



## The Avalon Home and Land Owners Association

JUNE 2010 - CAPE MAY COUNTY TOURISM DIRECTOR, DIANE WIELAND.

Ms. Wieland presented an overview of state of tourism efforts in the County. Tourism efforts in the County are taxpayer supported directly by the County Tourism Department, with a staff of three people, under the leadership of Freeholder Len Desidario, and also through grants from the state derived from occupancy taxes. The marketing is directed to PA, NJ, NY, and also to Canada. Some statistical information:

Tourism in NJ makes significant contributions to NJ's coffers. Without tourism dollars each taxpayer would be assessed an additional \$1400 to meet state financial requirements.

48% of the income in Cape May County is derived from Tourism which equates to \$5.1 billion annually (second only to Atlantic County in NJ), and generates 39,000 jobs.

50.2% of 2nd homes in NJ are in Cape May County; 47% of the residences in the County are 2<sup>nd</sup> homes and rental income from 2<sup>nd</sup> homes in 2009 was \$1.6 billion.

By gathering the statistical information and presenting it to state decision makers, the County is receiving the recognition and support that, at times, was lacking in the past. Additional data validates that vacationing in the County proceeds from one generation to the next for family summer and now, off season, gatherings.

The State Marketing Strategy is known as the "Destination Marketing Organization", which breaks out geographic areas of the state, with like amenities, to target likely groups for information. Cape May and Cumberland Counties are in the "Jersey Cape" area to promote the beaches, plus the abundant rural activities, such as birding and hiking.

The Department of Tourism has developed an award winning publication, the "Vacationer", that promotes places of interest and exciting venues (such as the Cape Atlantic Symphony), and it is designed to compliment local Chamber of Commerce marketing efforts. Written marketing is balanced with electronic media to take advantage of internet opportunities.

The Canadian connection with Cape May County is being rejuvenated. The Tourism Department is attending Canadian travel/trade trade shows and is gathering pertinent data as well as advertizing the benefits of vacationing in Cape May County. The average Canadian vacation in the County is 6-10 days and there are significant purchasing/shopping benefits when compared to the cost of goods in Canada.

Cape May County has won the Governor's award at the NJ tourism conference despite a reduction in dedicated resources by creative partnering and imaginative use of electronic media. Jerseycape.com is the website.