



May 2014

# Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through  
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

## OPPORTUNITIES TO PROMOTE YOUR RESTAURANT

### Restaurant Week

Returning October 12 – 26, Restaurant Week will have a new twist. Rather than having the previous fixed, four price-points, we are offering you the ability to be as creative as you'd like. You can tailor RW to fit into whatever price point you prefer. The focus will be "Great Deals on Great Food." If you'd like to participate and be featured on [www.oceancityrestaurantweek.com](http://www.oceancityrestaurantweek.com), make sure you sign up today! Call us at 410-289-6733 or email [inquire@ocvisitor.com](mailto:inquire@ocvisitor.com) to sign up.

### MD Travel & Tourism Summit

Tourism representatives from around the State will gather in Ocean City on November 12 – 14 for the annual Summit. On the first night, a welcome reception is being planned and will be held at the Center for the Arts. Following the reception is a "Dine Around OC" where the 250 attendees will be encouraged to dine at sponsor restaurants. We are looking for restaurants to participate.

### Mark Your Calendars

As we approach the fall, take a moment to add our dinner meetings to your calendars. It is always a wonderful time to reconnect with our industry! At our first dinner, State Tourism Director, Margot Amelia, will share the State of MD Tourism.

**November 20, December 18, January 22, February 19, April 23**



## LET SUMMER BE SUMMER!

Over the summer, Comptroller Peter Franchott kicked off a Let Summer be Summer campaign; a push for statewide post-Labor Day school start date. A report produced last year by the Bureau of Revenue Estimates found that this move could generate \$74 million in direct economic activity throughout the State, including \$3.7 million in wages and an additional \$7.7 million in state and local tax revenue. Think how wonderful it would be not to lose your staff in mid- August! Also over the summer, the task force, formed via a Legislative bill to study the issue, voted 12 to 3 in favor of a post-Labor Day start. Here's where you can help.....hopefully, this session, there will be legislation passed to officially start school after Labor Day. In order to prove the case that Marylanders want a later start date, a petition has been launched and we need your signature.

Log onto [www.MarylandTaxes.com](http://www.MarylandTaxes.com)

## YOUR PLAYING FIELD KEEPS CHANGING

### IT TAKES EXPERTISE AND INSIGHT TO STAY AHEAD IN HOSPITALITY.

CohnReznick's hospitality professionals provide financial, tax, and advisory services that help hotel and restaurant owners with concept development, strategic expansion, and liquidity events. Find out what CohnReznick thinks at [CohnReznick.com/hospitality](http://CohnReznick.com/hospitality).  
**Forward Thinking Creates Results.**

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*Joe Torre*  
HoF 2014  
Joe Torre  
2014 National Baseball  
Hall of Fame Inductee



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## THE DISH: *Restaurant industry trends* From Restaurant Association Of Maryland **NEW FDA REGULATIONS FOR RESTAURANTS AND FOOD MANUFACTURERS THAT CHOOSE TO DESIGNATE "GLUTEN-FREE" PRODUCTS**

On August 5, 2014, new U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations took effect requiring all packaged food manufacturers and restaurants to meet a new standardized definition if they choose to use the term "gluten-free" for menu items or food packaging. This standard also applies to foods labeled as "without gluten," "free of gluten" or "no gluten." Foods designated as such without meeting FDA's standard definition will be considered misbranded, and companies selling such products will be subject to regulatory action by FDA. Again, this is only for businesses that choose to use these terms on their menus or packaging.

Foods meeting FDA's new definition may be designated as "gluten-free" (or in similar terms) if the food does not contain any of the following:

- An ingredient that is any type of wheat, rye, barley, or crossbreeds of these grains
- An ingredient derived from these grains and that has not been processed to remove gluten
- An ingredient derived from these grains that has

been processed to remove gluten but still contains 20 or more parts per million (ppm) gluten (which means 20 milligrams of gluten per 1 kilogram (1000 grams) of food)

Of course, the "gluten-free" designation may also be used for foods that are naturally gluten free, like water, fruits, vegetables, eggs, etc.

According to FDA, the new definition is intended to help the estimated 3 million people in the United States who suffer from celiac disease, which can be effectively managed only by avoiding foods that contain gluten.

Restaurants should reexamine menu ingredients or wholesale food packaging and consult with ingredient suppliers before beginning or continuing to use "gluten-free" designations.

To learn more about the new FDA regulations or celiac disease, see the FDA Small Entity Compliance Guide at <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/>

## BREAST HEALTH & WELLNESS: THE POWER OF PREVENTION

Thursday September 18, 2014 5-8 PM  
The Carousel Hotel

Join Susan G. Komen at this free event to:

- Learn about the tools available to maintain breast health and healthy survivorship
- Learn how to best support survivors, co-survivors and caregivers affected by breast cancer
- Learn expert medical and health information
- Connect with valuable resources from hospital and community exhibitors
- Learn how to get involved in the fight to end breast cancer in your community



**Register Here**

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



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## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: *Rebecca Taylor*

Since she was little, Rebecca Taylor has been vacationing in Ocean City every summer. Originally from Lutherville, Maryland, she moved to OC in the late 90's after graduating from Gettysburg College with a bachelor's degree in Business Management. She met her husband, Brad Taylor, when she was 16 while working for his family at the Captain's Table Restaurant, where she continues to work today. Eventually, the two got married and have two beautiful girls, Caroline (10 years old) and Catherine (6 years old). With two little girls, there isn't a whole lot of free time; especially as they spend a lot of time traveling for Caroline, who is on the competitive team for Seaside Dance Academy. "Watching her dance is one of my favorite things to do," commented Rebecca recently. When there is free time, you'll find the Taylor family hanging out on the beach.



Lots of well wishes to **Matt Lyle, AAA**, for his upcoming retirement. Welcome **Michael Quindlen**, who is now Digital Sales Specialist at **Baltimore Sun Media Group**. A big congratulations to **Danielle Bellante**, on her promotion to Catering Manager for **Carousel**. Welcome to **Robert Fisher**, new General Manager at **Coconut Malorie**. Congrats also **Dr. George Ojie-Ahamioje**, who is joining **Wor-Wic Community College** as director and associate professor of hotel-motel-restaurant management. Welcome also to **Beth Bell**, who is Chief Financial Officer at **Atlantic, Smith, Cropper & Deehley**.

Our condolences to **Frank & Viola Candeloro, Ocean Terrace Apartments**, on the passing of Frank's sister-in-law, Isabella Candeloro.



## REST EASY: *Lodging industry trends*

### HOW TO GET TO NO. 1 ON TRIPADVISOR *By: Patrick Mayock*

When the management team at Library Hotel Collection first began monitoring content on various distribution sites more than a decade ago, the goal was simply to make sure information was accurate and up-to-date.

And then they started noticing guest-generated content on a review site called TripAdvisor.

"We had one hotel on the top," explained Adele Gutman, VP of sales, marketing and revenue. "Why not have all of them at the top?"

That's when the management team began a concerted effort to improve the on-property experience at its four New York City hotels with the goal of running up the online review ranks. Two years later, Library Hotel Collection properties ranked Nos. 1 through 4 on TripAdvisor in New York City.

"We accomplished that by having obsessive compulsive disorder and just looking at all those reviews on TripAdvisor," Gutman said.

That placement drives exceptional demand to the properties, she said.

"It is staggering the difference between the No. 1 spot or the No. 3 spot or the No. 3 spot versus the No. 5 spot," Gutman added. "It is the difference you will definitely feel in your pocket."

Gutman, along with three other panelists, discussed several ways to reach that No. 1 ranking during a panel titled "In my humble opinion" during the 6th annual Hotel Data Conference, hosted by STR and Hotel News Now.

#### Don't be shy

#### Keep the reviews coming

#### Address the good, bad and ugly

#### Grease the squeaky wheel

#### Get staff to buy-in

Today management at each hotel regularly monitors TripAdvisor to track operational issues, address negative complaints regarding particular associates or departments and highlight positive comments to boost morale. - See more here.



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Also known as the lunch ladies, Susan, Patricia Smith, Castle in the Sand, Lisa Dennis, OC Chamber, Tammy McWilliams, and Liz at the 2014 Surfers Healing, hosted by Castle in the Sand.

**ABOUT SURFERS HEALING:** Through the transformative experience of surfing, Surfers Healing attains greater mainstream acceptance for both the families of and the kids living with autism. People seem to have a lot of pre-conceived ideas about what kids with autism can or can't do. We're here to change those notions forever. Surfers Healing has spent the last fifteen years taking children with autism surfing. Our goal is to help foster the understanding and acceptance of autism.

With the help of incredible volunteers and a team of the most amazing surfers in the water, Surfers Healing is making a difference in the lives of families and kids living with autism.



**COMING UP:**  
*September 20, 2014 Take Steps  
for Crohn's & Colitis Walk  
Northside Park  
Check-in starts at 4 PM and  
the walk begins at 5 PM.  
[www.cctakesteps.org/eastern-shore](http://www.cctakesteps.org/eastern-shore)*

