



# NEWS TO SHAPE Asbury Park's Future

Asbury Park is in the midst of a years-long revival that's attracting new development and business. This is a critical time to address long-standing divisions in the community so that all voices can be heard as Asbury Park looks to its future. One way to spark that conversation is to bring local journalists and community members together.

**We invite you to join NEWS VOICES: NEW JERSEY as we explore ways to engage communities like Asbury Park in local journalism. We're building sustained collaborations between newsrooms and residents to fold community knowledge into the process of newsgathering.**

**Go to [NEWSVOICES.ORG](https://NEWSVOICES.ORG) to learn more.**



# Asbury Park: Resilient But Divided

Asbury Park is a city rich in history, culture, arts and music. Residents here are resilient; they have survived riots, hurricanes and years of broken promises. Through good times and bad, however, a division has persisted between the East and West Sides of Asbury Park. This small City by the Sea is, in the eyes of many who live here, a community split in two.

This division plays out in media coverage of Asbury Park. Headlines talking about the East Side center on w“revival,” “rejuvenation” or the latest business or restaurant. Meanwhile, stories about the West Side tend to focus on crime and violence. What’s more, the media have reinforced these divisions by writing stories that feature an East vs. West Side narrative.

For years, the biggest questions in Asbury Park have been about revitalization – whether promises would be kept, and what renewal would look like. Now, with investment coming in and new development going up on both the East and West Sides, there’s an opportunity to consider how the entire community can benefit.

As communities like Asbury Park go through economic and cultural transitions, journalists play an important role in critiquing what’s happening and challenging misperceptions. Sweeping declarations and divisive language may make for good headlines, but they don’t represent the lives of residents, address solutions to entrenched problems, or unite the community.

Journalists can advocate for local residents by giving them the means to make informed decisions. Reporters can bridge divides by seeking out, listening to and reporting on a broader range of community voices. Journalists can and should ask questions about who will benefit from the city’s new prosperity.



*Photo by Mike Rispoli*



# Asbury Park's Local News Landscape

**For a small community, Asbury Park generates a good deal of media attention.**

*The Asbury Park Press* is the area's largest media outlet and has covered the region of Monmouth and Ocean Counties since 1879. While the Gannett-owned paper has seen its newsroom shrink over the past decade, it continues to invest in several community-engagement initiatives in Asbury Park.

Residents can also turn to a handful of print and online outlets for local news. *The Asbury Park Sun*, led by veteran reporter Michelle Gladden, is an online outlet that covers local government, public safety, the arts and cultural events. The *Sun*'s print counterpart and owner, *TriCityNews*, is an alternative magazine covering the arts, culture and politics in Eastern Monmouth County. *The Coaster*, a weekly community newspaper, has been a mainstay in Asbury Park for over three decades. NJ Advance Media, which runs NJ.com, provides coverage of the Shore with reporters in Monmouth and Ocean Counties.

*Jersey Shore Hurricane News*, which began as a Facebook group right before Hurricane Irene hit in 2011, is now a dynamic platform for news and information sharing about topics relevant to Shore communities. JSHN recently launched a text-messaging project, Listening Post, to engage residents in conversation and generate stories and will soon launch a dedicated website.

APT, the city's public and government access channel, provides coverage of local government meetings and cultural events and also airs community-produced programming. Its website archives city council meetings. Statewide and regional talk-radio stations 101.5 FM and WOBM AM reach the area but rarely cover it. One local gospel station, 88.1 FM Good News Radio, provides religious programming in four languages and hosts community events.

When larger regional and national outlets cover the community, they don't always provide local context. It's important that local media continue to provide a voice for the community as Asbury Park experiences change.



Original photo by Flickr user Jazz Guy



# News Sources in Asbury Park

## PRINT AND ONLINE

### **Asbury Park Press** / [app.com](http://app.com)

A daily newspaper serving Monmouth and Ocean Counties, *The Asbury Park Press* is one of seven Gannett-owned daily papers in New Jersey.

### **Asbury Park Sun** / [asburyparksun.com](http://asburyparksun.com)

An online outlet of *TriCityNews*, *Asbury Park Sun* covers news, the arts and cultural events in Asbury Park and the nearby communities of Allenhurst, Interlaken, Loch Arbour, Ocean Grove and Wanamassa.

### **The Coaster** / [thecoaster.net/wordpress](http://thecoaster.net/wordpress)

Independently owned community weekly newspaper serving 11 municipalities, with a focus on Asbury Park, Neptune and Ocean Township.

### **TriCityNews** / [trinews.com](http://trinews.com)

The arts and entertainment weekly of Monmouth County; available in print only.

### **NJ Advance Media** / [NJ.com](http://NJ.com)

The publisher of *The Star-Ledger* and several other newspapers across the state. NJ Advance's website, [NJ.com](http://NJ.com), provides coverage of Asbury Park and the Shore region.

### **Jersey Shore Hurricane News**

[facebook.com/JerseyShoreHurricaneNews](https://facebook.com/JerseyShoreHurricaneNews)

Facebook-based crowd-sourced outlet specializing in coverage of news, traffic and weather in Ocean and Monmouth Counties.

### **NJ Spotlight** / [njspotlight.com](http://njspotlight.com)

A statewide independent news outlet that delivers news and analysis about politics and public policy in New Jersey.

## RADIO

### **WYGG 88.1 FM** / Good News Radio

Licensed to the nonprofit Minority Business and Housing Development, this small station in Monmouth County broadcasts gospel music and religious programming in Spanish, English, French and Creole.

### **WKXW 101.5 FM** / New Jersey 101.5

This statewide news and talk-radio station, owned by the Townsquare Media Group, provides occasional coverage of Asbury Park and the Shore.

### **WOBM 1160 & 1310 AM** / News Talk Radio

Airs syndicated conservative talk-radio programs, local news programs and sports coverage. It's licensed to the Townsquare Media Group.

Did we miss anything? Email Mike at [newsvoices@freepress.net](mailto:newsvoices@freepress.net) with info on any other local news outlets.

## TELEVISION

### **APT** / [asburyparktv.org](http://asburyparktv.org)

Asbury Park's public and government access channel broadcasts on Verizon Channel 30 and Cablevision Channel 77.

### **NJTV** / [njtvonline.org](http://njtvonline.org)

New Jersey's public television network produces news and public affairs programming and online news.

### **News 12 New Jersey** / [newjersey.news12.com](http://newjersey.news12.com)

This is an affiliate of Cablevision's 24-hour cable news.

### **Fios 1 New Jersey** / [fios1news.com/newjersey](http://fios1news.com/newjersey)

This is an affiliate of Verizon's 24-hour cable news.



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## Asbury Park by the Numbers

**15,778** population

**6,622** households

**1.42** square miles

**51** percent Black or African American

**26** percent Hispanic or Latino

**22** percent White

**<1** percent Asian

**<1** percent Native American

**33** percent speak a language other than English at home

**20** percent home ownership

**82** percent high school graduate or higher

**\$32,459** median household income

**32** percent below the poverty level

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014