tribute to George Mesterhazy" (for tickets call 609-884-9565 or online at www.capemayconventionhall.org)
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****BATTLESHIP A PG-13** 11:50, 2:50, 7:10, 10:00
****BATTLESHIP B PG-13** 4:40, 9:30
THE AVENGERS 2D PG-13 12:30, 4:30
THE AVENGERS 3D PG-13 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00
DARK SHADOWS PG-13 11:45, 2:20, 4:55, 7:35, 10:10
****THE DICTATOR R** 12:40, 2:40, 4:40, 7:50, 10:05
****WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN EXPECTING PG-13** 12:10, 2:35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:50
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THE AVENGERS PG-13 (1:00), 4:00, 7:00, (9:35)
****DICTATOR R** (1:25), 4:20, 7:25, (9:40)
DARK SHADOWS PG-13 (1:15), 4:15, 7:15, (9:25)
 Shows in () Sat-Mon () Fri - Sun

Craig

Continued from page A1

the wrong information," Sparks asked.

Craig said there was an action taken by the county because he had a problem with his health insurance after having worked for 32 years for Cape May County.

"I might go back to work for a short time," he said. Cape May County Director of Operations Ed Grant confirmed that Craig was hired as a "technicality."

"It's just a technicality for pension and health benefits that we need to get cleaned up for him," Grant said.

According to Grant, the steps were taken before he was put in his current position, under the administration of Cape May County Administrator Steve O'Connor, who retired in April.

"This is just a matter of where he needs to work for the county and retire so his health benefits and pension will be where they should have been originally," Grant said.

Grant, the former county treasurer, said there have been many pension and health benefit changes handed down from the state.

"There have been a tremendous number of hoops to jump through to clean this up, and that's all this is," he said.

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	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
23	10:23	10:28	4:14	3:52
24	11:02	11:04	4:52	4:31
25	11:42	11:44	5:31	5:14
26		12:27	6:12	6:03
27	12:28	1:18	6:57	7:00
28	1:19	2:15	7:46	8:03
29	2:17	3:15	8:39	9:10
30	3:21	4:15	9:35	10:16

Moon Phases
 Full Moon, May 5
 Last Quarter, May 12
 New Moon, May 20
 First Quarter, May 28
 Perigee, May 5
 Apogee, May 19