

This column, is an editorial re-cap of the Five Mile Beach news that occurred over the winter months. We write to inform the snowbirds and summer residents, and tourists alike, as well as locals, of what has happened on our island from Labor Day '05 until now, Memorial Day '06.

Whew . . .

And so it begins . . .

“Another One Bites the Dust”

The Joint Construction Office records 200 demolition permits on Five Mile Beach between September '05 and May '06. That number is up from last year's total of 199, and 176 the year before during that same time period.

We've compiled a list of a few businesses that have cashed in, moved on, and been torn down since you've ben gone:

Moore's Inlet Bar
Sea 'n Surf Tackle Shop
Lighthouse Cafe 1st & Central
Lurae Motel
Lau Ray Motel
Sand Dollar Motel
Flame Inn Motel
Thunderbird Motel
24th St. Motel
Lisa Motel
MaryAnn Motel
Surfside 7 Motel
McClains Gas Station
Flying T Shirts
Hawaii Kai Motel
Kona Kai Motel
Hi Lilly Motel
Hialeah Motel
Silver Beach Motel
Wagon Wheel Florist
1957 ACME
B&B between 17th & 18th & Central
Lavender Hall
Cavalier Motel
Conca D'Or Motel
Silver Dollar Motel
Motel Elmon
Blaker/Shore Movie Theater
DUFFINETTI's
Rio Motel
Sea Surf Motel
Palm Crest Motel
Sans Souci Motel
Donorail Motel
Holiday Motel
Sea & Surf
Ocean East Motel

Beach Rest Motel
Shady O's Bar

ON THE WAITING LIST

Seafood with an Attitude
Flacco's Market
DeAngelis
Wildwood Diner
The Grand Hotel

DEMOLISHED AFTER FIRE

Sam's Pizza/Shore Plaza

We don't promise that our lists are entirely complete. It's easy to miss a demolition or a renovation as the changes happen so rapidly here.

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND

To refresh your memory, last year's demolition list included:

Algie's Bike Shop (N. Wildwood)
Munchies (N. Wildwood)
Captain's Table
Seaside Gardens
Breeze Court
Variety Store/Arcade on 17th & Surf
Blue Sea Restaurant
Colson's Lumber
Martinique Bar & Hotel
QuoVadis/Nile
Bay Sea Motel
Fantasy Motel
Dune Motel
Bonanza Motel
Carousel Motel
Casa Bahama Motel
Montacello Motel
Lavender Motel
Earle Motel
Tahiti Motel
Sattelite Motel
Siesta Motel
Sands Resort
South Beach Motel
Waterway Motel
Angel Inn
Nomad Motel
Swan Motel
Palm Beach Motel
Sun Rest Motel
Notre Dame Motel
Lighthouse Motel

Blue Jay Motel
Tally Ho Motel
Le Voyageur Motel
Shea's Market
Waterway

. . . and the year before . . .

Sea Rose Motel
Ebb Tide Motel
The Kismet Motel
N.J. Ave. Warehouse
Shea's Market
Hungry Joe's Market
Colson's Lumber

On a brighter, less constructed note: Glorious Indian Summer by-the-sea weekends in the Wildwoods just keep getting better. The change of season did not stop the festivities.

For example, Weekend of Sept. 23-26:

1. Irish 2. Seafarers 3. Thunder on the Lake 4. Classic Cars ... four Huge Events on one Five-Mile island on the same weekend! One would think that the island would sink. With the assistance of perfect weather, the four-day Irish Festival drew an estimated crowd of 300,000 that came flocking to Moore's for LAST CALL.

Moore's No More

Must all good things come to an end? As the saying goes, it ain't over 'til the fat lady sings. Or, if you're a devoted patron of Moore's, until the last chorus of "Danny Boy" is sung. Moore's gave it's loyal following one last hurrah Irish Weekend before the wrecking ball arrived. Moore's began demolition on Nov. 7 and were driving pilings by Dec. 23. The Point at Moore's Inlet is looking at a projected finish date of Spring 2007 and will include a sports bar called Moore's Inlet Pub. According to a city ordinance passed in September, for every bar torn down on Old NJ Avenue, the developer must reserve the first floor for commercial, retail or restaurant space in order to be allowed to build condos on the upper floor.

·Business Changes

Sea ya later to the Sea n Surf Tackle Shop that was next door to Moore's. Jon Paul Paxton will be raising the bar in island living with his Villa by the sea.

If you Love Juan Pablo's, just wait til you see what Jon Paul Paxton's got cooking on Olde New Jersey Ave. this summer. Look for his newest creation - J.P. Prime to make its grand opening by July.

Juan Pablo's will also be ready for the crowds this summer with its "New Room" expansion that opened just in time for Wildwood's *party of the year*- Jon Paul's annual Christmas Party which was also host to local celebrities such as North Wildwood's New Mayor Bill Henfey and his wife Diane pictured here.

And now for a change in politics:

After 12 years, North Wildwood Mayor Aldo Palombo retired. Running unopposed for the prestigious position was Republican William Henfy, who, along with his wife Diane, has lived in the borough for over 36 years and has held the position of councilman since 1994.

His term starts on an exciting note as the city celebrated 100 years as the municipality of North Wildwood from the village of Anglesea on May 16, 1906. Mayor Augustus Hamilton, at the time, would have been delighted to know that he would be so popular. To bring some fun into the celebration, events planners like Joe Q., Bob Scully and Jake Schaad introduced the buzz

question around town, “Where’s Gus?” To kick off the celebration, a look-alike contest was held on May 12. A \$300 prize was awarded to Officer Robert Champion, of the NWPD and the finder was his wife, Eileen. But we here at the Sun think that the “GUS-ometer” was broken and it was a toss up between Gary Weyhmiller (*left*) and John Lynch (*right*). Nothing personal Champion.

Months of community planning went into marking the auspicious occasion. Before the parade occurred, a special celebration was held on the beach. There, a human-shaped 100 was formed with the assistance of numbered placards (and hundreds of Wildwood-loving residents and tourists) to mark the occasion when the fishing village known as Anglesea came to be known as North Wildwood.

What’s Old(e) is New:

Back on Olde NJ, it’s *au revoir* to the Hotsys, the folks who got the ball rolling at the north end of town when they purchased Sylvia’s and completely renovated in the early 80’s. They sold Hotsy’s to Mary and Claude Pottier in 2001 then Dave and Ruth Hotala opened The Irish Corner Gift Shop in the same building. They closed their doors after Christmas.

One block east at 1st & Central Aves. The former Lighthouse Cafe owned and operated for the last time by Walt Larcombe was torn down to make way for a private home. It was at one time long ago a General Store and a Post Office.

Casey’s on 3rd in North Wildwood has new owners, a new look, a new chef and an exciting new menu! Pictured here from NE Philadelphia are brothers Kevin and Tom Casey, Tom’s wife Michelle and Chef Fran Hannon. Fulfilling a long-held dream, the brothers are hard at work, making their new endeavor a welcome addition to an area heavily permeated with condominiums. The response from the old and the new patrons has been positive, and the Casey brothers are determined to provide their customers with good food in a pleasant atmosphere.

Taking A Trip Back in Time:

The Fabulous ‘50s Celebration went off in high 50’s style from Oct. 14 to Oct. 16. Under the Boardwalk isn’t the only place where music can be heard.

Chubby Checker performed in a sold-out show at the convention center.

A Sunday jam session was held where locals and tourists danced to the timeless tunes of the 50’s.

An overwhelmingly positive response to this fabulous weekend prompted the folks at the Greater Wildwood Chamber of Commerce to come up with a similar Springtime event. The Super 60’s concert turned out a packed house to hear The Grass Roots, Monkees, Herman’s Hermits to name a few on April 28-29.

Wildwood: A Great Place to Meet...

Adding to its growing list of accomplishments, Wildwood’s Convention Center was honored with the 2005 Inner Circle Award from Association Meetings, naming it one of the top convention centers in the country.

Speaking of the best in the country, Bill Herting, owner and creator of Sunset Cinema’s Movies on the Beach from California, chose our giant beaches to set up his open air movie theater. He returns for a second season of first-run movies. Is there a better way to watch a movie than with the tranquil sound of the ocean and sand between your toes (and out of your popcorn)? viewers are welcomed to bring their own refreshments (no glass or alcohol permitted) along with their favorite beach chair or blanket.

And while we’re on the topic of “best,” if you haven’t been to the Sea Theater, Wildwood’s only nostalgic nickelodeon, located at 4005 Pacific Avenue, then you are missing out on a real treat. The theater accommodates seating for 70 and is meticulously clean and highly detailed to

remind you of the old-time theaters. There is a concession for drinks and popcorn and candy in the lobby. The Sea Theater has top run movies that change on a weekly basis.

And if you're not in the mood to go out on the town, Wildwood's Blockbuster on the corner of Rio Grande and NJ Aves. Carries all of the newest releases along with a great selection of movies to choose from.

Getting back to Indian Summer, it was a continuation of the Dog Days of Summer, with temperatures remaining in the high 80's and low 90's every day, bringing crowds to the Wildwoods. Ocean temps reached record highs, but the jelly fish mustn't have known. The ocean was a pure delight for swimming and surfing. In fact, "watersports after school" was the flavor of the month.

It's Not All Fun and Games

Swimming on unprotected beaches off-season, or when lifeguards are no longer required, has become even more dangerous as an increase in rescues and drownings were reported. The combination of a very active hurricane season, high temps which made a favorable offseason on the beach, and the normal, end-of-summer, reduced lifeguard staff, all contributed to quite a few rescues and sadly, a couple of drownings. Former North Wildwood lifeguard Lew Ostrander Jr, helped rescue two swimmers who were caught in a rip current off an unprotected beach.

Several heroes were needed on the late morning of September 13th. Unbeknownst to his parents, an unnamed boy left the hotel he was staying at on JFK Boulevard. His destination: the unguarded ocean. Although the day was bright, the currents were strong in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and prior to the approaching Ophelia. Luckily, Dean Brattee, Ed Hansco, Wildwood local Bob Hartman, and Ed Rotoli spotted the obviously in trouble young boy and pulled him out of the ocean.

Approximately 30 minutes later, Madge List found herself in a similar situation. The now-experienced rescuers headed back into the ocean. By the time lifeguard Tim Fynes arrived to bring Madge in, the men had formed a human chain within three feet of her. Our beach & boardwalk correspondent, Sharon McMonagle was on the scene to capture the amazing picture above of the human chain.

Chief Tony Cavalier and council were slated to discuss extending lifeguard duties until the end of September. For this summer however, lifeguards will be on duty from 10 until 5:30.

Sadly, the heat didn't end with the summer: September Fires

At 2:30a.m. Sept. 25th, the Thunderbird was ablaze. Besides the Thunderbird fire, the Lobster House in Cape May had a big fire on Labor Day weekend. The dining room was only expected to be closed for a couple of months, but with all of the building permits and variances needed to rebuild such an old structure, they weren't able to reopen until last month in April. The Take Out remained open all winter, allowing us to enjoy our favorite "two-fors", the "buy-one, get-one Seafood Combos." The Thunderbird was demolished not long after the fire. The photograph below captures a double dose of demos. T-Bird on the left and 24th St. Motel on the right.

Competing with the cold of winter came the heat of December fires.

The first week of December brought bitter cold temps and as a result, two major fires occurred due to heating. A house fire on 25th & Atlantic claimed the life of a 46-year-old woman, Cynthia Gale, and her pets.

On Friday, December 9th at 2:30 in the afternoon, a blaze that turned into one of Wildwood's worst fires in recent history, lasting 18 hours, took Sam's Pizza Palace and the Shore Plaza.

A Sweet Sad Song for Sam's

by Bob Ingram

Another beloved Wildwood icon is gone, but not to the bulldozer and the backhoe. The relentless westerly wind blew and blew, and Sam's Pizza Palace burnt and burnt through the day and night and day again. The wind-whipped crazy dancing flames roared and scoured for thirty hours and more and, in the end, the heroic dedication of all the fire companies and the millions of gallons of water they pumped were like spitting in the ocean. The fire won.

Or did it? Because as word of the fire spread like the wind-blown blaze itself, the people came to stand in the deep cold in silent disbelief and homage, to pay their respects to a much-loved landmark, a true palace of memory and the heart.

Parents brought their children, muffled and wide-eyed, to see the end somehow of an era; video cameras whirred, digital cameras snapped; a man drove from Virginia, looked at the fire, and drove back, broken-hearted. On Sunday, people came after church and stood, somber, like a wake.

Late Saturday, an excavator had come and probed through the ruins like a ravenous giant insect, slightly obscene in this collapsed palace of laughter and expectant appetite, rooting among the smoke and soot and twisted debris, sifting time itself back to happier days of sun and light. Now, the front teeth are gone from the smile of the Boardwalk, there at that 26th Street dogleg that is its true epicenter, the fulcrum on which the dreams of generations hover like the wisps of smoke from the ruined simple blessed pizzeria now before us. But the day will come, it will come ... and I will have a slice with sausage again. And a small birch.

Happily, even fire can't destroy determination. Plans were diligently made to reopen Sam's Pizza. Look for their grand opening very soon.

THE HEAT CONTINUES

At 5a.m. on December 27 a 3rd Wildwood fire broke out at SuperFresh which the Anglesea Fire Dept. in North Wildwood was solely responsible for extinguishing. The fire was mainly on the outside of the building in the sign.

Major renovations were made inside the store upgrading all departments. Don't miss their Grand Re-Opening!

Allowing for a Different Kind of Star Gazing: With plans for 9 - 25 story condo-hotels being planned or discussed, Wildwood's skyline will be getting some company. Three that have been approved, the Wildwood Beach Hotel and Resort, 25-story Nouveau Wave Hotel (formerly Rio Motel at Rio Grande and Ocean Avenues) and the Bill Morey Family's 23-story Starlight Resort Hotel (formerly Hunt's Pier parking lot on Ocean Avenue, between Juniper and Poplar), will soon be sharing space among the stars.

Despite the prospect of a spectacular ocean view, many property owners are opposing the concept of tall buildings, concerned with Wildwood losing its small town appeal.

Wildwood Mayor Ernie Troiano puts it, "We have top developers in the world waiting to build high-rises here."

No rest for the weary (or members of the zoning board).

Because no sane person can be on the beach 24/7, at least not when there's frost on the waves, that busy zoning board heard plans for Wildwood Beach and Resort. An indoor pool, surrounded by sand, water slides, and a tiki bar, with windows overlooking the ocean, would await guests any time of year. Also included in the approved hotel's plans would be a ballroom, café, bar, and a variety of restaurants.

Wildwood Trash Becomes Wanted Treasure: Sunset Cove, a residential village on the west side of Wildwood between Susquehanna Ave. and the bay, rests on the site of a former landfill. According to K. Hovnanian representatives, construction to build 298 homes in four types of styles including duplex, triplex, townhouse, and mid-rise in a rural setting is moving forward.

Approval has been given to build the \$250 million Grand Condominium in Diamond Beach. Plans for the 12-story, 125-unit, with a nostalgic seashore decor, were three and a half years in the making.

As the saying goes (or as locals and tourists are continually being reassured), change is good. Sadly, too many changes have left locals and residents struggling to remember each piece of Wildwood history that has been turned into empty lots. "For Sale" signs can be seen throughout the city, attached to properties that fifty years ago cost \$10,000 to \$20,000 to build, now are priced at \$1 million and up.

December -Ironically, the increase in housings has left many with no place to call home. To usher in the holiday season, a new ordinance stipulated that visitors can no longer occupy space in a hotel, motel, or boarding house for more than 30 days at the same establishment.

While Constructing the Future, the Past Still Matters.

Wildwood Crest's Dream Image of the Future includes a glowing Doo Wop neon sign happily residing along the beachfront, motels staying motels as opposed to condominiums in waiting, and a peaceful shore town that will lay claim to a year-round population. While business owners resist zoning changes, Wildwood's collection of post-World War II resort hotel architecture continues to decline at a rapid pace.

Classics such as the Wildwood Diner are being moved to free up space for mid-rise hotels.

With all of the "improvements" being made, many are feeling the threat to Wildwood's nostalgic atmosphere. Preservation New Jersey placed Wildwood's Doo-Wop Historic Motel District on the 10 most endangered historic sites in the state list.

Remembering the Past But Looking Toward the Future With Home(town) Improvements:

Thanks to a \$174,000 grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and \$200,000 from the Downtown Business Improvement District, downtown Wildwood gets its very own makeover. Take a walk on the new sidewalks.

JGSC Group principals Rick Ferrell and Mark Lohbauer discussed future plans for downtown Wildwood with Edward Jones Investment's owner Vince Fulginiti. Developed by the JGSC Group, a Pennsauken-based firm, "Community Insights" is a program geared toward revitalizing individual community businesses while steering potential retailers, developers, and business owners in the right direction.

According to Main St. President Linda J. Williams, downtown Wildwood has gone through a major overhaul in recent years. Dozens of new businesses have opened and millions of dollars have been invested in purchasing and remodeling the area.

The goal of the "Community Insights" plan is to provide necessary information and resources, to develop the proper vision, and to recruit appropriate businesses while helping existing businesses flourish.

The search for funding continues:

The photo above was an historical moment in Wildwood history taken at Fox Park Groundbreaking Ceremony. The people of Wildwood have benefitted greatly from the generosity of the Byrne Fund. Mrs. Betty Fox poses with Tom Byrne & Pam Byrne-Gentek, Jack Morey, and Mayor Ernie Troiano with grandson Ernest, III. Additional funds were needed to support the development of a new community center, a Doo-Wop Museum, and band shell. The Byrne Fund donated \$400,000 to the construction. The Surfside Restaurant will hold a museum and

amphitheater (which will be an open-air band shell). Also on the premises will be a neon sign garden constructed with salvaged signs from demolished motels.

In an effort to save the borough's motels from being demolished, the state Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA), approved \$140,000 in funds to aid in a study. The state Department of Community Affairs granted an additional \$30,000 toward the study.

An audit by the state Department of Community Affairs held approximately 500 condominium owners in violation of state building codes. Stating design and permit errors as the cause, confused property owners faced the threat of fines. Violations aside, North Wildwood property value rose dramatically from \$866 million to \$3billion, causing many owners to find their assessed property value to triple and in some cases quadruple as a result of an island-wide real estate boom. With the rise in property value comes the increase in taxes.

While new property owners were likely to see a tax decrease, long-time property owners had to wait until May to find out how high their taxes would be increased.

Property owners were given the opportunity to speak with Tyler Technologies, the company that conducted the assessment, as well as an assist from the company in filing appeals. The company was bombarded with calls from an anxious community.

That concern could also be felt in Middle & Dennis Townships, where residents also faced the threat of a tax increase. Apparently, an ocean view from any distance come with a steep price.

Because Everyone Has a Voice:

Several hearings were held in March to give property owners another chance to address concerns regarding the property revaluation. North Wildwood Mayor Bill Henfey assured residents that each individual would be heard. A lawsuit was filed by property owners Margaret and Alexander Scherneck on behalf of the Wildwood Taxpayers Association in an effort to set aside the property revaluation. The suit states that taxpayers constitutional rights to be taxed fairly under New Jersey law have been violated.

Despite the skyrocketing property value, North Wildwood school taxes will remain approximately the same.

Tax Increase notwithstanding, Wildwood's locals and tourists can always find a reason for a Celebration:

Urie's Restaurant is celebrating 50 years of serving locals and tourists the finest, not to mention the freshest, seafood as well as a variety of appetizers and entrees in a tropical, family-friendly setting (complete with outside deck).

When the seafood and catering business that Urie's brothers George, Charles, and Larry slowed down in the summer, they decided to take a risk and opened a little fish fry restaurant on the water.

Little did they know that 50 years later the people of the Wildwoods would still be enjoying their diverse menu and shore-inspired atmosphere. Urie's is now owned by the BIG FISH Restaurant Group. See Back Cover of the SUN!

More reasons for Celebration:

The new year brought happy news to North Wildwood native and recreation Superintendent Buddy Tarbotton. New Jersey's Department of Community Affairs renewed his certification as a Recreation Administrator through 2010.

The Recreation Department took on new meaning when Tarbotton took charge. Tennis courts, landscaped gardens, playground facilities, as well as numerous leagues and programs for children and adults, soon took impressive shape under Tarbotton's care.

With that comes more North Wildwood news requiring a jolt of caffeine, Avalon Coffee and Bagel.

The ever-expanding franchise, with its loyal following of “coffeholics”, opens at 7th & New Jersey Avenue in North Wildwood which was purchased by Jim Nanos, along with his 2nd Franchise on Pacific Ave. Recently opened in the Clermont section of Dennis Township was another Avalon Coffee. The year-round stores in Wildwood, Rio Grande, and Cape May Court House will have a full menu including a salad bar and soup station. With so many stores around, there’s no reason to be decaffeinated again!

Because One Can’t Live On Coffee Alone: Following the new store trend is a new ACME which replaced the 49-year-old building in Wildwood Crest set for Grand Opening Memorial Day weekend. Pictured below on the ACME job site is SUN Journalist/slash/Carpenter, Mike Kutepow. See page 3 of The SUN for the finished rendition! Your shopping cart won’t roll away from you anymore here! The new neo-DooWop store with a price tag of \$10 million, spans 31,000 square feet, will be almost double its original size and provide higher quality refrigeration, a bakery, full-service deli, and a fish counter.

Mike Savino on 17th In need of much renovation and repair are our streets. But island officials are choosing to wait for the construction to slow down before focusing on streets. However there is one street on the island which received all the attention this past winter- 17th Avenue, the busiest street in North Wildwood. The city project included decorative streetlights and landscaping along with new pipes. The work will be complete for this Memorial Day weekend.

The latest business change on 17th was the reopening and relocating and merger of Peter Vincent’s with Champs Hair Salon. Locals and tourists alike enjoy the friendly atmosphere and hardworking staff ready to tackle all of your beauty needs!

Why not follow up a day of beauty with a night of partying?:

Owen’s Pub being centrally located in the middle of 17th has good food, good drink and good friends. It’s the “place to be!”

Heading west on 17th, it looks like *ariva derci* to South Philly’s Pete of DeAngelis on New York Ave. We’re gonna miss your friendly smile! But even moreso that Downtown hoagie!

Luckily, there’s still plenty of great places to eat:

Tony’s Island Cafe at 26th & New York Aves. reopened under new ownership. Pictured above at their Grand Opening are Mike & Barbar Farrell, Barbara & Tony Flacco.

Also under new ownership is the Apollo Diner in Wildwood. New owners Bob & Joan Fodera renamed it Andrews Avenue Diner and it is now open for breakfast, lunch and dinners as well as 24 hours on weekends.

Chiarella’s Restaurant sold to their next door neighbors, KONA. (Pictured above Brendan & Chris Sciarra with Harry Gleason.) It is being managed by Harry Gleason from Cape May’s “Island Grill”, former owner of Daniel’s on Broadway, as an American style eatery with nice portions that are moderately priced. Look for Dog Tooth Bar & Grill grand opening May 30th. Renovations transformed this 1908 Wildwood oldie into its original charm on the inside! After being completely gutted, the beautiful brick walls were revealed. Visit Taylor & NJ Aves-remember the 30th.

The only place on the island where you can dine in an original 1950’s Car Booth. It could be considered a museum! Go to Cool Scoops for Cool Food, Cool Times & Cool Friends, such as Paul Russo, pictured above at the Centennial Celebration! Choose from over 30 Flavors of ice cream!

Take a step back in time at the Pink Cadillac Diner! An unique, one-of-a-kind, exquisitely restored Diner of the Fabulous 50's with a modern flare! Above pictured owners Chuck & Toni Miles.

Russo's Restaurant & Bar underwent major renovations too this past winter. Stop by and see Amy at the new Pub!

Seafood with an Attitude who is now selling its crab cakes at a new location, 24th St. Market Take-Out window. 24th St. Market renovated inside and out. for all your grocery needs and lottery needs, stop on in. They have the best soft pretzels on the island, but you gotta get 'em early!

Gone But Not Forgotten:

Duffinetti's Restaurant is gone and has been already replaced by condos.

Blending the Old and the New:

Duffy's on the Lake reopens for 2006 season.

Old Meets New!

Pete Ricco, who celebrates his 90th Birthday on May 28, gives up his barber chair to Marie Giambalvo, who took it over on April 1st. She is now cutting men, women and children's hair at the Pacific Ave. Barber Shop.

Michael Cummiskey's Fabricare underwent a Spring Cleaning Makeover as the building received new floors and counters and is lit up with new neon from local neon artist Fred Musso. Stop in for all your dry cleaning needs.

Woody's Skate & Surf, has a third location! Woody's Beach Shack at the old Coral Reef Motel on 7th & JFK.

New Businesses Ready To Serve:

Diamond Beach Bums has new owners, Dean, Pam, Trevor and Tyler Gentek. See their ad on p. ???

New Red Sky Cafe opens in place of The Blue Olive. Proprietors Jeff & Greta bring their already famous Southwestern Cajun Creole Style Cuisine to our island.

Dave and Kathy Thompson have gone from selling hardware to software. Offshore in the shopping district of Rio Grande is the new Trace of Lace. Stop in for a peek.

Wildwood gets better looking all the time! A luncheon was held in October to honor 14 businesses with the Community Beautification Award. The luncheon, sponsored by the Greater Wildwood Chamber of Commerce, was at Uncle Bill's Pancake House. Serving the island since 1938 and with more than 650 active members, The Greater Wildwood Chamber of Commerce is Wildwood's leading business organization.

The award winners include:

The Cook's Shoppe, Commerce Bank, Sun Bank, Blitz's Market, Charles Catanoso for Cheap Charlie's, Europa Delights, & Junke & Treasures, Caribbean Motel, Laura's Fudge Shop, Pink Cadillac Diner, Wild Wings, Shalimar Motel, and the Wildwood Business Improvement District, for upgrading Pacific Avenue's dilapidated retail shops and apartments. Congratulations to all the award winners, who in their own unique ways make our island even more beautiful.

Because it's 5 o'clock somewhere:

Wholesome family fun will take on a whole new meaning for the Morey Organization who was granted its wish to provide adults with alcoholic beverages at the water park. Morey's obtained the liquor license that formerly belonged to Pompeo's Restaurant (one of two boardwalk establishments holding liquor licenses, the other being Adam's).

Under strict guidelines, alcohol would be permitted only in designated areas into the new "Ocean Oasis-Waterpark and Beach Club" with plans to offer more upscale amenities including free wireless internet service, cabanas, hammocks and spa services. The new resort atmosphere,

according to Morey Organization President Will Morey, will benefit all family members with its extensive offerings and its highly trained staff.

Other Boardwalk News:

Matching Arches now bookend the boardwalk as the happiest place on earth!

The Great Nor'easter on Morey's Pier was painted white to prepare for its spectacular new lightscaping. Be sure to see it with your own on Morey's Pier!

Parents no longer need drag their feet and their toddlers from pier to pier on the boardwalk this summer! They can get the caffeine jolt they need at the new Magic Brain Coffee House' second Wildwood location on the Boardwalk at Juniper.

Time for a Commercial Break.

Construction was halted on the million-dollar entranceway project at Rio Grande and Ocean Avenues located near the boardwalk and Convention Center.

2006 is off to a great start:

Who says nothing happens in February?

Feb.1 the Sun By-The-Sea Special Premier Edition "OLD MAN WINTER" hit the streets and pleasantly surprised all of the die-hard Sun fans who were planning on holding out until April 1st for the Spring issue.

Feb. 1 Toni Stahl headed to the Bavarian Alps for her winter get-away to her homeland. SPRING, SUMMER AND FALL she can be found riding her bicycle every day, twice a day, from one end of the island to the other!

Feb. 6 Seagulls aren't the only birds in town: a snowy owl came to let us know that winter was back. Searching for the elusive snowy owl, Bucks County residents Carol and Ronald Majors would ultimately find him in Stone Harbor Point. However, Doug Ford, a member of the City of North Wildwood Parks Department and a volunteer at the Wildwood Historic Society, found the snowy owl on Forget-Me-Not Road and the Beach in Wildwood Crest. He captured its beauty with the help of his Fuju S5100.

Feb 11. After winter break, I mean after winter took a break for two months, it returned in all its glory with a coating of snow over the island. The storm brought severe high tides, and even closed many island churches for Sunday morning worship.

Following the icy temperatures comes cleaner air. As of April 15 Smoke Free's How It's Gonna Be!

Opposing the smoking ban: 1st District Assemblyman Jeff Van Drew. In Favor: Jack Gibson

With Fresher Air Comes Drier Streets. Regional engineering and consulting firm Schoor DePalma was put to the task of designing and reconstructing flooding streets by installing new tide flex valves on outfall pipes and additional bulkhead replacements. With the assistance of a \$438,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency, \$197,000 will be used toward curing flooded streets.

Less Congested Streets Are Also On The Way. With the goal of alleviating traffic, as well as ensuring residential safety should an evacuation occur, tolls were removed going southbound at the Cape May Plaza and northbound at the Egg Harbor Plaza. Now each is a one-way toll.

While sunbathers search for a little time on the beach, is time running out for North Wildwood beaches?

It's no secret that North Wildwood's beach is shrinking. Approximately 150 feet of beach has been lost since last summer with that number probably only going to increase.

A walk on the beach used to come with the view of large sand dunes. Noreasters and constantly changing ocean currents have caused the disappearance of so many dunes.

The beach replenishment project, initially scheduled for spring 2007, may happen ahead of schedule, possibly closing some sections of the beach. Although sure to inconvenience some, the major project will include 400 feet of new dunes to replace the eroded ones.

The city is responsible to pay 25 percent of the cost while the state will pay 75 percent.

In March, North Wildwood Mayor Bill Henfey confirmed The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Shore Protection Stable Funding Program granted an additional \$3,812,500 to the replenishment project.

The funds will be used to construct a beach sand fill. 6,900 feet of shoreline replenishment are needed from 2nd Ave. to 26th Ave.

The DEP's Bureau of Coastal Engineering will work in conjunction with the Army Corps of Engineers.

Including this grant, state participation has now reached over \$7 million, capping off the city's three-year shoreline protection endeavor.

The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) and Agate Construction have constructed a wall of huge rocks into six-foot hills along the shoreline. The \$24 million Seawall Construction Project, which began in April '05 as a joint federal, state, and local endeavor, has caused concern for residents. Its development differs from what they believed they would be getting. For many, the ocean view is now obstructed and access to the beach is difficult in some areas. USACE project manager Keith Watson states the wall's purpose is "to absorb the wave energy like a sponge." As the project nears completion, the seawall begins to attract walkers and bikers as well, searching for some clean salt air and a glorious view.

The Crest is also looking for some beach space. A Beachfront Fitness Park, with ideas of movie night, concerts, and magic shows was proposed by the city's recreation commission as well as motel owners and Commissioner Don Cabrera. The park will also provide a walking/jogging path and shaded gazebo. County funds would be used for the approximately \$150,000 start-up costs.

Like the melodious sound emanating from bells and whistles? Such sounds will be used to indicate an unusually high tide. The early warning system is the brainchild of Police Chief Robert Matteucci. A cell phone from the city's Office and Emergency Management can operate the system.

Other notable past winter news With the goal of raising scholarship money at Wildwood Catholic High School, and honoring the memory of Andrew Alamenno, who was killed in the 9/11 attacks, the fifth annual Polar Plunge for Andrew took place on a cold and windy Saturday. Encouraged by a cheering crowd, more than 200 dedicated (demented?) people dove into the icy Atlantic Ocean.

For over 80 years, the Children's Fresh Air Home has provided needy children with a summer vacation in a nurturing environment. Sadly, the home will not be open for the summer of 2006 due to its need for major repairs. The dedicated (and mostly volunteer) staff hopes to reopen with the help of financial contributions.

Because kids of all ages need a family vacation: 70 members of the Catanoso family went to Italy to celebrate the canonization of Gaetano Catanoso.

North Wildwood's very own Catanoso family can brag that they have a saint in the family (while scoring major heaven points). Gaetano Catanoso was born February 14, 1879 in the Province of Calabria, Italy. At the age of 10, he entered the Archdiocesan Seminary of Reggio Calabria. At the age of 15, he became a priest, and at the age of 24 he became pastor of a small mountain parish. In Wildwood, a Mass was held at St. Ann's RC Church on Sunday Oct. 23rd for the newly appointed Saint, who, as Bishop Joseph Galante stated, "*embraced the life he was called to and embraced it every day.*"

Saint Gaetano Catanoso, who died April 4, 1963, was honored by his Wildwood family, who donated a ceremonial vestment to St. Ann's. "Nothing travels faster than light, with the possible exception of rumors." Since we wrapped up our Memorial Day issue of The SUN, which featured

the recap of Wildwood's off season news, we've caught wind of a few more

Doris has Seen her Day!

The "Taffy Walk" Condotel will replace the Doris Vernon Hotel on Pine Ave. Four stories of privately owned residencies will also be available to rent as hotel rooms. Taffy Walk will also feature a coffee shop and retail space along with a two story parking garage.

Also Going The Way of Doris...

Another former North Wildwood icon, is the Beach House, slated for the wrecking ball at summer's end. It was formerly the Red Garter, purchased by the late great Jimmy Kane in 1965 and then he changed the name to "Jimmy's" in 1990.

The Champagne is Flowing...

Coming in it's place in the Spring of '07, Wildwood will be celebrating the arrival of "Champagne Island Resort." Starting at \$995,000, the luxury executive condos and townhomes, complete with a rooftop pool, will overlook the lovely Hereford Inlet and its namesake, Champagne Island.

A Constructive List

Speaking of demos again, the Joint Construction Office lists 23 demos since the last list of 200 demos between Labor Day '05 and Memorial Day '06. On that list were 4 more motels to add to the already 27 motels demolished over the winter:

Lurae Motel at 7th & Surf
Mariner Motel Monterey Ave.
El Morro on 10th & Ocean
Cozy Inn Burk & New Jersey Ave.

Le Voyageur Motel on Andrews Ave. remains in full operation. We had it on our demo list from the previous year, but that was Le Voyageur II. Dennis & Grace Krause are the proud hosts of a great Wildwood Motel!

When One Door Closes Another One Opens

Ocean Oasis held it's grand opening on June 17th. Let it be known that more than 200 lifeguards at Morey's Piers Waterparks have earned, for the ninth year in a row, the Platinum National Aquatic Safety Award, which is the highest safety rating possible. Why not include a visit to the newest Morey creation on that action-packed list of things to do in the Wildwoods?

Wildwood's Newest LifeSavers

Speaking of lifeguards, congratulations to the 2006 Rookies on NWBP, WBP, & WCBP- namely, The SUN's photographer & local wave connoisseur, surfer Rob K.
Remember-Always Swim Near a Lifeguard!

(A More Family Oriented) Seaport Village Is Reborn

Getting back to the boards, the North Wildwood Planning Board, along with a professional firm of engineers, have approved a major plan to revitalize the abandoned Seaport Village Pier, between 22nd & 23rd Aves. Look for the redevelopment to include such things as restaurants, theaters, a possible aquarium or sport center, and what would a pier be without the ever-popular Wildwood pasttime- miniature golf? Even more significant for the changing of the Wildwoods is what will not be permitted on the pier. For the first time in boardwalk history, prohibited uses

include: any place of business, any graphic display of any kind, that would be inappropriate for families. That includes such things as offensive t-shirts. We here at The SUN pray that will travel down the remaining “2 miles of smiles.”

National Recognition is Good But Local Action is Best!

The Doo Wop Preservation League formed as a group of concerned business owners, local residents and preservation advocates. They have been working diligently towards securing a protection plan for our island’s iconic 1950’s kitschy style architecture that helped make Wildwood what it is today. Odds have been working against them though, as you’ve seen {in our last issue}, the list of over 100 of these motels that have been torn down over the past few years to make way for a new, more non-descript style of architecture. The National Trust for Historic Preservation lists Wildwood as one of America’s 11 Most Endangered Places.

The goal of the Doo Wop Preservation League is to get zoning restrictions in place as well as incentives to support property owners who want to keep and renovate their motels, making it more economically possible for them.

Wildwood’s Success Stories

A few of the successful restoration stories are evident in the Carribbean Motel, the Shalimar & Starlux Motels, Imperial 500, Bel Air, Cara Mara, Armada, Cape Cod Inn Motel and the Park Lane Motel, whose owners have done an outstanding job preserving our island’s past by the renovations made.

The Fifties Are in Full Swing

FUN characterizes what the 1950’s was all about! Don’t Miss the “**Back to the Fifties**” Doo Wop Exhibit going on all summer long at the Emlen Physick Estate’s **Carriage House** located on Washington St. in Cape May.

Mark your calendars for the 3rd Annual Fabulous Fifties Weekend in Wildwood on October 20-22 featuring James Darren, Johnny Maestro and the Brooklyn Bridge, the Platters, Joey Dee and the Starlighters, and the Shangri-Las, to name a few.

A Taste of Italy, Wildwood Style. Eleven years ago, the North Wildwood Original Italian Festival started with just 2 meatballs on a bun on a much quieter 17th St. My, how times have changed! The festival, now held on Olde NJ. Ave. on June 23-25, 2006, grew immensely with over 200,000 visitors in attendance. The day was a great success for the event planners of North Wildwood.

A Grateful Note

A big thank you goes to **Pete & Celeste DeAngelis** (*below*) for that “Downtown” the other day. I thought I’d never again get to eat my favorite hoagie. The DeAngelis’ left 17th & New York after 10 years to venture over to Pacific Ave. between Pine & Maple, next to Pacific Cuts. So stop in and see that smiling Pete we were talking about:)

Quicker Than The Eye

I bet none of you even noticed that the cool Doo Wop Commerce Bank sign was moved from the corner of the property to the entrance. It was erected before last summer and moved after the summer.

More Note-worthy Banking News~ Rio Grande’s bustling shopping district will be home to a new SUN Bank.

A Warm Wildwood Welcome

More New Business in the Wildwoods. . . a popular corner store on Juniper & Atlantic owned and operated by the Karter family for years is now under the new ownership of Bob Williams. It is

now called “POP’S Market & Deli”. Stop in for all your grocery needs.

And for all your international & European grocery needs visit Zack at EUROPA Delights at 4722 Pacific Ave.

Stephanie Patitucci brings the sweet tastes of Italy to the island with her new Marcella’s Caffè & Gelateria located on the corner of Sweet Briar & NJ Ave. All equipment was imported from Italy to insure the authenticity of the Italian Gelato.

Best wishes to our new island business owners!

For your ventures off the island, visit Wanderlust, located at 609 Jefferson St. in Cape May. They are a family owned and operated business that focuses on seaside living at its best and in all its splendor. Wanderlust can make your dream for your beach house, cottage, condo, shack or mansion . . . come true.

You’ll be inspired to bring a little Hula home.

The rumors continue to travel faster than the speed of (sun) light in our peaceful side of paradise. With each day comes change. But, as the proverbial saying goes, “change is good.” So, what good will the latest batch of changes bring to life on our island?

Stay tuned.

by Dorothy Kulisek and Meg Corcoran