

# The Coast Star

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**THEATRE REVIEW** BY KAREN MEISTER

## Broadway magic with 'Broadway Ray'

For several years I have been hearing the name "Broadway Ray" from many Jersey shore residents, but since I was relocating here from northern Jersey, I was not familiar with the person behind this catchy name or the services he provides. Well, that all changed on Wednesday, June 12 when I was fortunate to see Broadway Ray in action.

I was one of those passengers on a chartered Trolley Tour bus, headed for the Big Apple.

Ray had hosted a trip to Broadway to see *Motown: The Musical*. He had a full bus load from his scheduled stops in Toms River, Wall/Manasquan, and the Cheesequake Rest Area on the Garden State Parkway.

We were on the NJ Turnpike in a flash, heading toward the Holland Tunnel. With tickets in hand, Ray gave us a brief overview of the day's events, succinct directions to the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, only steps away from bus drop-off, and some recommendations for a scrumptious lunch, which all passengers were free to explore on their own.

Since I was solo, I wasn't sure where I would end up for lunch, but on the way to New York City, I met three lovely women from Long Beach Island, who graciously invited me to join them.

We arrived at Restaurant Row on 46th Street with adequate time to explore the various menus and ambiance and we chose a pre-fix lunch at Sangria 46, which was out-

standing. We leisurely enjoyed our delicious choices and were off to the theatre.

The Lunt-Fontaine is quite a large theatre, but our seats were fantastic. I had full view of the stage, seated in the first mezzanine row.

The hours flew by as we were thoroughly entertained by the cast of *Motown*. After the finale, Broadway Ray directed us to the waiting bus, where we shared our thoughts about the musical.

Now Ray raffled off [no charge] some CDs of the musical and a Broadway DVD followed with clips from current shows and those on their way to Broadway in the near future.

Passengers were already checking schedules — ready for their next Broadway adventure.

There are many more productions and performances to see and Broadway Ray will get you there with no hassle, no frustrating lines or commuting worries.

All prices include the theatre ticket, bus transportation, and driver's gratuity. This is a no-brainer — where else can you have a relaxed and enjoyable trip to the busiest city in the U.S.A. With Ray's knowledge and expertise, you can't go wrong, whether you choose to go alone, with a friend, or a group.

Now that I have experienced a "Broadway Ray" trip, I am anxious to not only spread the word about this service to those uninformed residents at the Jersey Shore, but also to inform



COURTESY OF KAREN MEISTER

**Evelyn Vlad of Surf City, as well as many others, enjoyed a day with Ray Soehngen, better known as Broadway Ray, recently during a NYC trip.**

those of you who do not know the special man behind this venture.

Ray Soehngen, a.k.a. Broadway Ray, is a retired pharmaceutical salesman, with a passion for theatre. This passion goes way back to the 1960s, when Ray first saw *Funny Girl* starring Barbra Streisand. He was hooked.

This love of his came to fruition in 2001, when he founded his own company and shared his enthusiasm with others, and by others, I mean hundreds, even thousands of others. Each week, Ray provides this service to theatre-goers who want a safe, pleasant venue into the city to see a Broadway show, and he provides tickets for an array of top rated performances

Ray is so successful in his own right, but never stops giving back to several non-profit organizations. As one returning theatre-goer expressed to me:

"He is a marvelous man who gives 110 percent of his life to others. He deserves all the accolades he receives."

Ray's most recent honor was being presented the Humanitarian of the Year award, given by the Algonquin Arts Theatre, Manasquan, where he sponsors, donates, and gives his energy and dedication for the benefit of the theatre that provides the shore area with wonderful entertainment throughout the year.

So, if you want "the shore way to Broadway," Broadway Ray is your man. All you have to do is inform him of the date and show desired, show up at a designated bus pick-up, and leave the rest to Ray. Ticket information and reservations are available by email at [Ray@BroadwayRay.com](mailto:Ray@BroadwayRay.com) or visit the website at [www.BroadwayRay.com](http://www.BroadwayRay.com). You won't be disappointed.