

THE CURRENT



OF VENTNOR, MARGATE & LONGPORT



Tina Vignali of Ventnor on a mountain biking trip in Queenstown, New Zealand.

Traveling is her passion; writing about it is her escape

BY NANETTE LOBIONDO GALLOWAY
Staff Writer

VENTNOR – For those whose New Year's resolution includes taking the trip of a lifetime – or starting to save for it – a local world traveler and adventure seeker has advice for helping it go off without a hitch, regardless of the weather.

Attorney Tina Vignali of Ventnor Heights writes a travel blog that can help novices to experienced travelers make the most of their time and money, whether they are planning a trip to an exotic far-off locale or a few hundred miles from home.

"It started with people asking me where I was going on my next

adventure, and where they should go on theirs," she said. "Friends encouraged me to start a travel blog because I had something to say."

Vignali, who describes herself as a "mild adrenalin junkie," has traveled to more than 60 countries, where her adventures have included biking, skiing, rafting, kayaking, a safari and more. Some trips have taken her to exotic places such as Queensland, Budapest, Namibia or Machu Picchu; but other times her travels are closer to home, such as a three-day ski trip to Vermont, a wine tasting in upstate New York, or a garlic festival in California, depending on her budget for the year.

"I've been traveling since I was
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Attorney and part-time travel blogger Tina Vignali of Ventnor collects art from places she visits around the world.

Longport appoints floodplain committee, names borough professionals for 2017

BY NANETTE LOBIONDO GALLOWAY
Staff Writer

LONGPORT – The Board of Commissioners appointed borough professionals for 2017 and passed resolutions to renew contracts with existing professionals, including borough attorney and engineer, auditor and municipal court appointees at a meeting Wednesday, Dec. 21.

Attorney Carl Tripician will serve as prosecutor, and James Swift will serve as public defender. Attorney Pacifico "Pat" Agnellini will continue as solicitor, while Joel M. Fleishman will serve as bond counsel. Ford Scott & Associates will continue as the borough auditing firm, and David Miller of CJ Adams Insurance Co. will serve as risk management consultant.

Samuel W. Holland was appointed to a two-year term as animal

control officer for calendar years 2016 and 2017.

The commission also approved renewal of a contract with borough engineer Richard Carter for up to \$72,000 a year.

In other business, the board appointed a floodplain management public information committee to evaluate and disseminate information about how to best manage the floodplain. The committee will work to help the borough improve its rating in the National Flood Insurance Program's community rating system, which reduces the cost of flood insurance for homeowners. The committee includes Commissioner of Finance James Leeds, floodplain administrator Bruce Funk, members of the Planning Board and public safety and public works departments, and the building and real estate communities.

Margate honors landscape architect who volunteered his services

BY NANETTE LOBIONDO GALLOWAY
Staff Writer

landscape architect Jeff King who offered his services to beautify the front of the Eugene A. Tighe Middle School.

MARGATE – The Board of Commissioners Dec. 15 honored

In October King designed, See KING on Page 6

TOP STORIES OF 2016

We count down the 10 most viewed Downbeach stories of 2016 on shorenewstoday.com. Page 2

CHANUKAH CELEBRATION

Students at the Milton & Betty Katz Early Childhood Education Center perform Chanukah songs. Page 3

FIRST DIP OF 2017

Margate held its annual Polar Bear Plunge Sunday, Jan. 1 on the Essex Avenue beach. Page 8

LOBIONDO RETURNS TO D.C.

The Affordable Care Act will be in the cross hairs when Congress gets back to work this week. Page 12

Vignali

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18 when I lived in Paris during college and when I started working," she said. "I've always had an adventurous spirit."

A former flight attendant, Vignali writes with humor about the trips she has taken and her experiences — expected and not — on her blog, traveleidoscope.com, to help others make informed choices, get the most for their dol-

lar, make the most of the weather, and try new and exciting things.

"My experiences are not one-dimensional. I've traveled for adventure and lived abroad, so that gives me the tools and tips to share," she said.

Vignali said she saves her pennies and lives frugally, and does two "big" trips and a half-dozen weekend jaunts a year.

"Money is the only thing that limits where I go," she said. "I set a budget for the year, then I

figure out where to go that would fit into that budget."

Her next big trip will be to Palau, one of the islands of the Philippines known for its scuba diving.

"I had to save a long time for that one."

It took Vignali three years to finance her trip to Namibia, and she saved money by making most of the travel plans herself. But it took months of trolling the internet to research and plan.

Her lower-budget jaunts include a 32-mile Tour de Donut bike ride in Staunton, Illinois, where cyclists were awarded a point for every doughnut eaten.

The blog, which she said is "casual and informative," includes ideas on where to vacation and tips on how to make the most of a trip. Recent entries include "8 1/2 ski saving tips" — a nod to film director Federico Fellini; "How to find a Laundromat in Croatia" and "It's raining, now what?"

"That one will share information about what to do when your travel plans get derailed by the weather," she said.

While her time for writing is limited by her day job and a three-hour commute,



NANETTE LOBIONDO GALLOWAY

Tina Vignali of Ventnor writes about her vacation experiences at traveleidoscope.com.



SUBMITTED

Tina Vignali of Ventnor on a bicycling trip from Vienna to Budapest.

Vignali said she makes the time to document and share her experiences.

"I find my writing is a great creative outlet. The technology is a bit of a struggle, because I'm not much of a tech person, but I am able to teach myself what I need to know to be successful," she said.

The blog name is a combination of the words travel and kaleidoscope.

"When you look into the lens of a kaleidoscope, you

never see the same pattern twice. It's like that when you travel. You never get the same experience twice," she said.

Although she hopes to someday generate revenue from advertisers on the site, at this time it is not a for-profit venture. Vignali said she simply does it to share information, knowing that people enjoy her writing style and seeing her photos.

People have asked her to help them plan their honey-

moons and vacations, but she is neither a professional travel agent or looking to make money doing that, she said.

"It is a creative writing venture more than anything else," she said. "It's not just to offer good travel tips, but sometimes people need a break. Even if they can't get away, they can take a 90-second vacation looking at my photos. It a little escape."

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NANETTE LOBIONDO GALLOWAY

The Margate Board of Commissioners honored landscape architect Jeff King Thursday, Dec. 15. From left are Commissioner John Amodeo, King, Commissioner Maury Blumberg and Mayor Michael Becker.

King

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purchased and installed native New Jersey plants and trees at the front of the school with the help of members of the city's Department of Public Works, students of the Surfrider Club and other volunteers.

According to Commissioner John Amodeo, King's exper-

tise made it possible for the city to complete the project at a fraction of the projected cost.

The project was needed following an irrigation system upgrade that tore up the grounds in front of the school.

King, a member of the school's first graduating class

in 1962, selected plants that will fare well in the Jersey shore environment.

"We couldn't have accomplished this without Jeff's expertise. He donated all his time to get this done," Amodeo said.

Amodeo said he is looking forward to working with King on future projects.

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