**IULY 2024** 

# HOSPITALITY



Official Newsletter of the Ocean City Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association

5700 Coastal Hwy. #302 Ocean City, MD 21842 • (410) 289-6733 • OCVisitor.com • Inquire@ocvisitor.com



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### **Dates for your Calendar**

### **Marlin Fest**

On the Beach at the OC Inlet August 5 - 9 - 11am to 9pm

### 8th Annual MTC Summer Soiree

Holiday Inn Ocean City - 66th St. August 14 - 5 to 7pm

> Pirate Masquerade 3rd St. Park Bayside August 27 - 6pm to 9pm

### Member Message

From Executive Director, Susan L. Jones

As the summer sun graces our beautiful resort, our team of 2, continues to work diligently to ensure we serve our members to the best of our ability. We remain committed to bringing you the most up-to-date information and will strive to be your go-to resource.

Every member has a unique story and valuable insights. Please continue to share your thoughts and experiences so we can enhance your membership. Together, we are a hospitality network of support and encouragement that drives us all towards excellence. Collectively, we can navigate this strange season and come out even stronger.

Be sure to take a moment to review and patronize the participants of DINE STAY & PLAY United as monies raised stay in the Lower Shore!

Thank you for being a part of our hospitality family.  $\bigcirc$ 



# **Hospitality Highlights**

Whats new in the industry?

### WARM WELCOMES & CELEBRATIONS

Congratulations to **Rafo Correa**, **Blue Water Hospitality**, for adding President to his current CFO title. We wanted to give a warm welcome to **Ashley Cluster** who is the new Director of Sales at the **Hilton Garden Inn**.

### **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

### **ALLIED**

Avon Dixon an Alera Group Agency LLC Avondixon.aleragroup.com

> Jackspot Restaurant & Bar Facebook



### **Weekday Waves: Surf into Savings Weekday Promotion**

"Weekday Waves: Surf into Savings" is a promotion aimed at boosting weekday business in Ocean City for our members. We want to attract visitors from Sunday to Thursday by offering deals that you provide. Our website features a <a href="DEALS page">DEALS page</a> that we promote through social media and direct visitor calls, where we showcase your lodging, dining, and attraction specials.

This is a great opportunity for you to fill your restaurant seats and hotel beds during the weekdays while still catering to the weekend rush.

Please send any weekday deals or promotions you have to kaylee@ocvisitor.com. There is no charge to participate - we are here to help you. Feel free to reach out with any questions!

### **NEW! Worcester Tech Culinary Arts Program**

The Pines Cafe by Worcester Technical High School represents an outstanding educational opportunity and community partnership. Spearheaded by Chef Cropper and the Culinary & Pastry Arts program, this remote teaching cafe is a collaboration between Tidal Health and Worcester County Public Schools. As the first initiative of its kind in Maryland, it offers students an immersive experience in managing a small business. Through this hands-on learning environment, students will acquire essential skills such as purchasing, food costing, customer service, menu development, and community relations.

Operating daily from 7 AM to 3 PM, Monday through Friday, the cafe will be entirely self-sufficient, generating enough revenue to cover salaries, consumables, and overhead costs. Any profits will be reinvested into Worcester Technical High School's Culinary & Pastry Arts program, helping to mitigate the increasing costs of providing high-quality education. This model not only equips students with practical business skills but also ensures they are career-ready upon graduation. The Pines Cafe exemplifies a successful educational initiative and community partnership, fostering student development and supporting local economic growth.







### **Find-A-Kid Program**

The Find-A-Kid program is an excellent service that you can offer to your guests upon check-in to help them relax while on vacation. The OCHRMA has partnered with the OC Beach Patrol and OCPD to help reunite lost children with their families. We will provide the first box of wristbands to all hotel members who sign up with their property information (name, address, phone number).

These bands should be given to all guests with young children. If a child wearing the wristband wanders away from their parents on the beach, OCPD or OC Beach Patrol will first work to reunite the child with their parent. If they cannot locate the parent, they will bring the child to the hotel. This is an additional layer of assistance.

If you have not signed up and would like to participate, please refer to the participation flyer for hotel sign-up information on page 13.

We would like to thank all the participants so far for signing up and being a part of the Find-A-Kid Program.

Ashore Resort & Beach Club | Best Western Ocean City Hotel & Suites | Best Western Plus Ocean City | Cambria Ocean City Bayfront | Carousel Resort Hotel & Condos | Castle in the Sand Hotel | Comfort Inn Gold Coast | Courtyard Ocean City Oceanfront | Days Inn by Wyndham OC Oceanfront | DoubleTree by Hilton | Dunes Court OC, Fairfield Inn & Suites | Fish Tales Boardwalk Inn | Flagship Oceanfront Hotel | Hilton Ocean City Oceanfront Suites | Holiday Inn Express & Suites North | Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites | Holiday Inn Oceanfront | Home2 Suites by Hilton | Hotel Monte Carlo, | Howard Johnson by Wyndham OC Oceanfront | Howard Johnson Plaza by Wyndham OC Oceanfront | Hyatt Place Ocean City Oceanfront | La Quinta Inn and Suites | Madison Beach Motel & South Beach Apts | Monte Carlo Boardwalk | Ocean Lodge, | Oceanic Motel | Plim Plaza Hotel | Princess Bayside Hotel | Princess Royale Oceanfront Resort | Quality Inn Boardwalk | Quality Inn Oceanfront | Residence Inn by Marriott Ocean City | Seabonay Motel | Surf Inn Suites | TRU by Hilton OC Bayside

#### NAO Trinidad - Volunteers Needed

If you enjoy maritime history, like interacting with people and children; the Nao Trinidad crew is looking for volunteers to assist with basic tasks dockside over the term of their 10-week stay in OC.

### Task assignments include but may not be limited to:

- Assisting with the boarding process
- Monitoring guests around the vessel mooring site
- Assisting with directions on where to pay and what to expect onboard.

The international crew is very knowledgeable and will teach you the basics of what the vessel has to offer beyond its historic exterior.

Click here to sign up to volunteer!

### **J1 Housing Available**

Two apartments located off Somerset St. downtown have become available for J1 housing. Each apartment includes a living room, kitchen, and bathroom.

A \$250 deposit is required, and the summer season stay costs \$2500. The deposit will be refunded within 2 weeks of departure provided that all rent is paid and there are no damages.

They are looking for 2 female and 2 male tenants. Please contact Chelsea at (443) 953-1134 with any questions or referrals.





### **Clean Indoor Air Act Updates 2024**

On May 16, 2024 the General Assembly for the State of Maryland passed House Bill 238, which went into effect on July 1, 2024. It is an update to the 2007 Clean Indoor Air Act and includes the prohibition of vaping in indoor areas and places of employment as well as certain mass transportation. It also requires that signs be posted and maintained in each indoor area open to the public and each public entrance to an indoor area where smoking or vaping is prohibited under the Clean Indoor Air Act. Vaping includes any device through which the user inhales aerosol containing tobacco, cannabis, or hemp. A person may not smoke or vape in an indoor area open to the public, an indoor space in which meetings are open to the public, a government-owned or government-operated means of mass transportation including buses, vans, trains, taxicabs, and limousines; and indoor places of employment. No more than 25% of hotel or motel guest's rooms are permitted to allow smoking or vaping.

Signs that state "No Smoking or Vaping" are to be prominently posted and properly maintained in each indoor area open to the public and each public entrance to an indoor area where smoking or vaping is prohibited. The signs shall be maintained by the owner, operator, manager or other person having control of the area. Signs that state "Smoking or Vaping Permitted in This Room" shall be posted and properly maintained where smoking or vaping is allowed (up to 25% of hotel or motel guest's rooms). The letters of all signs need to be at least 1 inch in height.

The Worcester County Health Department will be receiving signage from the State of Maryland and will be distributing these updated signs to businesses this Summer. For employees wishing to quit smoking or vaping, please call 410-632-1100, extension 1108 to learn about no cost cessation services.



### TIPS OF THE TRADE



## Bars & drinks redefined: Adding creativity & design to the drinks' menu

Today's bars need to offer unique drinks and an Instagrammable atmosphere to create an immersive experience for customers.

They should specialize and cater to evolving international tastes by offering local craft beers, wines with a narrative, eclectic spirits collections, and hyper-locally sourced juices. Bars also need to focus on offering mocktails and non-alcoholic food pairings to cater to the healthier lifestyles of Gen Z and millennials and be taught to customers in mixology classes.

Read the full article here!

### How To Train Your Guest Service Staff To Turn Every Conversation Into A Sales & Marketing Opportunity

As tech solutions continue to replace "touch points" in our guests' cycle of service, each remaining "conversation" becomes ever more important, especially since guests are more likely to reach out to our humans either when things go wrong or when they have a special request or need. With so many guests booking online, often through third parties, and with an ever-increasing number using self-checkin, any remaining interaction might be the only chance to put a "face" on your brand and foster loyalty.

Click here to sign up for the webinar







### **NEW EVENT --- OC's Pirate Masquerade**

Experience a magical evening of food, fun, and entertainment against the backdrop of the majestic Nao Trinidad, adorned with twinkling white lights on her masts.

Enjoy delicious tapas from some of Ocean City's best restaurants (*if your restaurant wants to participate, contact Alex at grieralex@gmail.com*) and explore the decks of the Nao Trinidad. Listen to lively island music throughout the festive grounds. Meet Captain Jack Sparrow and listen to his fascinating tales. Witness thrilling sword fights, fire juggling, and a flare competition.

Don't miss the treasure hunt to find the hidden bounty!

This event is dedicated to our locals and open to those 21 years and older. Conclude the evening with friends as you watch the sunset over the bay framed by the rigging of the magnificent Nao Trinidad.

Details on page 6.

### **BUSINESS BRIEFS**



### Partner Referrals Top 80,000 for First Quarter of 2024

Did you know that VisitMaryland.org got more than 1 million views during the first quarter of 2024, which resulted in more than 80,000 referrals to local Maryland businesses? With more than 550,000 users in the first quarter alone, VisitMaryland.org had a 69% engagement rate with an 18% increase in views, a 27% increase in users, & a 26% increase in engaged sessions as compared to the same time last year.

Make sure you are doing everything you can to take advantage of a host of valuable opportunities by partnering with our office (visit pg. 10-12 for promotional opportunities sign up sheet). Contact Lisa Hansen Terhune, lisa.hansenterhune@maryland.gov, to learn more and click here to see the full report.



### **Destination Decisions 2024**

Future Partners and Miles Partnership shared insights on informed trends and new developments within the travel and media landscapes. This year's Destination Decisions, powered by The State of the American Traveler, examines what type of information American travelers value most when deciding where to take a trip. This edition also explores the nuances of how different traveler demographics impact how they determine where they want to go and what channels they turn to when seeking destination information.

<u>Click here</u> to view the repot.

### No Taxes on Tips Bill Introduced in Senate

Recently, 4 U.S. Senators introduced the "No Taxes on Tips Act" to prevent federal income taxation on employee tips in any industry. While the proposal would eliminate the federal income tax for tips, these tips would still be subject to the federal payroll tax ("FICA") paid by employees and employers to contribute to Social Security and Medicare. The FICA contribution ensures a tipped employee can demonstrate his or her total income as they build credit or access benefits, while ensuring restaurant employers continue access to the FICA 45B credit.

Former President Trump proposed this idea during a campaign event this month and said it would be a priority for his administration should he return to the White House in 2025. The current Senate Finance Committee chairman did not signal that he wanted to advance this bill in 2024.

The aim is to ensure that the restaurant workforce can collect Social Security benefits and show income inclusive of earned tips, without disrupting the federal tip credit model and endangering benefits for tipped employees. The impact of the legislation on restaurants and the broader economy remains unclear, but the National Restaurant Association plans to engage with Congress on tax priorities that affect the restaurant industry.





# **Community Connections**



# PIRATE MASQUERADE

Hosted by: Captain Jack Sparrow
Benefiting: the Noa Victoria Foundation
Presented by: the Town of Ocean City

TUESDAY, AUGUST 27, 2024 6 PM TO 9 PM 3RD ST. PARK & THE BAY

This event is dedicated to our locals and open to those 21 years and older.

For more details or to see how you can participate, contact
Alex Grier (grieralex@gmail.com).



The OCHMRA produces the flyers below to help keep your guests informed. If you are not receiving them or you'd like your front desk supervisors to receive, send us email addresses for e-distribution.





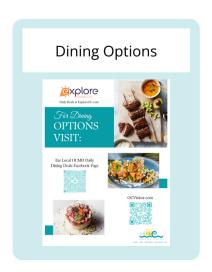












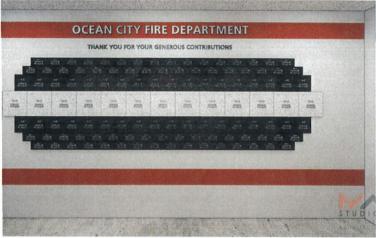


NEW OCEAN CITY FIRE HOUSE

# Buy a Brick Campaign







Ocean City Firefighters and EMS providers are moving into a new fire station, and we need your support! We're excited about the opportunities this new space will bring for growth, safety, and training.

You can be a part of this exciting new chapter by participating in our buy a brick campaign. Purchase a laser-inscribed brick and help pave the entryway of the new midtown fire station. We even have granite tiles that will be prominently displayed in our main fover.

Your contribution will make a real impression, and proceeds will go towards funding the furniture, fixtures, and equipment our firefighters and paramedics need to operate out of the fire station. Join us in supporting the Ocean City Fire Department and our brave first responders.

**Buy Online:** 

www.ocfirehouse3.com

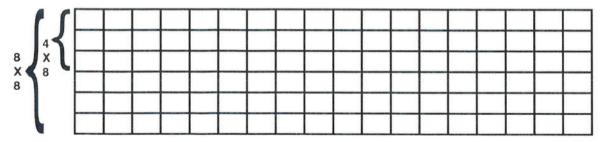
**Mail Form:** 

Email:

Mail the below form to: OC Fire Station 3; PO BOX 3217; Ocean City, MD 21843

Make checks payable to: OC Fire Station Fund

Yes, I would like to reserve a permanent brick. Please engrave our brick as follows: (Any symbol is considered one space- period, comma, dash. All text is centered.)



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8x8 = \$200

Name: _	 Phone:	
Address:	 	

Questions: 443-235-3205

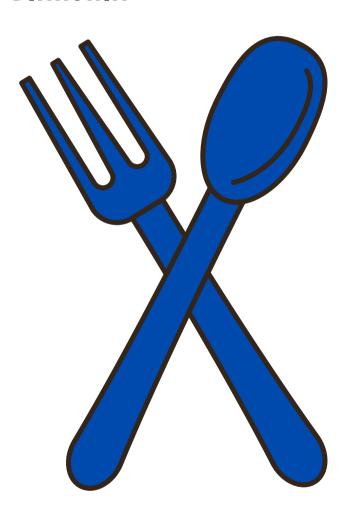


# FUND RAISING

### DINE AND DONATE TO SUPPORT DIAKONIA

Services Provided in Worcester, Wicomico, and Somerset Counties

- Homeless Outreach
- Coordinated Assessment
- Eviction Prevention
- Emergency Shelter
- Landlord Engagement
- Rapid Rehousing Assistance
- Emergency Food Pantry
- SNAP Application Assistance
- Support Services for Homeless
   Veteran Families



## WHAT WE NEED:

YOUR BUSINESS TO PARTNER WITH DIAKONIA TO TURN YOUR DELICOUS FOOD INTO IMPACTFUL DONATIONS WITH A PERCENTAGE OF YOUR PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT OUR ORGANIZATION.

## **CONTACT:**

443-953-5039 Susan Blaney sblaney@diakoniaoc.org

### FREE PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITY

### LIST YOUR DEALS, PACKAGES AND EVENTS ON VISITMARYLAND.ORG

Hotels, dining, retail, attractions and all tourism-related businesses are invited to list deals, packages, bundled multi-day experiences, incentives, loyalty programs, and discounts to be featured on VisitMaryland.org.

Warning up to winter?
YOU'RE WELCOME
TANKL BLASS

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The Maryland Office of Tourism's promotions reach millions of potential visitors, targeting the state's overnight travel markets through interactive advertisements, social media and e-newsletters encouraging them to enjoy getaways in Maryland **and find deals on VISITMARYLAND.ORG**.

### **GET CREATIVE!**

### "HALF OFF WEEKDAY STAYS"

Enjoy your Maryland getaway - stay for one night and enjoy 25% your second night.

Valid Sunday-Thursday Jun 16 - Oct 8, 2024.

[Learn More]

### **CREATE YOUR PACKAGE AND DEALS/DISCOUNTS**

### Give your offer a fun and memorable name!

Package or deal name ideas could be Weekday Wanderers, SummerMDVisit, Wellness Weekend, Weekday Welcome, MDAway!

- > Offer unique specials such as seasonal discounts, added-value incentives, 2-4-1, add-ons such as value-add tickets to attractions and museums, weekday discounts, shopping coupons.
- ➤ Include an enticing image and list the start/end dates that it is valid.
- ➤ Make it trackable!!! Include a hyperlink with specifics on how to redeem and get specific information; include restrictions and blackout dates.

### SUBMIT YOUR DEALS, PACKAGES AND EVENTS TO BE FEATURED ON VISITMARYLAND.ORG



### << OR CODE LINK TO UPLOAD YOUR OFFERS at INDUSTRY.VISITMARYLAND.ORG

- > Find the link to our Self-Entry Portal to upload your offers.
- > Find industry resources, more information and a checklist on more Ways to Work With Us.
- ➤ Be sure to sign up for *Maryland Insights*, our industry newsletter.

**General Questions -** Lisa Hansen Terhune, Destination Development Manager 410-699-3711 or lisa.hansenterhune@maryland.gov

**Database Technical & Entry Questions** - Visitor & Business Support Services Team Brandon Chan, Brandon.Chan@maryland.gov Flo Brant, Florence.Brant@maryland.gov



SAMPLED

**IPS & IDEAS** 

CONTACTS

# LIST YOUR BUSINESSES, EVENTS, AND PACKAGES & DEALS ON VISIT MARYLAND.ORG

Maximize your BUSINESS, EVENTS AND DEALS/OFFERS exposure to travel decision-makers! While this is a no-cost opportunity, certain criteria apply.

### BUSINESS LISTINGS - HOW TO GET YOURS LISTED/UPDATED ON VISITMARYLAND.ORG

A Business Listing is a place of interest for visitors and residents of Maryland. This includes restaurants, accommodations, retail, amusement parks, and more.

>>If you already have a business listing or want to add a deal/event without a business listing, skip to step 3.

- 1. First, go to VisitMaryland.org to search for your Business Listing use the magnifying glass upper right
  - >> If it is not present, or to claim, and/or update your Business Listing, follow these steps.
- 2. Next, go to our self-entry portal at https://mdyoda.milesmediagroup.com/Register.aspx
  - >> Register by creating a username and password.
  - >> You must check that you agree to the terms/ conditions.
- 3. Once registered, simply Sign-in.
- 4. Enter your listing name (if a listing exists it will pop up as an option to select name.)
- 5. If you are a new editor and are claiming the business listing that's already in the database, you will see a prompt indicating you have to wait to be approved. The request email goes to <a href="mailto:info.visitmaryland@maryland.gov">info.visitmaryland@maryland.gov</a> for approval. You will be notified, generally within 48 hours.
- 6. Fill in the rest of the information as indicated. Starred items are required.
- 7 You must complete this section before moving on to the next.
- 8. After completing all applicable information fields, you are all set to add/edit business listing(s), add editors, add events, and add deals. Review appropriate business/events/deals Listing Criteria as you enter information.

### >>LISTING TIPS

**The Destination Maryland Magazine Listing:** (indicates if your business is listed in the current *Destination Maryland* print publication). Not all categories are eligible for inclusion in the magazine.

**Web Category:** Web categories are how your business fits into VisitMaryland.org. At least one category is required.

**Warning:** deselecting categories may delete information in the Options section. You will be given a summary of what will be deleted before saving.

**Options**: Based on selection in Web category: Provide as much information as your business has, as this will enrich your listing. **Warning**: the options available here depend on the categories selected above. Changing the categories will change the options available here and may result in data loss. If applicable, check the box to indicate that you are a "group-friendly" business and it will ask for additional information.

**Images:** Enter your image using the pixel requirements listed in the section. **Warning:** images that do not meet required specifications can not be used and a generic icon will be used instead.

Be sure to save your listing anytime you make changes! (You can also Finish Later to save and return.)

### PROMOTE YOUR DEALS, OFFERS, PACKAGES AND DISCOUNTS

Create and list travel inspirations! Upload your special offers, hotel and partnership packages, incentives, discounts, and time-sensitive special promotions – these will be featured on VisitMaryland.org **Deals and Discounts Page**>>TIPS: Give your offer a unique name and redemption link - make it easy for visitors! Multi-night packages are encouraged.

### **UPLOAD EVENTS**

Optional! Enter new and recurring events hosted at your business listing or event site.



### TIPS AND STEPS CONTINUED

**EDITOR**: This is the person responsible for the accuracy of the listing. As the primary editor, you can add more editors.

**ACCOUNT INFORMATION**: This is for internal purposes only. This information will not be published. This is how the administration will contact you regarding updates to your listing.

**CLICK SUBMIT** when finished. Approval by an administrator will occur before any listing, deal or event becomes live on the website. You may receive a verification email if you are claiming an existing listing - follow the steps.

**RETURN OFTEN:** Check your listing often to ensure that it capitalizes on Maryland Tourism's initiatives, thematic promotions, programs, and marketing activities.

#### **NEED HELP?**

For technical issues, contact Florence.Brant@Maryland.gov or Brandon.Chan@Maryland.gov

The Maryland Office of Tourism offers these **free opportunities** for you to promote your business, special offers, packages and events on VisitMaryland.org. By managing your information in our Self-Entry Database, you help inspire and inform trip planning! Multi-night packages are encouraged. Here's how the database information is used:

- ➤ It populates listings on VisitMaryland.org, attracting millions of visitors annually.
- >It may be included in our themed initiatives and related publications.
- ➤Our Welcome Center travel counselors refer to it when answering travelers' questions.
- ➤Our PR Team uses it in publicity materials, social media, and interviews.
- ➤Our advertising and content team uses it for campaign inspiration, articles, print publications and e-newsletters.

### **SHARE YOUR NEWS!**

We suggest that you add Maryland Office of Tourism team members to your distribution list for press releases and

### announcements.

Leslie Troy, PR & Media

Connie Spindler, PR & Media

Claire Aubel, PR & Media

Cynthia Miller, Partnerships

Ana Hall-Defoor, Social Media

Rich Gilbert, Group Tour/Travel Trade

Theresa Donnelly, Content Writer

Daesha Stark, Web/Advertising/Content

Lisa Hansen Terhune, Destination Development

ltroy@visitmaryland.org

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caubel@visitmaryland.org

cynthiad.miller@maryland.gov

ana.hall-defoor@visitmaryland.org

rgilbert@visitmaryland.org

theresa.donnelly@maryland.gov

daesha.stark@maryland.gov

lisa.hansenterhune@maryland.gov

### TOURISM INDUSTRY RESOURCES – INDUSTRY. VISITMARYLAND. ORG

- Visit Industry. VisitMaryland.org for more information, link to database entry, research, and industry resources.
- See more "Ways to Work with Us Checklist" at industry.visitmaryland.org/work-us.
- Be sure to sign up for Maryland Insights, our industry newsletter
- Order Destination Maryland Magazine and themed travel guides in Bulk for your business.



HOTEL • MOTEL • RESTAURANT • ASSOCIATION • INC

# FIND-A-KID



Children often wander off at the beach and can have trouble finding their families. The "Find a Kid" program is a reassuring service hotels can offer to their guests with young children.

- OCHMRA will supply the first box with your property name, address, and phone number at no cost to you.
  - Hotels with less than 100 rooms will receive a box of 500
  - Hotels with more than 100 rooms will receive a box of 1000

If the child is wearing a wristband and wanders away, here's what will happen:

• If a lost child is found OCPD or OC Beach Patrol will first work to unite the child to their parent. If they cannot locate the parent they will bring the child to the hotel. This is an extra layer of assistance.

If interested in participating, please fill out the form below and email it to susanjones@ocvisitor.com:
Property:
Address:
Contact Person:
Property Phone # (for wristhand):