



Eagles drop one
Philadelphia suffers its first loss of the season, 24-23 to the Lions. **B1**

HIS GOLDEN PIPES
Voice actor Leonard Dozier, of Egg Harbor City, becomes the new voice of NFL Films. **C1**

ATLANTIC CITY CASINO CLOSINGS

RIP TAJ: 1990-2016

Closing is on
copter crash
anniversary

MICHELLE BRUNETTI POST
Staff Writer

The same date in October now marks two dark days for the Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort.

The former jewel of Atlantic City is closing on Oct. 10, the 27th anniversary of the helicopter crash that killed three of Donald Trump's top Atlantic City executives, including Taj Mahal President Mark Grossinger Etes. The accident on Oct. 10, 1989 sent waves of grief and shock through Trump's organization just months before it opened the Taj — then billed as the largest casino in the world — and as the business faced major financial challenges.

The three executives killed when the helicopter crashed in a wooded Garden State Parkway median in Lacey Township were: Etes, 37, of Margate; Trump senior executive in charge of all Atlantic City operations Stephen Hyde, 43, of Linwood; and Executive Vice President of the Trump Plaza Hotel Casino Johnathan Benanav, 33, of Margate.

See **CRASH**, A6



THE PRESS OF ATLANTIC CITY
Donald Trump, top left, leaves the Etes home in Margate after senior executive Mark G. Etes, 37, died in a helicopter crash on Oct. 10, 1989.



VIVIANA PERNOT / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
The Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort is closing today. For up-to-the-minute coverage of the casino's last hours, photo galleries and video from the scene, see **PressofAC.com**.

Casino leaves legacy of excess

NICHOLAS HUBA // Staff Writer

When Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort opened 26 years ago, it was like nothing the city had ever seen.

From over-the-top chandeliers to its lavish 4,500-square-foot penthouse suites to its Indian theme, everything about the property was different from the other casinos that lined the Boardwalk at the time.

"The building is so good, it's so grand, it's so popular, it's so beautiful," said Donald J. Trump, now the Republican nominee for president, days before the opening of the \$1 billion property in April 1990. "People are going to flock toward it."

Now, more than two decades later, the property once called the "Eighth Wonder of the World" by Trump is set to close for good early Monday morning, two months after management accused striking Unite Here Local 54 members of preventing a "path to profitability."

The closing will leave more than 2,800 employees looking for work.

"It's sad," said Wilma Hopper, of Wayne, as she walked out of the casino Thursday afternoon for the final time. "The life is gone from the property. This was such a great property. I remember coming here when it first opened and there was nothing else like it."

During the last week, the sound of slot machine winner payouts has been replaced with an eerie silence that has taken over the 14-acre site. Some casino-goers have taken pictures to remember the last moments of the dying property. For the last couple of weeks, employees have been busy closing down the property, including

See **TAJ**, A6

CAMPAIGN 2016



Trump says he didn't assault

JULIE PACE & LISA LERER
Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — In a debate filled with tension, Donald Trump accused Hillary Clinton of attacking women involved in her husband's marital affairs and declared she would "be in jail" if he were president. Staring icily at her Republican rival, Clinton said Trump's own aggressively vulgar comments about women had revealed "exactly who he is."

Sunday night's debate was the culmination of a stunning stretch in the race for the White House, which began with the release of a new video in which Trump is heard bragging about how his fame allowed him to "do anything" to women. A flood of Republicans revoked their support, with some calling for him to drop out of the race.

Answering for his words for the first time, Trump denied that he had ever kissed and grabbed women without their consent. He said repeatedly that his words in 2005 were merely "locker room talk" and paled in comparison to what he called Bill Clinton's abuse of women.

"She should be ashamed of herself," Trump declared. Ahead of the debate, the businessman met with three women who accused the former president of sexual harassment and even rape, then invited them to sit in the debate hall.

Bill Clinton never faced any criminal charges in relation to the allegations, and a lawsuit over an alleged rape was dismissed. He did settle a lawsuit with one of the women who claimed harassment.

On the debate stage, Clinton did not respond directly to Trump's accusations about her husband or her own role, but was blistering

See **DEBATE**, A2

Avalon hopes stipend boosts firefighter ranks

CLAIRE LOWE
Staff Writer

AVALON — The volunteer fire department has a problem: finding enough people to properly staff the firehouse overnight.

An aging population in the small resort, where the average home is assessed at nearly \$1.3 million, means the fire chief has responded alone to middle-of-the

night calls.

Young firefighters simply cannot afford to live there, opting for the less expensive mainland, he said.

So Avalon is considering what some other South Jersey shore towns do — offer stipends to volunteers.

"We struggle with the same basic population problems that all of the shore towns do," Avalon fire Chief Ed Dean said. "Get-

ting volunteers from within the municipality has become a real challenge."

Borough Council will vote Wednesday on implementing a program similar to what exists in Stone Harbor and Sea Isle City, in which firefighters who meet a certain number of shifts get monthly payments.

The amount has not been determined, but Dean proposed a maximum of \$400

per month.

He said most of the time, the firefighters who live off-island — about two-thirds of the department — don't respond because by the time they would arrive, the call would be over.

Dean said that in the event of a true emergency, middle-of-the-night calls become a safety issue for

See **STIPEND**, A2

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