

Ferry

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Porch said along the way, guests can see the historic lighthouses, amazing sunsets, check out the other vessels on the water, and maybe even see some dolphins if they're lucky enough. He said with Cape May County being one of the biggest bird watching areas in the world, many passengers enjoy watching the hundreds of seabirds during the 17-mile, 85 minute trip across.

"It's a great boat ride," he said. "You see all kinds of wildlife and scenery along the way. We have a lot of fun activities for people on board too."

All five ferry boats, the Cape May, the Delaware, the New Jersey, the Cape Henlopen and the Twin Capes feature food courts, gift shops, arcades and lounge areas serving up soft drinks and cocktails. Depending on the boat, the capacity of a vessel is up to 800 people and about 100 average size cars. In the dining areas, guests can relax and watch the new flat-screen televisions or play around on their laptop and

smart phone, now that Wi-Fi has been installed on each ferryboat.

There are also activities for guests to take part in off the boat hosted by the DBRA. Porch said the "Cross-Cape Adventure" is a contest through the use of a smart phone. Passengers can download the application on their phone, which points out several pre-selected locations and attractions on each side of the bay that they can check in to. The more checks one has the better chance they have of winning. Prizes include a three-night stay for four at Congress Hall in Cape May or The Inn at Canal Square in Lewes, as well as a complimentary round-trip auto fare on the Cape May-Lewes Ferry.

On Sunday Oct. 9, the ferry will be hosting a "Mellow Music Cruise," featuring smooth jazz entertainment, Porch said. A one-way show will depart from Lewes at 2:45 p.m. and a round-trip show will depart from Cape May at 4:30 p.m.

Porch said the scenic aspects, fun events and services of the ferry ride make it



Cain Chamberlin/Cape May Star and Wave
Ten-year DRBA veteran, Capt. Izzy Sorace sits at the helm of the Cape May-Lewes Ferry.

a perfect venue for weddings, parties, and business meetings. He said they specialize in wedding receptions of 75 to 100 guests. Arrangements for these types of events can be made anytime by phone or online reservations.

The Twin Capes vessel is the newest addition to the fleet, designed by Danish naval architects and the inspiration for the DRBA to

refurbish all the other boats with similar modern features and amenities.

Porch said each ship has state-of-the-art safety equipment, which is all inspected by the U.S. Coast Guard on a regular basis. Each boat is run by a nine or 10-man crew and of course, commanded by the captain who is assisted by the pilot.

Capt. Izzy Sorace has been

working on the Cape May-Lewes ferryboats for 10 years and said there is a very intense process involved, when working one's way up through the ranks, which he referred to as the "Haws Pipe."

He said there is also the option of going through an academy to achieve higher rank, but most do it the old fashioned way and start out at the bottom of the totem pole. The OS (ordinary seaman) is the lowest rank, then comes the ABS (able-bodied seaman), then pilot and finally, captain. To achieve each rank, a certain number of hours aboard the ship is required as well as written exams, which are quite difficult, according to Sorace. Even as a captain, Sorace is required to renew his certification every five years and have an annual physical examination.

Even though the captain and his commanding crew steer the boat to its destination, the ferry would not run at all without the engineers. Bill Harner, who has been down in the engine rooms of the Cape May-Lewes Ferryboats for the past 22 years, is in

control of everything from the electric to the sewage and water systems.

"This is the whole city down here," he said. "We make sure everything runs the way it should."

Before every trip Harner checks the temperatures, gauges and fluid levels throughout the engine room, containing twin 12-cylinder diesel engines – each being the size of a large pickup truck. He said the boat has two of nearly everything to make sure there aren't any catastrophic failures. The ferryboats even have dual steering systems, according to Harner.

"There's no other vessels like this in the area," Porch said after examining the engine room of the New Jersey ferry. "I never get tired of riding on these ferries."

Porch said they have been running four boats back and forth all summer and decrease down to one during the off-season, but it's always a good time to take the ferry ride, no matter what time of year it is.

Little

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"When Woody and I were involved we got a nice grant from Department of Travel and Tourism. We needed that grant to hire quality people, major headliners," Stone said.

Stone also believes there was never an adequate treasurer on the board since Bob Dolge filled that position.

"He did a wonderful job, but he resigned in 2004 and nobody ever came forward since then to do a good job as treasurer," Stone said. "Up until the time I resigned (June 2010) I signed most of the checks, so I kept a pretty good track of what was going on. I kept close tabs on things. I don't think it was appreci-

ated, but I kept close tabs on things."

Asked about the potential for a stronger comeback after taking a festival off, Stone did not express any confidence in that happening.

"I don't see anybody involved who is going to do the job. I don't know any who knows about the music, or cares about the music and the musicians. They are just concerned about making money and the Jazz Festival has never been a money maker."

Stone said the people who are most concerned with having a Jazz Festival in Cape May were not generous toward the festival. Asked who they might be, Stone said, "The lodgers, restaurant peo-

ple, business people in general."

Former executive director Sal Riggi said on numerous occasions the Jazz Festival brought about \$3 million into the Cape May economy every year in the form of room rentals, meals in restaurants and other spending.

"The only person who did much for us was Joey Carney... and of course, Curtis," Stone said. "Curtis was generous from day one."

Stone said it was not easy to put on a Jazz Festival in Cape May.

"I don't know anybody in town that cares about the music. This is not a jazz town. We brought people from out of

town for the festival. We had a list of people who are serious jazz fans, and they are sorry we resigned and are not going to come," she said.

Asked if she believed the festival could make a comeback in the spring, Stone said she was not optimistic and thought the Jazz Festival would never be what it was. Asked if she wanted it to continue as a legacy of her and Woodland's 16-and-a-half-year commitment, Stone said, "No, I actually prefer it didn't."

"We were so dedicated to the music and the musicians," she said. "I don't see anybody coming along who would have that same care and dedica-

tion."

Stone said the Jazz Festival not a money maker, but an event that brings people into town who spend money.

In 1994, she and Woodland assembled some musicians who played at The Shire. She said they became friendly with these musicians and asked them to participate in the first Cape May Jazz Festival, which took place entirely at the Marquis de Lafayette, when it was owned by the Menz family. She said there were two venues inside the hotel, the Top of the Marc, and the restaurant on the first floor.

"In 1994 we had 1,100 people attend. I borrowed \$5,000 from my mother to put on the festival and paid it back the day after," Stone said.

Stone said they earned an additional \$3,000, which they put in the bank. She said the festival continued to grow slowly from that point.

Stone said the cost of running a Jazz Festival exceeded \$300,000. She said the largest festival, in terms of attendance, was the April 2004 10th anniversary festival. She said it cost \$322,000 to put on the festival. Prior to that, the biggest and best was the previous Jazz Festival in November 2003, which featured Maynard Ferguson, Little Jimmie Scott and Pieces of a Dream and drew 8,400 people.

Stone said the largest single budget was the November 2007 festival, which cost \$342,000.

"Hugh Masekela alone cost \$20,000," she said.

Stone said Masekela played the Cape May Jazz Festival in April 2001 and April 2007.

She said the technical back-up for the festival was \$40,000, and the music budget over \$90,000. They also paid for rooms for the musicians and fed them, later getting some help from local businesses.

"Martini Beach was always very generous toward the end, donating the musicians buffet. And when we put musicians up at the Inn of Cape May, the lodging cost included breakfast."

Stone said the November 2006 festival was another "really outstanding" festival, when New Orleans came to Cape May. She said even though it was an outstanding, the attendance had dropped off.

"Attendance started dropping off right after 10th anniversary. That was the beginning of the recession," she said.

"They this conversation started with them (the board) saying they wanted to get someone to look at the books," Stone said. "It's very difficult to run a Jazz Festival, and then two weeks before the April 2008 festival they closed Convention Hall and we lost \$60,000."

Stone said this happened two weeks before the festival, striking a big blow in an already weak economy. She said the festival was reeling and never recovered, in part, because they did not have a financial manager.

"They haven't had a proper bookkeeper in the office since June 2010. Nobody on the board wanted the job. And I'm absolutely certain the books are appalling," Stone said.

Stone said the Jazz Festival is being sued by the sound company from the April 2011 festival because the Friends of Cape May Jazz didn't have the \$22,240 it owes them. She claims the festival owes money to most of the advertising companies, and that the phone has been turned off since approximately Aug. 1. A call to the office resulted in a message saying the phone was disconnected.

Stone had kind words, however, for the cadre of volunteers who time after time returned to work at festivals.

"Another group that was very dedicated and helpful were the off duty Coast Guard members who worked security at the door," she said.

Stone said Pete Zalesny from the Coast Guard base volunteered to work at the festival for at least 12 years. She said when some of the Coast Guard members were reassigned out of town they would still come back and work the festival.

She said Chrissy Zelesny also organized the volunteers every year.

Stone said the circumstances of she and Woodland leaving has left them both angry with the Friends of Cape May Jazz.

"I put in 24/7 for 16-and-a-half years and got slapped in the face. And Woody is very angry. He doesn't like the way we've been treated," she said.

Stone said she and Woodland are being honored on Oct. 24 at the Richard Stockton College, at the beginning of its Jazz and Blues Series, featuring Grace Kelly and Phil Woods. She said she and Woodland donated everything they had from the past Jazz Festivals – every review, all their pictures, DVDs of every jazz festival, and Stone's collection of old jazz CDs.



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