



October 2018

# Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through  
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

## News from... THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### Welcome New Members ACTIVE

Tailchasers Restaurant & Dock Bar

### ALLIED

Constellation  
Cintas  
Just Deliveries

### TKU Bikefest Volunteers

While this was not a traditional Bikefest weekend that we've all grown to love, fortunately we were still able to have one beer booth inside the Convention Center. THANK YOU to Gary Leach and Centerplate for giving up their license for a few days so that a few non-profits could still sell the beer! Also a HUGE THANK YOU to our members who volunteered to help us barback – **Steve Sweigert** PKS, **Earl Conley** Bank of OC, **Austin Purnell** OC Motels, **Ryan Wilde** BEST Motels, **Andrew Geiger** Doubletree, **Gigi & Todd LeKites**, PKS.

### Restaurant Week

Last Call — we've all heard that famous line! If you'd like to participate in this FREE promotion, please let us know. Restaurant Week begins October 14th and runs through October 28th ~ mark your calendars to dine out!

### Welcome New Board Member

Many thanks to Steve "Chief" Hoffman, co-owner of Pit-n-Pub for his service on our Board of Directors! To fill in his shoes, the Board voted to invite Jackie Ball from Conner's Grub & Suds/Park Place Hotel to finish out his term. With her family's hospitality heritage dating back 125 years, we think she'll be a wonderful addition to the Board!

## ENDLESS SUMMER CRUISIN

### Cruisin' Burn-out Spot Added

With burn-outs as one of the unofficial spectacles of the official Cruisin', event producers decided to add an appropriate spot for this activity. Originally added to the Spring Cruisin', the weather cancelled the inaugural event out. Coined, "Takin' it to the Strip" will take place at the US 13 Dragway located in Delmar and will occur on October 5 & 6. Events will include a "No Prep" Shootout, car shows, burnout contests, "King of the Strip" Showdown, test & tunes and will be open to vehicles of all years and makes. Additional features include Jet Dragsters from Larsen's Motorsports, vendors, and entertainment. On Friday, a Car Blow Up fundraiser has been added to benefit Believe In Tomorrow. There will also be a feature American Graffiti Race Reenactment Saturday night at 9pm. Admission is \$15 on Friday and \$20 on Saturday, with 14 and under free with paying adult.

For complete details, check out: [www.SpecialEventPro.com](http://www.SpecialEventPro.com)



Octoberfest

10/27, 2018

12:30 - 4:30 pm

The best party of the season with live music, VIP tickets, or regular admission, and award winning food trucks. 14 local craft breweries, over 30 beers, shopping during the event, spectacular views of the bay, and VIP tickets.

Get tickets here!



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## THE DISH: *Restaurant industry trends* By: Warren Fowler, Modern Restaurant Management

### 10 TRICKS TO SOLVE WORKPLACE DISAGREEMENTS IN RESTAURANTS

According to the report, US employees spend almost three hours a week dealing with conflicts. It makes a huge impact on productivity, while some workers even have to leave their positions due to improperly managed discords.

In such circumstances, you should learn how to balance between the two conflicting sides. This article will show you 10 tricks to effectively solve workplace disagreements in a restaurant.

#### **Don't Let the Guests Notice Anything**

The basic rule of restaurant dispute management is to keep it all in the kitchen. It's completely natural to see an occasional workplace quarrel, but restaurant customers are there to relax and have fun – not to watch a couple of staff members arguing and yelling at each other. As soon as you notice something strange is going on, you need to react immediately and solve things internally.

#### **Keep Calm**

The next step to take in case of a restaurant disagreement is to tell everyone to calm down. The most important thing is to ensure the normal functioning of your organization, so you can't afford bigger conflicts. Don't let the dispute turn into an outburst because your clients could hear it. Besides that, it's much easier to solve the problem calmly than to scream your way to the solution.

#### **Talk It Over**

Sometimes you just have to act promptly, but most of the time you can wait until the end of the shift to discuss the problem. Before you start judging, you should ask both sides a few questions: What seems to be the cause of this problem? How did you react to the dispute? Once you learn what your employees think about this issue, you can take a stand and act accordingly.

#### **Treat Each Side Fairly**

Let's say that one waitress is jeopardizing her colleague's territory, serving more tables than agreed. The solution is clear in this case – you just need to remind them to stick to the table plan. However, keep in mind to treat both sides fairly, letting them speak their minds freely. After all, you don't want to lose a good employee because of the minor incident.

#### **Find a Common Ground**

As much as it is important to treat each side fairly, it is just as important to find a common ground when solving a

disagreement. If a winner takes it all, then a loser ends up devastated. Nothing is ever 100% black or white, so you should ensure each employee is satisfied at least to some extent. If a waiter is serving someone else's tables, perhaps it's because he doesn't like the existing plan and feels underprivileged. In such circumstances, you are the one who should reconsider their positions and perhaps even make necessary corrections.

#### **Keep an Eye on Employees**

The first five items on our list were dedicated to conflict-solving, but now we want to focus a little more on prevention. Keep an eye on your employees because it will help you to notice potential problems before the actual outbreak. For instance, people can be angry because of their personal problems. You should get to know your workers and give them a little break if they don't feel comfortable.

#### **Delegate Tasks Clearly**

Another way to prevent trouble in a restaurant is to delegate all tasks clearly and precisely. If everyone knows exactly what to do at any given moment, it minimizes the odds of interpersonal disputes.

#### **Organize Team Building Events**

Team building can help you to strengthen relationships within the group, thus improving the overall productivity of your employees. Besides that, team building events often increase people's motivation to work and inspire collaboration. At the same time, they serve as creativity and confidence boosters. Using this tactic, you can improve organizational communication, build team culture, and reinforce responsibility as the key factor to restaurant performance.

#### **Don't Always Interfere**

As a manager, you should learn that the workplace disagreement is not a catastrophe. As a matter of fact, sometimes it's even better not to interfere and let your employees resolve disputes on their own. That way, they will feel more independent, while you can always jump in if you realize that the situation demands your mediation.

#### **Conflicts Are Not Bad**

A conflict is a natural consequence of the hectic restaurant environment. Therefore, you should not treat it as a disaster, but rather see it as the opportunity to improve the work process in your team. The sooner you realize it, the easier it will be to handle workplace disagreements in a restaurant.



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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPOTLIGHT: JACKIE BALL

Since 1971, the OCHMRA Board of Directors has been an integral part of the OC community, however, our newest Board member has Worcester County roots dating back much longer! A fourth-generation hospitality professional, Jackie Ball was raised in Ocean City and received her BS in Hotel Administration from Cornell University and serves as a Cornell Ambassador. After receiving this degree, she worked for Sheraton and Amfac Hotel corporations in Dallas, Minneapolis, Stamford CT and Washington DC. However, the sand in her shoes called her back home and in 1989 she opened Conner's Restaurant, and in 2000 built and opened the Park Place Hotel. Jackie has served on many boards including, Coastal Hospice, Salisbury School, Boardwalk Development Association, Atlantic General Hospital Foundation, St. Paul's by the Sea Episcopal Church Vestry, Worcester County Drug & Alcohol Council, and the Worcester County Overdose Fatality Review Team. In 2016, she co-founded the Worcester Warriors Against Opiate Addiction. Welcome to the Board Jackie!



## Hotel Deals Needed for "Home for the Holidays" Promotion

In an effort to increase overnight lodging stays during the 4th quarter, the Maryland Office of Tourism is organizing an effort to increase visitation to Maryland and your hotel through a unique partnership. The Partnership is called, somewhat tongue in cheek, "Home for the Holidays... But Not My Home."

**Background:** Maryland welcomed 42 million visitors in 2017; 37% of those overnight visitors came to visit friends and family. Many stay with them rather than in a paid accommodations.

**Building Capacity when there is a Need:** The majority (32%) of overnight trips to Maryland occur between July and September. The least amount of overnight trips (21%) are during the 4th quarter, October-December.

**Marketing Promise:** Make it a Happy Holiday for family and guests. As we all know, the time between Thanksgiving and Christmas are when many return home. Your help is needed to promote a time of year when there is traditionally capacity. We will encourage our visitors to enjoy the holidays, then get cozy at the local hotel where they can sleep in peace and enjoy the morning at their own time.

**The Buy-In Premise:** The state is looking to partner with the lodging community to develop a holiday package that is promoted through digital media. The State would invest \$50,000 and is looking for funding

from other partners to deliver more impressions and exposure.

**The Partner Promise:** The accommodations will develop holiday packages, to be posted on [www.VisitMaryland.org](http://www.VisitMaryland.org). The site receives more than 2.5 million unique visitors per year. During the 4th quarter, the site welcomes an average of 300,000 unique visitors.

**The State Promise:** The Maryland Office of Tourism will use it's media buying resources to determine the best digital platforms and manage all aspects including purchasing, optimization and reallocation. All digital buys will be directed to [VisitMaryland.org](http://VisitMaryland.org), where the holiday packages will be featured. Consumers will click to the deals and the links will take them to your site for purchase. The promotion would be a prominent feature on the home page from early October through mid-December.

**Timing:** The site will launch with a press announcement timed to coincide with Halloween with a "No more scary houseguests for the Holidays" angle.

**Next Steps:** Please fill out your deal by clicking here. You may specify the date range of the deal, but we encourage offerings from mid-November through late December. Discounted rates work, but also think about Holiday Light Displays, holiday themed attractions, or nearby shopping coupon offers. Let us know and we will include it in the Home for the Holidays promotion! Deadline for submission is October 15, 2018



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## REST EASY: *Lodging industry trends*

By: Doug Kennedy

### TRAIN YOUR FRONT DESK TEAM ON THE "5 PILLARS OF HOSPITALITY EXCELLENCE"

When a guest enters your lobby, chances are they are about to have their first human interaction with your hotel's individual "brand." In the past, most guests called to book by voice and then called back multiple times prior to arrival with questions about driving directions, transportation, area restaurants, hours of operations and the like. These days most guests book online and then Google search for answers to these and other pre-arrival questions.

Therefore, while I have always believed that the front desk staff played a critical role, now more than ever they truly are the first impression makers, for better or for worse. Chances are that hard evidence for this is available online every day in your guest surveys and/or your online guest reviews. For example, if you take a moment to read through your hotels 10 most recent "5 star" and also your 10 most recent "1 star" reviews, chances are the department most frequently mentioned is front desk.

All too often when I walk up to the front desk with my luggage in hand, a jacket over my arm and a smile on my face, I am greeted with a raised eyebrow and nod and the question: "Checkin' in?" When they hand me the room key, I notice that many forget to point me in the direction of the elevator. However, they always seem to remember to give me their "Welcome speech" about what time breakfast is served, where the fitness room is, and that I can make copies and even send a fax from the business center.

That being said, I also have experienced so many authentic, genuine and warm welcomes at registration and when I do it literally makes my stay. Over the years I even written about some of these hospitality superstars in my monthly articles in this publication.

So, what makes the difference? Some front desk colleagues truly understand that hospitality starts in the human heart.

#### **Properly Welcome Guests.**

Understand that with all of the stress of travel these days, chances are we are seeing the worst side of even the nicest personalities. Yet when we make it our job to bring out the best in others, it brings out the best in ourselves and we have a lot more fun! Be sure to properly welcome them upon arrival with a phrase such as "Good afternoon, welcome to the brand X hotel. How may I assist you today?" Deliver this with eye contact and a genuine smile, it is contagious. Tailor your "welcome script" to the guest story playing out in front of you.

#### **Telephone Hospitality Excellence.**

Convey hospitality and enthusiasm in your tone of voice by "stepping into character" like an actor on a stage. Speak slowly and articulate, which means to pause between words and not run them all together as if one syllable. Always provide your name when you answer to show confidence. For answering questions or assisting, ask for and use the caller's name. Supervise transferred calls and introduce both parties. End calls by offering additional assistance, thanking the caller and restating the hotel name.

#### **Know Your Product; Voluntarily Mention Key Details.**

Be in the "guest experience business" and not the "room rental business." Be prepared to thoroughly answer frequently asked questions. Voluntarily offer "local insider's tips" such as where the locals eat, actual "rush hour" travel times and "off the beaten path" attractions.

#### **Welcome and Resolve Guest Complaints.**

Understand that no matter where a problem occurs in the hotel, chances are it will be reported to the front desk. Since the worst complaint is the one that is never mentioned, we should welcome them! (Otherwise the un-reported complaint will surely end up posted online.) First, let guests vent their frustration and validate their emotional distress. Next, show empathy and apologize. Finally, after resolving the issue follow-up to ensure their satisfaction.

#### **Fond Farewell at Departure.**

While reception is a first impression, the front desk departure conversation is a chance for a lasting "last" impression. Solicit feedback with sincerity. Encourage online reviews when feedback is positive. For regular guests, offer return reservations to secure more direct bookings. Offer assistance with transportation or driving shortcuts during rush hour. Conclude the conversation with eye contact, a smile and a fond farewell.

If you take time to train your front desk team on these "5 Pillars Of Hospitality Excellence," not only will they create more positive memories for your guests but they will have a lot more fun in doing so.



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## Member highlights

Welcome to **Candace Hall**, Dr. Berger's new Assistant at the **Clarion Resort Fontainebleau** & Happy Retirement to **Krista Radena**. Welcome to **Dan Flaherty**, who has joined the team at **APPI Energy**, and a happy retirement to **Deb Carven**. Welcome to **Betty Akcam**, who joins the sales team at the **Aloft**. **Joslyn Harman** is the new Administrative Coordinator at **Ocean City Development Corporation**. Best wishes to **Richard Huebeck**, **Clarion Resort Fontainebleau**, who is retiring after 28 years! Congrats to **Ashley Rodriguez**, at the **Courtyard by Marriot** on recent engagement.

## Condolences

Condolences to **Deb Travers**, on the loss of her mother.

## *MD Travel & Tourism Summit - Registration Open & Prizes Needed!*



EDUCATING, INSPIRING, EMPOWERING

CAMBRIDGE • NOV 14-16, 2018

The Maryland Travel & Tourism Summit (MTTS) is Maryland's annual tourism industry conference that brings together all sectors of the hospitality industry where business and public sector leaders convene, network and learn new strategies to advance MD's Tourism industry. More than 250 attendees engage with a variety of keynote speakers on industry trends and participate in interactive learning sessions. The MTTS will be held at the Hyatt Cambridge on November 14-16. We are currently seeking prize donations – see the following flyers for all the details. Register today to attend this super informative event – details follow below.

[Click here for the Donation Form](#)  
[Click here to Register](#)

## TangerOutlets



## UNITE IN THE FIGHT

Tanger Outlets in West Ocean City is once again joining the fight to help save lives in our community. Shoppers can purchase a 25% OFF Pink Savings Card for only \$10! In addition, Tanger Outlets Ocean City will host a **"Pink Party Luncheon"** from 11am – 3pm on Wednesday, October 17th at Outback Steakhouse in Ocean City. The event consists of food, prizes, giveaways and more! Tickets are \$15 per person and includes a choice of pasta, steak or chicken plus 1 side, and coffee, tea, soda & water. 100% of these proceeds benefit Women Supporting Women, a local organization offering free services and support for women and families battling breast cancer. Tickets can be purchased at Tanger Outlets Ocean City inside Shopper Services or by contacting Women Supporting Women at 410-548-7880. New this year, a "PinkStyle Crush" drink will be available at Outback Steakhouse during the entire month of October! Enjoy this refreshing mix of lemon, strawberry and elderflower flavors for \$6. A portion of these proceeds will also benefit Women Supporting Women. With your help, we can continue the fight and crush cancer!

PO Box 340 • Ocean City, MD 21843 • 410-289-6733 • [www.ocvisitor.com](http://www.ocvisitor.com)



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## Make Your Maryland Travel Promotion “Crab Tank on the Choptank” Pitch

Have you got a can't-miss marketing platform to increase overnight stays in Maryland? Submit now and see if you've got what it takes to win over the judges at the Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit's (MTTS) first-ever “Crab Tank on the Choptank” pitch competition. Make your submissions now, and, if selected, you will make your pitch live at MTTS on November 16 and our judges, the “Big Crabs,” will pick the pitch with the claws to get it done. Winning submissions will go beyond traditional travel “silos” and combine Maryland's winning travel possibilities including group travel, multicultural/diversity travel, human powered recreation, and family fun. The winning pitch will receive \$50,000 in marketing support provided by OTD, including a full-page ad in Destination Maryland, web banner ads, coverage on Visitmaryland.org and in OTD's newsletters, and more. All submissions must be received by October 15.



[Click here for more information about how to submit your pitch.](#)



The Maryland State Highway Administration office of structures will be performing routine bridge inspections on the MD Route 90 bridges. The engineering firm Stantec Consulting Services will perform the inspection over Assawoman Bay from apx. Tuesday, October 2 through Wednesday, October 11, 2018 (Excluding Oct. 4) and Wednesday, October 24, 2018. The engineering firm EBA Engineering will perform the inspection over St. Martin River approximately Tuesday, October 16 through Wednesday, October 18 and October 23. The inspections will be a flagging operation being performed between the hours of 8am-4pm out of the eastbound lane on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday's only.

OCEAN CITY LIFE-SAVING  
STATION MUSEUM  
40TH ANNIVERSARY

FAGER'S ISLAND 60TH ST. & THE BAY  
OCTOBER 20, 2018 1-3:30PM

## Surfin' The Seventies



OCEAN CITY  
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MUSEUM

[CLICK HERE FOR TICKETS](#)