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6-in-10 RESIDENTS PLAN JERSEY SHORE VISIT

Wildwood tops list of favorite shore spots for 2009

The Jersey Shore should be seeing a steady stream of in-state visitors this year, but the economic mix of who is visiting and for how long may differ from last year. The latest *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* also discovered New Jersey's favorite shore destination.

Overall, 6-in-10 state residents plan on visiting the Jersey Shore this summer, including 21% who will spend a week or more and 38% who plan on shorter visits. Another 7% of Garden State residents live down the shore. Among those staying a week or more, 57% say it will be their family's main vacation this year.

The 59% of New Jerseyans who plan to visit the shore this year is similar to the 60% who planned to visit the shore in 2008. However, there has been a decrease in how long visitors intend to stay this summer compared to last year.

"The economy seems to be having an impact on who can afford an extended shore vacation this year. While it looks like shore resorts will be seeing the same number of in-state visitors, the economic mix will be different from last year, which may actually benefit shore merchants," said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

The poll results indicate that upper income residents may make up a larger portion of shore visitors this season. New Jersey families that earn over \$100,000 are more likely to plan on visiting the Jersey Shore this summer (75%) than they were last year (68%). This includes 32% who plan a trip of a week or longer (up from 27% last year) and 43% who plan on shorter stays or day trips (about the same as 41% last year).

Middle income families – those earning between \$50,000 and \$100,000 – are just as likely to plan a shore visit in 2009 (64%) as they were last year (63%), but it will probably be for a shorter period. Just 19% of families in this income group will be spending a week or more down the shore this summer, while 45% plan shorter excursions. Just one year ago, 27% of New Jersey middle-income families planned a week-long shore stay.

Less than half (46%) of Garden State families earning under \$50,000 a year plan on visiting the Jersey Shore at all this summer, down from 54% last year. This is due mainly to a drop in the number of lower income New Jerseyans who say they will be spending a week or more down the shore – 17%, down from 25% last year.

The poll also found that families with children are more likely to plan on making short visits to the shore than they were a year ago. Currently, 45% of parents plan on making day trips or excursions of less than a week to the shore in 2009, which is up from 36% last year. Another 23% of parents are planning week-long vacations down the shore this year, similar to the 25% who said the same in 2008.

When asked to name their favorite shore town, New Jersey residents’ choices continue to be – quite literally – all over the map. Compared to the last time this question was asked in a representative stateside poll in 2006, the Wildwoods (12%) have edged out Long Beach Island – or L.B.I. – as the state’s favorite shore destination. In fact, L.B.I. (8%) now stands just behind Point Pleasant Beach (9%) and Atlantic City (9%) on the list of Jersey Shore favorites.

Other Jersey Shore towns that are popular with Garden Staters include Seaside Heights (6%), Cape May (6%), Ocean City (5%), and Belmar (4%). A number of other towns garner a mention as the favored spot from between one and two percent of residents.

FAVORITE JERSEY SHORE TOWNS				
<i>Among residents of:</i>				
	<u>Statewide</u>	<u>North Jersey</u>	<u>Central Jersey</u>	<u>South Jersey</u>
1.	The Wildwoods (12%)	Atlantic City (10%)	Point Pleasant (15%)	The Wildwoods (23%)
2.	Point Pleasant (9%)	The Wildwoods (9%)	L.B.I. (10%)	Ocean City (12%)
3.	Atlantic City (9%)	Point Pleasant (8%)	The Wildwoods (6%)	Atlantic City (11%)
4.	L.B.I. (8%)	Seaside Heights (8%)	Avon-by-the-Sea (6%)	Cape May (8%)
5.	Seaside Heights (6%)	L.B.I. (7%)	Cape May (6%)	L.B.I. (7%)
6.	Cape May (6%)	Cape May (5%)	Belmar (6%)	Seaside Heights (5%)
7.	Ocean City (5%)	Belmar (5%)	Atlantic City (5%)	Point Pleasant (5%)

The poll also found regional favorites in the Garden State. North Jersey residents tab Atlantic City as their favorite destination, edging out the Wildwoods, Point Pleasant Beach, Seaside Heights, and L.B.I. Central Jersey residents name Point Pleasant Beach as their favorite, with L.B.I. in the number two slot. Among South Jerseyans, the Wildwoods are clearly the favorite shore destination, easily beating out Ocean City, Atlantic City, Cape May, and L.B.I for the top spot.

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* was conducted by telephone with 803 New Jersey adults from April 23 to 27, 2009. This sample has a margin of error of ± 3.5 percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute and originally published by the Gannett New Jersey newspaper group (Asbury Park Press, Courier-Post, Courier News, Daily Journal, Daily Record, and Home News Tribune).

Note: The rating of "Favorite Shore Towns" is distinct from the New Jersey Marine Sciences Consortium's "Top Beaches" list, which uses a combination of opt-in voting and environmental factors to rank the state's beaches. By contrast, the Monmouth/Gannett poll asks a scientific sample representative of all state residents to name their favorite Jersey Shore town, which may also take into account other shore features along with the beach.

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1. Will you visit the Jersey shore this summer? If YES, will you stay for a week or longer?

	TOTAL	AGE			CHILDREN		INCOME			REGION		
		18 to 34	35 to 54	55 or over	Yes	No	<\$50K	\$50K to \$100K	>\$100K	North	Central	South
For a week or more	21%	26%	22%	13%	23%	20%	17%	19%	32%	22%	13%	24%
For less than a week	38%	41%	41%	31%	45%	36%	29%	45%	43%	38%	44%	36%
No, will not visit	30%	25%	26%	41%	19%	34%	41%	24%	19%	36%	30%	18%
(VOL) Live down shore	7%	4%	7%	11%	7%	8%	7%	11%	5%	0%	11%	17%
(VOL) Don't know	4%	4%	4%	4%	6%	3%	7%	2%	1%	3%	2%	5%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	803	182	353	263	229	571	237	261	203	376	188	226

TREND:	May 2009	May 2008	May 2007
For a week or more	21%	26%	23%
For less than a week	38%	34%	37%
No, will not visit	30%	29%	31%
(VOL) Live down shore	7%	7%	5%
(VOL) Don't know	4%	3%	4%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	803	803	804

[AMONG THOSE WHO WILL SPEND A WEEK OR MORE DOWN THE SHORE, moe = $\pm 7.9\%$]

2. Is the Jersey shore your family's main vacation trip for the year?

TREND:	May 2009	May 2007
Yes	57%	54%
No	43%	44%
(VOL) Don't know	0%	2%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	155	188

3. What is your favorite Jersey Shore town?

	TOTAL	AGE			CHILDREN		INCOME			REGION			TREND:
		18 to 34	35 to 54	55 or over	Yes	No	<\$50K	\$50K to \$100K	>\$100K	North	Central	South	May 2006
Sandy Hook	2%	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	3%	0%	2%
Asbury Park	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	1%
Ocean Grove	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Avon-By-The-Sea	2%	1%	2%	4%	1%	3%	2%	3%	2%	1%	6%	1%	1%
Belmar	4%	5%	5%	2%	4%	4%	2%	5%	7%	5%	6%	2%	3%
Spring Lake	2%	0%	2%	2%	1%	2%	0%	2%	3%	1%	4%	0%	2%
Other Monmouth County	4%	4%	3%	5%	3%	4%	4%	3%	5%	3%	8%	1%	2%
Point Pleasant Beach	9%	13%	8%	8%	11%	9%	11%	8%	9%	8%	15%	5%	8%
Lavallette	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%	4%	0%	2%
Seaside Heights	6%	5%	6%	9%	6%	7%	8%	6%	4%	8%	3%	5%	7%
Seaside Park	2%	2%	3%	2%	4%	2%	2%	3%	1%	3%	1%	4%	2%
Island Beach State Park	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
LBI-Long Beach Island	8%	6%	9%	9%	9%	7%	5%	8%	12%	7%	10%	7%	10%
Other Ocean County	2%	1%	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Brigantine	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Atlantic City	9%	10%	9%	9%	9%	9%	11%	6%	7%	10%	5%	11%	9%
Other Atlantic County	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Ocean City	5%	6%	6%	4%	5%	5%	4%	8%	4%	4%	0%	12%	8%
The Wildwoods	12%	16%	14%	6%	18%	10%	14%	14%	11%	9%	6%	23%	8%
Cape May	6%	2%	9%	7%	6%	6%	3%	7%	11%	5%	6%	8%	6%
Other Cape May County	2%	0%	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	0%	0%	5%	1%
Can't choose one town	7%	10%	5%	7%	7%	7%	8%	6%	7%	8%	9%	5%	14%
Don't visit Jersey shore	9%	10%	7%	9%	6%	10%	12%	8%	2%	13%	7%	3%	10%
Unwtd N	803	182	353	263	229	571	237	261	203	376	188	226	803

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* was conducted and analyzed by the Monmouth University Polling Institute research staff. The telephone interviews were collected by Braun Research on April 23-27, 2009 with a statewide random sample of 803 adult residents. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported by gender or party identification, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

It is the Monmouth University Polling Institute's policy to conduct surveys of all adult New Jersey residents, including voters and non-voters, on issues which affect the state. Specific voter surveys are conducted when appropriate during election cycles.

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