

Spring 2009

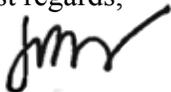
Message from the President

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as president of this organization and I am very proud of our accomplishments. During my term, we have seen a new president elected and with that comes great concerns for our industry. We have most recently been faced with the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) and through our efforts we have gained a better understanding of the legislation and worked collectively to defeat it. Although the legislation is not expected to pass in it's current state, we need to remain diligent in our efforts to insure that we are actively monitoring issues that will affect our livelihood.

Thanks to the continued hard work of our board the advertising budget, funded by the room tax, has continued to grow. This will enable advertising throughout the season as many visitors are now booking last minute. Recently, we were pleased to see a ½% reduction in the food tax and we applaud our local restaurateurs, Mayor and Ocean City Town Council and the Worcester County Commissioners for their efforts in reducing that tax. In addition, we also saw our annual trade show grow by nearly 50 booths and attendance at the event increased as well.

It has been a great year and I have enjoyed working with Susan and her staff. I wish everyone a healthy and prosperous season!

Best regards,



Jon Tremellen
2008-2009 President

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DELICIOUS DEALS... *May 31st - June 7th*



2 course menu for \$20 or 3 course menu for \$30
Menu profiles @ WWW.OCEANCITYRESTAURANTWEEK.COM

Support your local restaurants and fellow OCHMRA members... **Ocean City Restaurant Week is back!** Participating restaurants are offering either 2 courses for \$20 or 3 courses for \$30. It's not too late to participate! If your restaurant would like to be a part of restaurant week, please call us at 410.289.6733.

Participating Restaurants (to date)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| BJ's On The Water | Marlin Moon Grille |
| Fresco's Fine Dining | Phillips Seafood Restaurants |
| Galaxy 66 Bar and Grille | Reflections |
| Happy Jack Pancake House | Seacrets |
| Harpoon Hanna's | Sunset Grille |
| Horizons Oceanfront Restaurant | The Bonfire Restaurant |
| J/R's Ribs | The Hobbit |
| Jules Restaurant | The Shark on the Harbor |
| Macky's | |

Welcome new members

Active

*Ambassador Motor Inn
5th St. and Philadelphia Ave.*

Associate

*Original Smith Island Cake Co.
12742 Ocean Gateway
(in the OC Factory Outlets)*

Allied

*AQUA Pools and Spas
ECS Mid-Atlantic
F. A. Taylor & Son, Inc.
Guardian Plumbing Services, Inc.*

*Interior Savvy
US Foodservice Philadelphia
Washington Post Media
William Allen, DDS. MAGD*

Update on the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA)

After massive lobbying by both labor and business, it appears that the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), which, as it now stands, would allow workers to organize in many cases merely by signing cards instead of holding elections, is expected not to have the 60 votes required to get past a Republican filibuster in the Senate. However, this bill is still pending and there are many modifications to the original bill being circulated through Congress.

A Toast To Our Coast

We have partnered with the publishers of Coastal Style Magazine to develop a new promotional event during their October 23-25 Luxury Living Show. The new event has been coined, **Toast Our Coast** and will add a nice culinary dimension to the Luxury Living Show. Our goals are to foster culinary tourism, to offer visitors a reason to come to Ocean City and to have a new fundraiser for our non-profit association.

On Saturday and Sunday, October 24 & 25, approximately 20 restaurants each day from around Delmarva will set up & staff stations to provide specialty samples. (your samples will be cooked at your restaurant and served out of your hot boxes) Distributors will be invited to set up for free complimentary wine & beer tasting. Live music will be playing

- jazz - background music. There will be scattered seating throughout the hall. Tickets will be sold in conjunction with entry to the Luxury Living Show. (you can participate for both days or only one day)



In exchange for providing food samples, restaurants would receive an ad in the Luxury Living Show program where you could display menu/coupon, your restaurant name included in all pre-event publicity, feature on the website, featured in *Coastal*

Style Magazine's Sept/Oct issue.

At this point, we are trying to gauge interest. If you think you would be interested in participating, please let us know as we will mostly likely be opening this up to restaurants all over Delmarva.

Ask for the... Rodney Rate!

The OC Tourism Department has unveiled the new ad campaign for the upcoming season. The main character is a lifeguard named Rodney who will rescue people from their stress by bringing them to an OC vacation. In order to incorporate Rodney with the local businesses, we are suggesting you come up with some sort of "Rodney special", i.e. a special Rodney hotel rate (could be week-day special or % discount), a Rodney restaurant special (buy an entrée get a free appetizer or early bird discount), a Rodney retail discount.....be creative, it can be whatever you'd like! One suggestion for marketing your Rodney rate is to include the free family fun activities that will add value to your deal. The free family fun activities can be found at www.ococean.com/familyfun.html



Once your Rodney specials are created, please send them to us and we will have a link on the Promotions page of our website. These Rodney deals will be mentioned on the Mayor's media tours, press releases, Town of Ocean City E-news and other local email blasts.

We are also offering the following promotions on the promotions page of www.ocvisitor.com; There is no charge to list your business. Free Marketing! Just email your deals to us at inquire@ocvisitor.com

**Book Early & Save • Dining Discounts • Salute to Our Services
Family Fun • Vacation Values**

Thank you

TO OUR SPRING TRADE SHOW VOLUNTEERS

Adam Yuhas
Andy Adkins
Annemarie Dickerson
Ashley Harrison
Austin Purnell
Bruce Kennington
Caitlin Evans
Carolyn Kennington
Charlene Shockley
Chris Trimper
Christine Brous
Coleman Bunting
Dan Hallon
Danelle Amos
Dawn Nock
Diane Kaeufer
Dominic Ferretti
Harry How
Heidi O'Donnell
Hugh Wilde Jr

JD Quillin
Jeff Evans
Jeff Foster
Jennifer Hallon
Joel Brous
John Berry
John Lewis
Jon Tremellen
Joyce Melocik
Judy LeMaster
Karen Cramer
Kathleen Lewis
Kathy Enste
Laura Lockwood
Lauren Taylor
Lisa Lynch
Lisa Parks
Lisa Roberts
Madalaine How
Maggie Cellitto

Malcolm VanKirk
Marie Hopper
Marie-Noelle Sayan
Nancy Berghauer
Pat Diniar
Pat Harman
Paul Sayan
Paul Wall
Rachel Pennington
Ray Rickett
Reba Felty
Rebecca Taylor
Ruth Watts
Sal Fasano
Sarah Cooper
Shawn Harman
Suzanne Jackson
Tom Tawney
Travis Wright

A Message from the Seasonal Workforce Committee -

Carrie Linch, ASSE International/ASPIRE Worldwide

As the international students begin to arrive in Ocean City, there are a few things the Committee would like employers to know.

There are two types of international students that are arriving in our town. The students who entered the U.S. with a J-1 Visa are here on a Summer Work/Travel Program, which enables them work in the U.S. during their summer break from university. They typically work 3 to 4 months (4 months is the maximum they can work) and then travel for a few days or weeks before they go back home, and back to school. The J-1 students' work authorization comes from their DS2019 Form (not their J-1 Visa, which is only a travel document). The DS2019 also contains important information such as the student's Program Sponsor name and phone number, and the dates they are legally permitted to work in the U.S. Program Sponsors are responsible for the students while they are here. If a student has any problems, or you as their employer, has any issues, please contact the Program Sponsor.

The second type of international student is in the U.S. with an F-1 Visa. These foreign students go to university in the U.S. and are here for academic purposes only. They are required to show that they will be able to afford the costs of school and living expenses prior to entry. These students are typically only permitted to work on the campus they attend, and therefore are not eligible to work in Ocean City. In very rare circumstances the F-1 student may be permitted to work off-campus due to severe economic hardship occurring after their enrollment. Those students will have an EAD card (Employment Authorization Document) which is a plastic card with their photo and identifying information (it looks similar to a driver's license). Validate the student's work authorization card before permitting them to work for you.

Hiring an F-1 student without a valid EAD card is in violation of U.S. immigration law and is subject to a fine.

If you choose to hire F-1 students who are unable to work legally, please consider that you are taking job opportunities away from the J-1 students, who have paid to participate on the work/travel program and come to Ocean City for employment. This practice will also diminish the work/travel program's viability in this town. The J-1 students choose to have their work/travel experience in our resort, and in turn help to fill the thousands of seasonal positions for local businesses. That could change in the future if the J-1 students' jobs aren't available and they can't find work here, which may result in a smaller international workforce in the future.

Further info can be found on the Department of State website:

<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/jexchanges/private/swt.htm>.

If you have any questions, please contact the Seasonal Workforce Committee at seasonalworkforcecommittee@gmail.com or visit our website at www.ocworkforce.com.

LONE RANGER & SILVER

at the Worcester County Library in Ocean City

Saturday, May 9th • Noon-3pm

Meet and greet The Lone Ranger and his horse Silver. Get your picture taken with him and his beautiful white horse. See his silver guns, silver bullets and the famous Ted Flowers silver saddle that has been used in numerous "Tournament of Roses Parades".

For more information, please call the library at 410-524-1818

Share with your
Springfest Guests



Congratulations to **Francis Scott Key** for being selected as one of Trip Advisor's "**Top Ten Best Family Hotels in the United States**".

Welcome to **Penny Davis**, who recently was appointed as the new General Manager at the **Paradise Plaza Inn**

Congratulations to the **Hilton Suites Oceanfront** for being selected as one of Hilton's 2008 Brand Awards "**Best of the Best**" in the category of Best Overall Accommodations (under 500 rooms).

Congratulations to **Virginia & Leo Cipollone** on the birth of their daughter Valentina. Congratulations also to **Clara & Jeremy Ziman** on the birth of their son Anthony. Clara and Virginia are sisters and owners of the **Hotel Monte Carlo**.

Welcome to **Mike Tatro**, new General Manager of the **Tidelands Caribbean**.

Congratulations to all of the Ocean City winners from **Restaurant Association of Maryland's 2009 "Stars of the Industry"** awards. **Restaurateur of the Year**- Leighton Moore, Seacrets Bar & Grille; **Favorite Bar and Tavern**-Fager's Island; **Hall of Honor**-John Fager; **Wine and Beverage Program of the Year**-Liquid Assets Wine & Martini Bar; **Maryland's Favorite Restaurant**-Marlin Moon Grill; **Allied Member of the Year**-Fred Lankford, SYSCO Eastern Maryland; and **McCormick Cornerstone Award winner**, Greene Turtle Sports Bar and Grille.

Congratulations to **Darren Schaffer** on becoming the Director of Sales of the **Princess Royale**.

Welcome to **Brook Lamar**, who joins the staff of **The Shark on the Harbor**.

Congratulations to **Michael James** of **Carousel Resort Hotel & Condos** on being named the new **Chairman of the Ocean City Economic Development Committee**.



Condolences

Our thoughts and prayers are with the Marx Family following the death of **Jeff Marx**. Jeff was a long-time employee of the **Harrison Group**, serving as manager of the **Paul Revere Smorgasbord** and the **Caribbean Pool Bar and Grill**. He was also part-owner of **The Burgundy Inn**.

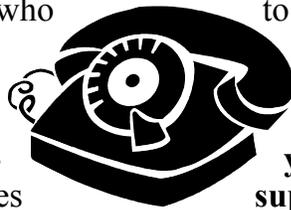
Our condolences to **Cathy Donovan** of **New Wave Printables** on the loss of her father.

Belated condolences to **G. Hale Harrison** of the **Harrison Group** on the loss of his grandfather, S. Lee Smith, Jr.

Tip from Ed Horrell, author of *The Kindness Revolution*

I am continually surprised at the number of company executives and managers who don't have a clue as to how their company sounds the first time they are called on the telephone.

Whether a live operator or automated response system, many companies would change the way they greet their cus-



tomers if they would only take the time to listen to how they sound!

Give your company a call and ask yourself if you are proud of the way you sound to a first-time caller. Does it support the image and brand you want to display to the public...and your customers?

FOOD & BEVERAGE TAX LOWERED

The food and beverage tax, originally proposed by Seacrets owner Leighton Moore in 1993, was enacted in 1995. This allowed the town of Ocean City to implement a 1 percent tax on food and beverage sales within the resort town that would serve as a funding mechanism to help finance the town's share of the \$29.4 million expansion to the Ocean City Convention Center.

Just recently, the Ocean City Town Council, in a 5-2 vote decided to decrease the food and beverage tax to 1/2 percent. On April 21st, the Worcester County Commissioners voted unanimously in favor of the decrease. This will provide a much-needed boost to the local economy while also helping to fund the future expansion of the Ocean City Convention Center. Therefore, as of June 1st, this tax will go from 1 percent to 1/2 percent. Please remember to make any necessary adjustments to your POS systems.

The tax reduction will begin starting June 1, 2009.



E-MARKETING SUGGESTIONS

from www.hospitalitybusiness.com

LOCAL STRATEGIC LINKING TO THE PROPERTY SITE

Strategic Linking establishes links from highly relevant and authoritative websites to your property's website. Link popularity refers to the number and quality of incoming links that are pointing to your website. Each relevant incoming link to your website is considered by the search engines as a "vote of confidence" in your website.

Why is Property-Level Strategic Linking important?

- Exposes the property website to incremental traffic and highly qualified potential bookers.
- Builds your website's Link Popularity, a crucial criteria used by the search engines to determine how to rank the website in the search engine results (e.g. Google and its PageRank). Link popularity refers to the number and quality of incoming links that are pointing to your website.

These locally-based sites can boost the Link Popularity of the property website and generate highly relevant traffic and incremental leads and revenues

- Local destination and city directories
- State, county, and city CVB sites
- Chamber of Commerce sites
- Local wedding planning sites
- Local golf directories and portals
- Area attraction and theme park sites
- Local museum sites

Therefore, if you don't have our association linked at the bottom of your site, please add it!

www.ocvisitor.com

LOCAL EMAIL MARKETING TO THE HOTEL'S OWN OPT-IN LIST

Email marketing to the hotel's own opt-in list is one of the most popular internet marketing formats used by hoteliers today. Today's savvy online travelers subscribe to multiple travel eNewsletters and love receiving relevant email promotions, events and happenings. Many studies have found that only a small percentage of U.S. travelers have ever unsubscribed from any travel related list. In a recent survey by Ypartnership, 46% of online travelers mention email notifications promoting special fares and rates to be a feature of greatest interest.

Why is property-level email marketing important and why should it be considered?

- Email marketing to the hotel's own email is the most cost-effective online advertising format: it costs pennies per email delivered vs. expensive print and display ads.
- Your emails "speak" to an audience that already knows your hotel, amenities and services, or is at least familiar with your website.
- Creates personalized interactive relationships with locally-based customers.
- Instantaneous message delivery: thousands of potential customers may be reached within seconds.
- Serves as a tool to move distressed inventory.
- Serves both as a direct-response vehicle and branding tool.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year, our Association awards scholarships to students enrolled in Wor-Wic Community College and University of MD Eastern Shore's Hotel & Restaurant Management programs. The criteria is simple; students must be hard workers, have a passion for the hospitality industry and be nominated by the schools department leaders.

Diane Redman received the Kate Bunting Wor-Wic Community College Memorial Scholarship, named after Past President and one of the founding members of the OCHMRA. Kate helped shape the direction of the Association. Michelle Sprague, received the OCHMRA Ken Barnett Memorial Scholarship, named after HMRA Allied member supporter Ken Barnett. Parkside High School graduate and Red Cross volunteer, Hillary Sherman, was selected for the OCHMRA University of Maryland Eastern Shore's Hotel & Restaurant Program Scholarship.

This year, a new scholarship was created in partnership with the Bank of Ocean City. Named for a second generation OCHMRA Board Member who passed away unexpectedly last summer, the John "Tres" Lynch, III Memorial scholarship was awarded to Wor-Wic culinary student, Ron Brose.

It is our hope that providing financial support will help foster their experience and enthusiasm for the industry.

NEW OCHMRA OFFICERS INSTALLED

On Thursday, April 16th, 2009, Paul Hartgen, CEO of the Restaurant Association of Maryland installed the 2009-2010 Officers and Board of Directors of the Ocean City Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association at Castaway's. Approximately 150 members gathered for this annual ceremony. John Lewis of Talbot Inn/M.R. Ducks was installed as the new President, Malcolm Van Kirk of the Sea Bay Hotel/Best Western OC Suites Hotel was installed as 1st Vice President and Mary Eastman of the Cayman Suites was installed as the 2nd Vice President. Shawn Harman of Fishtales/Bahia Marina, remained Secretary -Treasurer.

The three-year Board of Directors installed include, Mark Elman of the Clarion Fontainebleau Hotel and Resort, Travis Wright of The Shark on the Harbor Restaurant, and Lisa Lynch of the Commander Hotel. Two-year Directors include Chris Wall of the Harborside Bar and Grill, Dave Robinson of the Boardwalk Hotel Group, and Doug Buxbaum of Buxy's Salty Dog.

Outgoing President, Jon Tremellen, was presented with a plaque in appreciation of all his hard work and dedication as HMRA President. The new Board will have their first meeting on May 14, 2009.



l-r: Malcolm VanKirk, 1st Vice President; Paul Hartgen, Restaurant Association of Maryland; Mary Eastman, 2nd Vice President; John Lewis, President.

FREE FAMILY FUN

Movie Nights on the beach at 27th Street every Monday and Friday running June 29 through August 14.

Beach Olympics planned for Tuesday evenings. From 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on the 27th St. beach, Family Beach Olympics will offer such activities as sand castle contests, tug of war, relay games and more. Children must be accompanied by parents or guardians.

Free Concerts on the Beach take the stage on the beach at N. Division St. on Wednesdays from 8 to 9:30 p.m. from July 15 through September 2 (no concert July 29).

Bonfires on the Beach each Thursday at 9 p.m. from July 9 through August 27. The bonfire hour is offered free of charge.

Sundaes in the Park family concert series is offered on Sundays at Northside Park, 127th St. bayside, July 12 through August 27. The music plays from 6 to 8 p.m. While the music plays, children will enjoy special entertainment just for them. Cool off and make your own ice cream sundae for a small fee.

Sunset Park on the bayside in Ocean City's downtown at S. Division Street – Polish Festival Night on July 28. Festivals feature music and food (fee charged for food and drink items). From 5 p.m. until 9 p.m.

Sunset Park on the bayside in Ocean City's downtown at S. Division Street – Greek Festival Night on Aug. 25. Festivals feature music and food (fee charged for food and drink items). From 5 p.m. until 9 p.m.

Ocean City Life-Saving Station Museum at the south end of the Boardwalk is once again offering free programs each Monday through Saturday at 10:30 a.m. Topics vary daily and include beach safety, aquarium feeding, knot tying and all about sharks.

Susan says...

Don't forget to include Free Family Fun in your email confirmation letters and marketing to guests!



TripAdvisor is becoming one of the most popular sites for travelers. Are you taking advantage of the free marketing that is available on this site? Not only do you have the opportunity to respond to reviews about your property, but you also have the option of including a business description and photos of your property. For more information, visit www.tripadvisor.com/help and click on "Managing Your Listing Page" under the Owners/Representatives page, or contact Amy at 410.289.6733 or inquire@ocvisitor.com.



STAFF

Susan L. Jones, Executive Director

Amy S. Tingle, Event Manager

Jayne Sawyer, Sandy Patrick; Part-time Tourism Coordinators

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www.ocvisitor.com • www.oceancitytradeexpo.com • www.oceancityrestaurantweek.com

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