

In our bustling little town, some businesses said hello while others said their final good-bye. Overall, the scenery had its share of reduction, remodeling, and restoration:

The Construction Office of Wildwood records only 49 demolition permits on Five Mile Beach between September '06 and May '07. That number is down from last year's total of 200, and 199 the year before and 176 in 2004 during that same time period.

We've just two businesses to report this year that have cashed in, moved on, and been torn down since you've ben gone: The Beach House, formerly Jimmy's and the Red Garter, to make way for the Champagne Island Resort and Manor Hawaiian Rumble located on Surf Ave. between 24th & 25th Aves. (On this block once stood the very stately and grand Manor Hotel.)

New Businesses Booming for the Wildwoods!

No stone left unturned, no spot left unfilled in North Wildwood. Officials began the development phase needed to bring businesses to vacant storefronts along New Jersey Avenue, encouraging new businesses into the city while supporting existing store owners. North Wildwood Shirt Shop, Avalon Coffee, & Wilkins Fitness, are a notable few.

Joe Wilkins, fitness enthusiast, and personal trainer, returned home to the island with his Wilkins Fitness Gym on the corner of 9th & New Jersey Aves.

After six years in Wildwood Crest, Jack & Renee McCartney (above) of Crest Shirt Shop opened their second location, North Wildwood Shirt Shop, in the new storefront at 6th & New Jersey Ave. in North Wildwood.. Their inventory, which includes more than just shirts, is overflowing with beach chairs, beach towels, hats, sandals, jewelry and so much more. Be sure to stop in for all your beach needs or to find that perfect gift!

Fred DiSantis (above) opened Cabrelli's Italian Bakery and Deli in the original Terminal Bakery building on the corner of 17th & Central Aves. in North Wildwood. Custom order cakes for any occasion~ Butter Cakes! Cheese Cakes! Pound Cakes! Cabrelli's has it all~ fresh Cold Cuts & Starbuck's & New England Coffees, too!

These folks were among the brave business owners who decided to open their doors just before the onset of a Wildwood winter. Although business has been steady for them, they're ready to welcome the new tourist season with a big hug!

With that comes more North Wildwood news business requiring a jolt of caffeine. Avalon Coffee ~ Beans, Bagels and Buns, the ever-expanding franchise, with its loyal following of "coffeeholics", opened at 7th & New Jersey Avenue in North Wildwood with Jim Nanos as its franchisee.

Wildwood's Pine & Pacific Avenue location is now under the franchisement of Bob & Kim Maschio. Bob, a partner in Coastal Broadcasting, purchased the Pacific Avenue franchise for Avalon Coffee. He closed the doors on February 24th and reopened on March 5th and completely renovated this downtown meeting place, adding booths, comfortable chairs, flat screen TVs and a coffee bar. This Avalon Coffee location will be expanding its weekend hours during the summer season to be open all night long. They intend to include late nite menu items and will be featuring various local entertainment.

Magic Brain Coffee House opened Easter weekend at its 2nd location at 2701 Boardwalk for its 2nd season. With so many cafes around, there's no reason to be decaffeinated again!

Nina Catanoso, who established Carli's in Erma and Cape May, sold her business after 14 years to Michael Hober. Michael & his fiance Jess Ryan, continue to carry the unique and eclectic gifts and furniture that make Carli's a favorite shopping stop! See their picture on page 66.

On Burke & Atlantic Avenue, Oceans Cafe says goodbye to our friends Bill & Mario and says hello to Bobby Mulholland with his Atlantic Cafe. He's not just small potatoes anymore! It's bigger and better than ever featuring many new menu items.

The Aqua Beach Cafe, formerly run by Bobby Mulholland, has been completely transformed into the Cantina Beach Grille featuring a Breakfast Buffet, Fresh Pizza, an Island Grille Dinner Buffet, a Full Salad Bar and Stir Fry Bar! There's yet another fine coffee house on the island and it's located at Aqua Beach Hotel and Resort at 5501 Ocean Ave. in Wildwood Crest. Java Doux offers internet access to go with your fresh ground coffee, espresso, or cappuccino. Both establishments are open to the public.

Our friend Mike Porch at Main Street Wildwood reports on the progress over the winter along Pacific Avenue . . . the NJ Department of Community Affairs, through Main Street New Jersey, has awarded Main Street Wildwood a \$25,000 business recruitment service. This service will be provided through the JGSC Group, based in Pennsauken. Their web site, www.community-insights.com <<http://www.community-insights.com>> , details their unique approach to downtown revitalization. JGSC will work with a local group with Main Street, WBID and city representatives to target downtown properties and identify desirable business categories for recruitment. The initial planning meeting took place in April for this year long process.

Despite a nationwide slowdown in the real estate market, investment continues on Pacific Avenue. A significant renovation is underway at Oliver's at Rio Grande and Pacific. New ownership is transforming the landmark restaurant into a Doo Wop-styled eater, Marvis

The former Fox Brothers store, reputedly the oldest retail location on Pacific Avenue dating back 100 years, has recently been sold to a Greg Sykora, a South Jersey entrepreneur. He now owns most of the west side of the 4400 block and has begun a major renovation with a new business to follow. A new store to that block at 4410 is Steve's Hip Hop Fashion & Electronics, selling name brands such as Timberland, Air Jordan, Nike and Air Force One as well as Video Games and MP3 players.

City Nightclub, which opened late last season after a \$200,000 renovation, remained open throughout the winter and continued to build a loyal following.

Juan Pablo's Margarita Bar expanded their award-winning restaurant and cocktail lounge by purchasing and renovating the adjacent storefront.

Pacific Avenue continues to add fine dining locations as it grows as a restaurant and entertainment center for the entire island. Vince Chiarella's Gia at Glenwood and Pacific has been a spectacular recent addition with a beautiful Tuscany-inspired renovation and excellent Italian cuisine.

Pete and Celeste DeAngelis have relocated their namesake Italian eatery just south of Maple on Pacific. This friendly BYO restaurant is attracting a growing lunch business to add to their loyal dinner patrons.

New Look! New Name! New Management! Good Night Irene's, the former Poplar Cafe, at Poplar and Pacific, has been closed all winter while undergoing a complete, top to bottom renovation. A totally New Menu, featuring brick oven pizza, a range of salads and sandwiches and other gourmet lunch and dinner selections, promises to add another exciting dining destination to the downtown. A selection of 20 draft beers and micro brews will make this a must-visit pub for any beer connoisseur. The renovation has also restored elements of the facade to its original 100+ year old splendor, uncovering a columned wrap around porch overlooking Pacific Avenue.

The Wildwood Business Improvement District (WBID) has continued their capital investment in the downtown with new sidewalks and curbs to enhance the appearance of Pacific Avenue. The next phase of this project will continue after the 2007 tourist season. The WBID and the City of Wildwood also worked together to add new benches and trash cans to the downtown business district.

This has been the fifth consecutive year with significant investment in the downtown Wildwood commercial area, adding 40+ net new businesses and dozens of jobs. This continued redevelopment progress has added many new services, dining and entertainment options for both residents and visitors alike. Shop local and vocal! Tell them you heard about them in The SUN!

Building on the island News

The Haldeman family of Owen's Pub (above are Peggy & Michael) on 17th St. closed their doors for a week this winter while the carpenters came in for an express makeover that gave the pub a brand new upscaled look & feel. Stop in for the happiest hour!

Breakers Realty moves into their new offices on 25th & NJ. Once the move is complete, the brick building on 26th & New Jersey Aves. will be torn down and similar townhomes will be built making yet one more beautiful block along New Jersey Avenue.

Pete & Sherri Byron of PETE BYRON REALTY on Pacific Ave. in Wildwood, completed construction of their new home at Park & Garfield in time for the holidays, (and in time for a new little baby boy on his way! Congratulations!) We captured a Kodak moment for the Byron's as all 6 children were together, from right to left are Rick & Nick, (or is it Nick & Rick?), Sam, P.J., Maddie & Alex. The nursery is all ready for baby boy Byron due to arrive September 10th.

The new Bob Davis 4,000+ sq. ft. Home

(Pictured in column below)The Bob Davis Family built his dream house on an historical lot in Anglesea. Originally, the 1st & Central Avenue location was home to North Wildwood's post office and Acme Markets. It changed ownership many times during its history, more recently Adam & Zebe's and the Larcom's Lighthouse Cafe.

The old 1940's Capt. Otto Stocker home on Aster & Park Blvd. was torn down for a new Stocker home. Look for a SUN story on the Stocker family later this year!

Beautifying Wildwood ~ It is rare on our island that a property has had only two owners. Such is the case of Mary Miller's Beauty Shop, built in 1923 and located on the corner of Magnolia & Pacific Aves. Adding to its rarity is the fact that Irish immigrant Jerry Phillips, (now a US citizen who considers himself a Wildwood Local!) became its 2nd Hairdresser owner. He opened up Jerry's Hair Studio when he made purchase of the building in 1989.

"Building on the island" Old News ~

A Bit of Wildwood History

The Earle Motel Story- from a conversation with Betty Braidwood Taylor. Betty & her late husband, Earl built the Earle Motel in 1963 for the cost of \$67,000. The photo above, looking south on Seaview at Hollywood Avenue, shows that their motel was the southernmost property on the island at the time. The Taylor's actually had to pay the contractor to put in the roads for Hollywood & Topeka. Frank Hoffman of Hoffman Agency sold the motel for Betty & Earl in 1965 for \$125,000. It changed hands several more times until it was finally sold to condo developers in 2004 for \$2 million.

Staying Put ~ In 2000, following lengthy careers in nursing and construction, Donna and Carl Gallucci built their future in the Surf Haven Motel, a small motel on Surf Ave. in North Wildwood. Rejecting the popular inclination in which developers acquire motels, demolish them, and build them into new condos, the Gallucci's turned the Surf Haven, the working-class motel open from May to September, into a successful business by creating a rapport with their customers (including Tuesday night crab fest), by building a website, and by looking toward expansion. Despite the hard work motel owners are subjected to and the regular lure of condo developers, the Gallucci's are committed to providing their customers with a great vacation with a place to return to year after year..

Other Newsworthy events:

“Always swim near a lifeguard!” The North Wildwood Beach Patrol (NWBP) set a local precedent when Chief Tony Cavalier made the decision to extend their stay two full weeks past Labor Day last season, guarding the still active beaches. In response to bustling beach days in September 2005, lifeguards were given a bonus to stay on duty until the Tuesday after Irish weekend. Kudos Chief!

Off Season Beach Finds

A 20 ton, 35 ft. young, male humpback whale washed up on the beach at Sweet Briar Rd. in Wildwood Crest in the early morning of September 28th. It was quite a sight to see~ and to smell! Reportedly, it was involved in a collision with a fishing boat that sank leaving the fishermen lost at sea for over 48 hrs. before they were rescued.

A creepy Halloween Beach Surprise ~ on October 30th at Hereford Inlet Beach., a human skull, which remains mysteriously unidentified, was found during a low tide.

The sun shines its brightest over the 15th annual Irish Fall Festival.

Under an initially sunny sky, the festival drew an even larger crowd than expected. The well-maintained event, sponsored by the Ancient Order of Hibernians (A.O.H.), donated proceeds to charities such as Children's Hospital and the Shriners and the North Wildwood Volunteer Fire Department.

In its first year, the festival drew approximately 1,000 people. 15 years later, an estimated 200,000 people were said to attend the celebration.

On a Sad Irish Note

January 2, 2007~ For many people around Wildwood and in Ireland,

2007 began with the sudden and unexpected death of Tom Fallis. Irish Tom the bartender, as he was know around here, will be remembered for his character and compassion, he was the kind of guy that was everyone's best friend.

More sad news followed for the Fallis family back in Eniskillen, Northern Ireland when Tom's mom, Lily passed away on May 10.

Adding to the cliché that only the good die young, on Monday, Dec. 4, 2006, the beloved former Wildwood Police Chief William “Billy” Fisher III died at home after his fearless fight with cancer. Fisher, 51, was remembered by many Wildwoodians as someone who could be counted on in both good and bad times. He is sorley missed.

The Fifties were never this Fabulous!

October 2006 took a 50-year step back in time as the Fabulous 50s Weekend took to the music-jamming stage. Despite the dark clouds, the event, in its third year, SOLD OUT for the first time. Stars including the Dovells, the Platters, Chubby Checker, Jerry Blavat, and James Darren came out to celebrate and reminisce alongside thousands of fifties music lovers.

Is there enough room in the sky? Proposed high rise condotels, The Nouveau Wave, Wildwood Beach Resort, The Starlight Resort, East Bennett Project, the Waypoint Beach Club, and the Riviera, all took center stage at the Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CFARA) hearing, as the pros and cons of altering the skyline were addressed including concerns for wildlife and parking restrictions. Having been granted final approval from the city's zoning board as far back as 2004, the state rejected a permit under the CAFRA to the first city approved project, The Nouveau Wave on Rio Grande and Ocean Avenues. However, a March 15 letter to Mayor Troiano from Mark Mauriello, DEP assistant commissioner for land use regulation, presented the developers and the state a compromise that would accommodate these structures into designated high rise areas on the island. If the city wishes to gain approval, master plans have to be revised and certain criteria must be met. Mayor Troiano said a new Master Plan will be drawn up in a matter of just two months.

Adding to the stars in the sky...

Moving on to the seventh proposed high rise structure, the 25-story Martinique Condotel unanimously acquired city approval. The tropically-themed high-rise is expected to advance community interests by accommodating convention center visitors while adding to the tax base.

Written in the stars... North Wildwood's fifth annual Beach Writers Conference will be held June 5 and 6 at the Wildwood Convention Center. The \$30 admission, payable to the City of North Wildwood Financial Officer, includes eight seminars and a full course dinner. Speaking at the conference will be authors with connections to the movies. Included in this list are Superior Court Judge Nelson Johnson, whose non-fiction book, "Boardwalk Empire: The Birth, High Times, and Corruption of Atlantic City," has been optioned by HBO as a mini-series.

Also speaking at the conference will be The Sun's own contributing writer, journalist/editor/filmmaker Bob Ingram. Be sure to catch his seminar on Writing for a Profession, Wednesday, June 6th at 9:30am. at the Wildwood Convention Center.

A new addition to the conference will be a shore-inspired writing contest, consisting of poetry and personal essays, for South Jersey high school and college students. There is no entry fee and prizes awarded include \$100 first place, \$50 for second place, and \$25 for third. Look for the first place winner to be published in the SUN-by-the-sea!

Falling back in actual time. Seashore Developers and W.B. competed for the development of Seaport Village, located on the east side of the boardwalk at 22nd and 23rd avenues. W.B. Resorts Inc. was ultimately chosen as the redeveloper and is scheduled to bring the pier back to life. Their family-friendly plan could include a year-round waterpark and a 405-room hotel with parking garage, with a permit to also include amusement rides and concession stands, restaurants, aquariums, theaters, sport centers (including miniature golf), spas, and nightlife businesses. Future proposals are in negotiations.

One Hundred Reasons to Celebrate!

A year-long celebration of North Wildwood's 100th anniversary culminated with a festivity for the 50-some volunteers who contributed to the centennial celebration's triumph. Special thanks were bestowed upon Ralph Grassi, Jim MacMillan, and Nancy Cellini. Mayor Bill Henfey and

Council President Patrick Rosenello presented city entertainment director Joe “Q”uatrone with a key to the city.

One Hundred is the Hot Number!

On March 16, 2007, Woody’s Place Celebrated the Original Home of the North Wildwood Fire Company No.1. The fire company held a formal 100th anniversary celebration at Neil’s Steak House on May 19th.

One Million Reasons to Celebrate!

On Saturday, March 31st, Wildwoods Convention Center, with the assistance of community leaders, politicians (like Assemblyman Jeff Van Drew pictured above), and an excited crowd, happily welcomed its one-millionth visitor during the Wildwood’s Boat Show and Fishing Expo. Confetti and cheers welcomed surprised Ocean City, NJ resident Dan Triboletti, an airline captain with Jet Blue Airlines, as he entered the Wildwoods Convention Center to buy electronics for his new boat.

Thanks to a persistent group of community and political leaders, the Convention Center, which opened during 2002’s second quarter, has made an economic impact of over \$178 million. Kudos!

The Celebrated Convention Center gets a new neighbor.

The Surfside Restaurant could tell its own seaside story. Originating on Ocean and Lavender Roads in Wildwood Crest, then to a Vineland warehouse, it finally became the home of the city’s Doo Wop Museum and Amphitheater. The Doo Wop Preservation League scheduled the grand opening of the vintage establishment, located across the street from the Wildwood Convention Center on Ocean and Davis Avenues, for April 27th. With a construction cost of just over \$1.27 million, the city was given a \$167,000 grant from the New Jersey Sports and Exhibition Authority and a \$400,000 donation from the generous Byrne Fund. The museum will highlight a neon garden running along the sidewalk and entryway, featuring recovered signs from long-since demolished motels and restaurants. (Fittings are being made for the signs to sustain 150 MPH winds, a new state requirement established after Hurricane Katrina.)

The museum will hold exhibits of the Doo Wop era and the island’s tourism industry as well as an outdoor amphitheater for concerts and events.

Enjoy the full story on pages 14-15.

A North Wildwood Greeting for the Digital Age

A new digital welcome sign now greets those entering North Wildwood along Spruce Avenue. Along with the signs artistic welcome are the times and dates of special events and emergency messages when needed. Crest Savings Bank was pleased to fund and construct the new sign, according to senior Vice President Jodi DiEduardo. The old sign which was replaced, originally donated by Joe & Lenora Martino of the NW Beautification Committee, has a new home at the North Wildwood Beach Patrol Headquarters. On the note of beautifying, the 16th Ave. entrance archway to the boardwalk will be lit up this year, thanks again to the NWBC!

Time to restore that welcoming feeling at the shore. P and D Construction of Vineland set to work on restoring North Wildwood’s weakening streets. Included in the 3.5 million bid is the replacement of sewer mains, gutters, driveways, and water lines. Work began in April on some of the city’s worst streets such as 3rd and 23rd (where it was a pure island adventure to simply ride your bicycle, let alone a car down these particular streets!)

10th Ave. from Surf to JFK boulevard was also scheduled for restoration following a \$143,000 fund from the state.

Access ramps to the boardwalk from 20th Avenue and the beach were set to be installed

following a \$172,000 contract awarded to R.A. Walters and Son, of Cape May Court House.

In neighboring Wildwood, Mayor Troiano moves forward with the final phase of the state, federal, and county-funded Rio Grande Avenue Corridor Project. Replacing curbs and sidewalks, ornamental lighting, and a median are included in the repairs said to take approximately six months to complete. The Team of Mayor Ernie Troiano would like to sincerely thank everyone for having patience during the course of this unique and significant overhaul of Rio Grande Avenue. Your patience will be rewarded with a beautiful and comfortable ride into our premier island resort. It will be something you can be proud of each and every day.

All Wheels off the Big Wall. The 8,800 foot seawall that stretches along the Hereford Inlet in North Wildwood was built to protect residents against tidal flooding. It was a source of controversy among the residents during its construction but has quickly become a favorite attraction for walking and enjoying an ocean view. The path is 15 feet wide and in some places, over 20 feet high with no guardrails in place. Mayor Henfey is in the process of making an ordinance that would prohibit the use of any wheel devices along the wall.

The good, the bad, and everything in between.

Negative press has plagued the Joint Construction Office of Wildwood for five years, the most damaging occurring in February 2006 when approximately 500 condominium units were discovered to be in violation of building codes and many other units lacked proper fire safety, according to firefighter officials. Additional buildings also failed to meet building codes. Once hopeful, now aggravated condo owners headed to court to remedy the situation they believe JCOW to be responsible for. Plans are underway to rectify the safety issues, with officials and owners reaching an agreement. Financial responsibility, however, still needs to be determined. Since the beginning, JCOW has maintained a portion of the blame, citing that architects also share in that blame.

Meanwhile, the (sun) light at the end of this problem-plagued tunnel now shines on a new organization. Wildwood will now retain island code office control, providing a severe contrast to the now defunct JCOW office. An optimistic Mayor (and volunteer firefighter) Troiano believes Wildwood's best interest will now be served. An advisory committee, comprised of representatives from each municipality, will be created to assist in staffing the office. The new office funding will be provided by Wildwood and North Wildwood (34% each), Wildwood Crest (24%) and West Wildwood (8%). Wildwood will make every effort to hire inspectors possessing multiple certifications. Each town will incur the expense of their own zoning officer. The new office opened for business April 2nd, with Hamilton Township construction official Glenn Franzoi overseeing the operation.

Budget breaks. The city of Wildwood approved the annual budgets of The Business Improvement District (BID) and boardwalk Special Improvement District (SID). The BID will function on a \$315,000 budget while the SID operates on a \$1.24 million spending plan. Sponsorship, like the Coca-Cola banners displayed on tram cars, is needed to fund additional activities on the boardwalk, like firework displays, new trashcans (possibly displaying Coca-Cola banners), and tram car services. BID searched for funds in the hope of replicating Pacific Avenue after downtowns in Millville and Atlantic City. New sidewalks, pleasing-to-the-eye streetlights and trashcans are already being mounted.

Not pleasing any eyes, however, are the boarded-up windows of vacant buildings. Mayor Troiano affirmed that property owners were issued numerous tickets as he continues to encourage those offenders to develop the look of their empty buildings.

More restoration.

The future of the Wildwood Crest Fishing Pier, originally built in 1916, was in question over the winter. Commissioner Don Cabrera explored options to save the pier from demolition while others debated whether it is more cost effective to demolish it.

The Borough of Wildwood Crest recently approved the renovation of the Fishing Pier located at Heather Road and the beach. The Pier was formerly owned by the Crest Fishing Club since 1916. The first Mayor of Wildwood Crest, Philip P. Baker helped found the club and the Pier. The Pier will be used as a multi-purpose recreational and beach amenity and later extended for fishing.

Along Sunset Lake in Wildwood Crest, the shore line has been protected from erosion with the utilization of an Armortech matting system. The State of NJDEP awarded the Borough 1.4 million dollars to complete the project. The project also created a kayak launching access area at Monterey Ave. A new park area will eventually be created with new grass, irrigation, electric, and seating areas.

There's always time for some Fresh Air. Although the Children's Fresh Air Home, located at 1100 Surf Avenue in North Wildwood, dodged the wrecking ball, funds in the neighborhood of \$5 million are still needed for them to refurbish the home for disadvantaged children. Superintendent Karen Willie stated the home's need for major renovations as well as a wish list that could extend as far as the ocean that the program will continue. The Fresh Air Home has operated entirely through donations since 1923.

A Seagull Diet (fresh air still permitted). According to two ordinances passed on December 5th, feeding seagulls is considered bad for the environment. By feeding not domesticated animals, waste accumulates, adding to storm water pollutants. Water runoff, or surface water, overflows yards, sidewalks, and streets, through storm drains, and ultimately enters rivers, lakes, and oceans. A fine of no more than \$1,250 would be issued for each offense.

For those still mourning the fresh air (among other things) provided at Moore's, Developer Beazer Homes stated pre-sales of more than one-third of The Pointe at Moore's Inlet in North Wildwood. Located between the inlet and the ocean, the 60 luxury condominiums are attracting locals and residents anxious to recall fond memories that Moore's inspired (direct access to the beach and front-to-back water views are nice bonuses).

According to Mike G. and Jo Bilbee, The Pub at Moore's Inlet is looking to open the Summer of '08.

Sales flourishing elsewhere. The Grand at Diamond Beach doubled expected sales on their condominiums scheduled to be completed in 2008. Residing on one of the last private beaches on the Atlantic Coast, the 12-story oceanfront condominium on Atlantic Avenue holds 125 residences each with an oceanfront or bay view. The building features a fitness center, spa, infinity pool, and several special occasion rooms. The Grand at Diamond Beach condominiums are the new ideal in luxury South Jersey Shore beachfront living.

Champagne Island Resort & Premier Contractors of North Wildwood, Joe, Jr. & Joe Mahoney Sr. brought the House Down! The Beach House, that was, on November 8. Formerly the Red Garter and then Jimmy's, the new Champagne Island Resort and Flip Flop Poolside Bar & Grill boasts Caribbean style fun in the Anglesea sun! As the resort takes formation, it aims for a Summer '07 opening of its restaurant, coffee shop, and beauty salon. Champagne Island Resort is sure to become a family favorite at the shore.

The road less traveled. The oft-postponed opening of the Rio Grande Wal-Mart left many skeptical that it would ever open its money-saving doors. Reportedly, access into the parking lot,

as well as unfinished paperwork, repeatedly delayed the opening. With the million-dollar construction traffic-ready thanks to Wal-Mart handling the road production, developer William Juliano, of Delco LLC, stated the grand opening is scheduled for no later than June.

So, as we calculate the many transformations seen and heard around town, yet another change worth noting involved the fluctuating temperatures. The off-season climate had us all confusingly riding a “polar coaster” of sorts as we celebrated a mild Christmas and a “White Easter.” Flurries arrived Easter weekend, prompting Green’s Liquor’s marquis to plead: “Easter Bunny please bring a snow shovel.”

Believe it or not! The above photo, capturing Andy, the Fudgy Man distributing free ice cream to Wildwood locals was taken January 7, 2007. As temperatures soared into the 70’s, many seized the day and headed to the beach.

As we officially celebrate the start of another great season, we hope the upcoming weather is of the tropical island type, encouraging vacationers to the Wildwoods!

Not that we want to leave you on a sad note. . . but while we’re on the subject of fudgy wudgies, a very special ice cream man will not be seen or heard on our beaches this summer. The original Fudgy Wudgy Man, POP Redding, passed away April 20th at his winter home in Florida. When ice cream vending licenses became available in 1971 only to Vets, Pop retired his ice cream truck for a 75-lb. box. He worked the northernmost end of our beach for 36 years. He was our Fudgy Wudgy Man growing up. (All our love to his wife Connie, and son Dennis.)

Meanwhile, here at The SUN we ponder the numerous changes that have occurred since this column last appeared in May 2006. We are inspired by philosopher Alan Watts, who stated, “The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance.”

Now, as we gracefully glide toward summer at the shore, we are reminded that some things happily never change. The view may be altered, but days spent in Wildwood remain timeless, their memories eternally safe from all forms of construction.

Written and composed by Meg Corcoran and Dorothy Kulisek