



FEATURED

# South County Tourism Council welcomes search for golden ticket

By Vincent Gallo Staff Writer Feb 9, 2023



Joe Viele and Laurie McCoy, of the Southern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce, are pictured with the Golden Ticket Getaway chocolate bars in the chamber's Wakefield office on Wednesday morning. Photo: Michael Derr

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CHARLESTOWN, R.I. — South County's contest straight out of Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory has returned for a third consecutive year.

The South County Tourism Council has again partnered with Westerly's Hauser Chocolatier to hold the "Golden Ticket Getaway" contest.

"I think the enthusiasm has grown, we started it in 2021," South County Tourism Council Creative Director Faye Pantazopoulos said. "Things then were still under lockdown, to some degree, so we let people purchase online or come to our office and purchase. We did curbside delivery and we had so much enthusiasm that year because things were — as you know — not usual."

Inside three of the bars are golden tickets good for a two night stay in South County at Margin Street Inn with dinner at Bridge, Shelter Harbor Inn with dinner at Farmhouse Kitchen & Bar, or The Break Hotel with dinner at Spain of Narragansett.

Inside five of the bars are silver tickets good for a South County experience for two. Prizes include a Heliblock helicopter tour, a Save the Bay cruise, a lighthouse cruise, a Frances Fleet excursion or brunch at Ocean House.

There are also 23 bronze tickets, which will give the winner a gift card to a South County business.

Bars are \$5 each. Proceeds will benefit the South County Museum. The contest will continue until all 1,000 bars are sold out.

Each year, a different South County non-profit organization benefits from the fundraiser.



Council representatives described the contest as a way to generate publicity for the area's local businesses and hotels, while raising money to benefit the South County Museum.

The bars were purchased from Hauser, by the tourism council, Pantazopoulos said.

The council also purchased the gift cards and will pay for each of the two-night hotel stays, dinner, and the five South County experiences from the prizes.

"We don't make any money off this promotion; we pay for everything so that we give a boost to our local businesses and make sure the nonprofit we choose as beneficiary receives all the money generated by selling the bars," Pantazopoulos said. "A lot of people might think we ask the businesses to donate gift cards, stays, etc, but that's not true."

Pantazopoulos added, the council expresses its gratitude to the businesses that agreed to sell the bars.

"They receive a little extra promotion via our website, social media and our advertising for the contest, but it's a very nice thing for them to do nonetheless."

Bars can be purchased at Charlestown Mini Super in Charlestown, Dunns Corners Market in Westerly, Kitch Mystic in Olde Mystic Village, CT, Narragansett's BankNewport, Sophie's Brewhouse in Exeter, and the Southern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce, in Wakefield.

Winners should contact South County Tourism Council at 401-789-4422 to claim their prizes.

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### ONLINE POLL

#### Does the percent that a state charges for sales tax influence how or where you decide to spend your money?

A proposal by Gov. Dan McKee to cut Rhode Island's sales tax from 7% to 6.85%, which the governor championed in his budget proposal for the next fiscal year, was criticized by opponents last week as McKee's office admitted there was an error calculating the projected savings for the average RI household. Under initially projections, McKee's budget said most households in the state would save an average of \$77 each year if lawmakers approve the measure but, when excluding businesses who purchase their own items from the calculations, the actual, tangible savings appear closer to \$39 per household. The revelation sparked a new debate over the state's sales tax for consumers, with some arguing McKee's proposal would be too costly to balance in the budget and others saying it doesn't go far enough to align Rhode Island with neighboring states who charge residents less for purchases. Does the percent that a state charges for sales tax influence how or where you decide to spend your money? Why or why not? Let us know in this week's poll question below.

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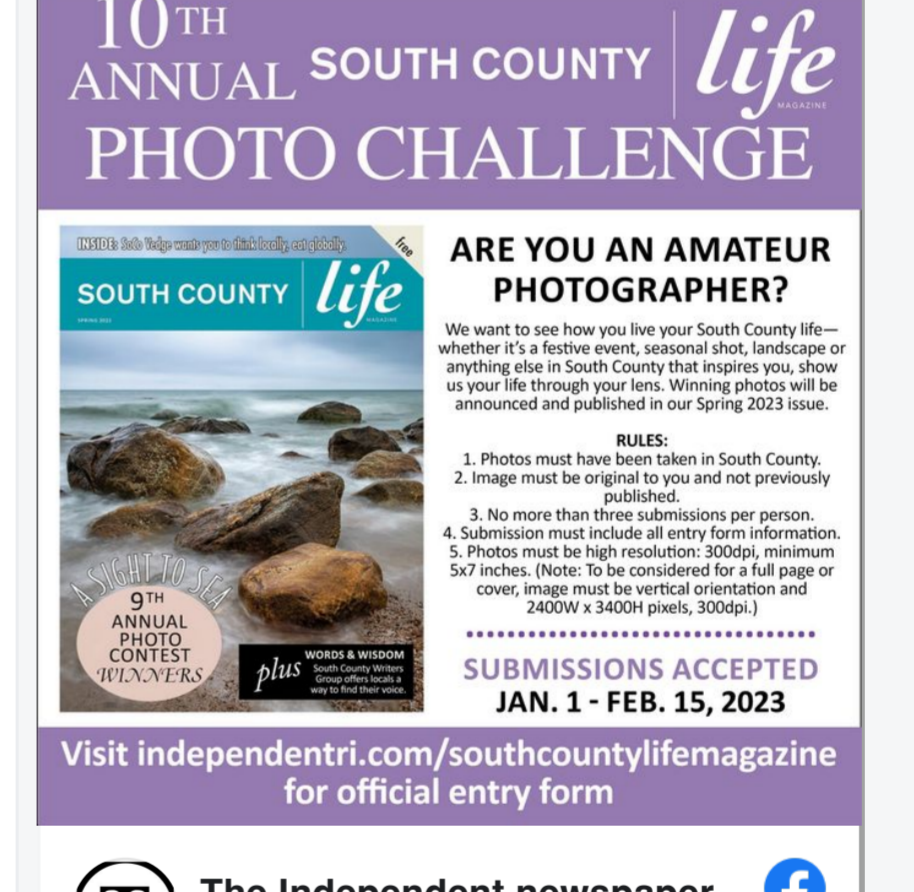
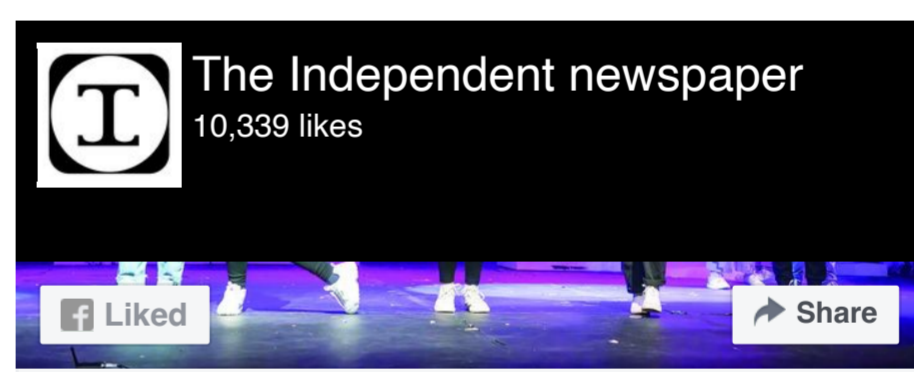
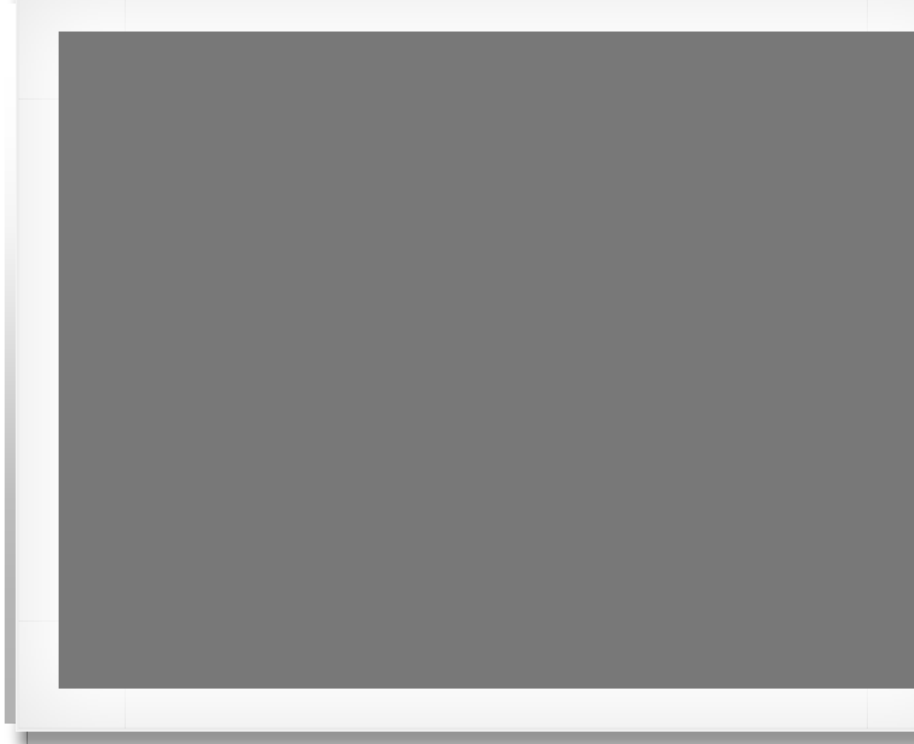
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