

# HOSPITALITY HOTLINE

April 2026



Susan Jones  
Executive Director



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## Member Message

From Executive Director, Susan L. Jones

As we gear up for the season, I want to take a quick moment to *thank everyone* who helped make our 52nd Annual Trade Expo a success. Whether you exhibited, attended, or volunteered, your support made all the difference!!

Our **Learning Lobby** session is on **April 8th** - From Chaos to Calm Through Communication - see page 9. We hope to see you on **April 16 at Oyster & Scales** for our **Installation of Officers and Directors**, held in conjunction with the United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore DINE STAY PLAY Awards and scholarship presentations. Join us for a fun "nibble and network" evening you won't want to miss - amazing menu & Everett Spells as an added bonus!

Spring also means Ocean City Restaurant Week is here! Plan to dine out and support our local businesses! Restaurant members: don't forget to sign up, this is a **FREE** member benefit. Happy April! 😊

## Dates For Your Calendar

**Summer Work Travel Conference**  
April 14<sup>th</sup>  
Holiday Inn Oceanfront

**Learning Lobby - From Chaos to Calm Through Communication**  
April 8<sup>th</sup>  
Hilton Garden Inn - 28<sup>th</sup> St.  
[Click here to sign up](#) - it's FREE

**Ocean City Restaurant Week**  
April 26<sup>th</sup> to May 9<sup>th</sup>  
Participating Members in OC

**Nibble & Network Events**  
5:30pm to 8:30pm  
April 16<sup>th</sup> - Oyster & Scales  
[Click here to sign up](#)  
May 21<sup>st</sup> - Vista Rooftop  
[Click here to sign up](#)



## FEATURED PARTNERS



Your single source for exterior building maintenance. Our comprehensive commercial service offerings include window cleaning, facade restoration, waterproofing services, safety systems, and more.



Leading high-performance commercial coatings contractor specializing in seamless resinous (epoxy, polyaspartic, MMA, urethane) polished/stained concrete, and commercial painting service - serving the mid-Atlantic.



[Member Directory](#)

# Hospitality Highlights

Whats new in the industry?

## WARM WELCOMES & CELEBRATIONS

The **Hilton Garden Inn** welcomed 2 new people, **Tomiko Burroughs**, Director of Sales Support, and **David Vincent**, Director of Sales. The **Boardwalk Hotel Group (Howard Johnson Oceanfront Plaza)** announced **Rubi Guerrero** as their newest General Manager. **45<sup>th</sup> Street Taphouse** welcomed a new General Manager, **Jim Loomis**!

One of Ocean City's most iconic restaurant names is officially entering its next chapter: **The Embers** relaunches as **1945 Steak & Seafood** this month!

Congratulations to **Becker Morgan Group** for being recognized by Best in American Living (BALA) with a Silver Award for Best One-of-a-Kind Custom Home. They were also recognized in Building Design + Construction's 2025 Giants 400 Report in multiple categories, ranking among the best architecture and engineering firms across various markets.

Our **Discover Ocean City** has been nominated for a 2026 Stella Award for Northeast's Best DMO/CVB & Best Convention Center - The Roland E. Powell Convention Center. You can go and vote for them at <https://stellaawards.secure-platform.com/a/page/suppliers-2026>.

After 40 years of incredible work, **Ruth Waters**, officially retired from the **Harrison Group** on March 19.

## Welcome New Members

### ALLIED

**Chesapeake Bath & Home Solutions**  
[chesapeakebath.com](http://chesapeakebath.com)

**Fallen Pine Oyster Company**  
[fallenpineoyster.com](http://fallenpineoyster.com)

**HGM Glass, LLC**  
[hgm-glass.com](http://hgm-glass.com)

**Minuteman Press**  
[md207.minuteman.com](http://md207.minuteman.com)

**Sentral Services LLC**  
[sentralservices.com](http://sentralservices.com)

## Museum Society Launches Event Rental Opportunities at the Museum of Ocean City

The Ocean City Museum Society is excited to announce that the newly restored Museum of Ocean City, located at 217 South Baltimore Ave, is now available for private events. This historic downtown venue offers a unique setting for meetings, birthday parties, receptions, and other special occasions.

Ideal for gatherings of up to 40 guests, the museum provides an intimate, memorable atmosphere with flexible rental packages starting at \$350 for a half-day (4 hours) or \$600 for a full day (8 hours). Discounts are available for nonprofits and Museum Society members.

Packages include access to the first-floor exhibit hall, two 8-foot and two 6-foot tables with tablecloths, 20 chairs, Wi-Fi, and accessible restrooms. Guests may bring their own caterers for a fully customized event.

### Rental hours:

- May – October: Mon–Sun, 5:30 p.m.–11:00 p.m.
- November – April: Mon–Fri, 11:00 a.m.–11:00 p.m.; Sat–Sun, 3:00 p.m.–11:00 p.m.

For rental inquiries or additional information, please visit [ocmuseum.org/moc-rentals](http://ocmuseum.org/moc-rentals).





# Business Briefs

## Protect Our Sand & Seas, Be Waste Free

*Let's work together to keep Ocean City beaches & ocean clean!*

Ocean City's environment is our greatest asset, and protecting our ocean, beach, and bay is key to preserving its beauty. With 12 million metric tons of plastic entering oceans each year, ending plastic pollution at its source is critical—recycling alone isn't enough.

Efforts began in 2018 with the Surfrider Foundation Ocean City Chapter's "**Strawless Summer**" initiative, encouraging restaurants and individuals to reduce plastic straw use. So far, 70 restaurants and 500 individuals have taken the pledge.

Now, the **Ocean City Green Team**, led by the Maryland Coastal Bays Program, is taking it further with the "**Protect Our Sand and Sea**" campaign. This voluntary program promotes restaurants that commit to reducing single-use plastics.

**Join the movement:** [Click here](#) to view the Sand & Sea Pledge

## RESOURCES

### Top Ways to Maximize Your Membership

8 simple ways to stay engaged and make the most of your partnership—so you never miss a valuable opportunity!

### OCMDHA Member Portal Guide

Update your listing on OCVisitor.com, pay dues, update contacts, & register for events.

Use this [step-by-step guide](#) to get started!

### November OC Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes

Catch up on the latest Tourism Dept. News

## Paid Family and Medical Leave is Coming to Maryland

Starting January 2028, eligible employees will be able to take up to 12 weeks of paid, job-protected leave. Employees will be able to welcome a new child, tend to a serious health condition, care for a loved one, or manage urgent family needs related to deployment—while still being paid up to \$1,000/week.

Learn how to prepare your business for FAML, including critical deadlines, contribution rates, and reporting responsibilities. Find guidance on plan options, employee notifications, and managing future leave requests.

Employers, [click here to learn more!](#)

## Meet the 2026 Competitiveness Index

*Maryland Is at Inflection Point: 2026 Competitiveness Index Shows Why It Matters*

The 2026 Competitiveness Index for Maryland (formerly the Redbook) — measuring more than 150 indicators across economic performance, workforce, taxation and business climate — makes clear that our state is at a genuine inflection point. The gains are real. So are the structural challenges. And the policy decisions being made in Annapolis now will shape which direction we go.

[Take a look →](#)





## Maryland Line n' Dine Program

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) have partnered on the Line n' Dine Program (the Program) in an effort to promote and engage in the safe sale and offering of select finfish caught in Maryland through a partnership with the local charter fishing industry and local Maryland restaurants. This Program (1) provides charter boat fishing clients with the opportunity to catch finfish from Maryland waters and (2) allows restaurants to cook and serve those fish (but ONLY to the same charter boat fishing clients who caught those fish). **Please direct any questions to [mdh.foodplanreview@maryland.gov](mailto:mdh.foodplanreview@maryland.gov), ATTN: RROs and indicate "MD Line N' Dine" in the subject line.**

**Approved Source:** All food served to the public must come from an "approved source" (COMAR 10.15.03.04A(4)), meaning it is safe, labeled, and approved by the local health agency. This Program allows licensed restaurants to prepare and serve recreationally caught fish *only* to the clients who caught them, provided the following guidance is followed.

**Licenses:** Both the restaurant and the charter boat/captain must be licensed.

- **Restaurant (FSF):** Must be a full-service restaurant and hold a local health department license (Health-General Article [§21-305](#), COMAR [10.15.03.28](#)).
- **Charter Boat Captain:** Must hold a DNR Fishing Guide license, a Charter Boat Decal (Natural Resources Article, [§4-701\(b\)\(4\)](#), [§4-745\(d\)\(1\)](#)), and a U.S. Coast Guard Captain's license (National Maritime Center, [Charter Boat Captain](#)).

### Responsibilities for Food Safety:

- **Charter Captains Must Ensure:** Awareness of fish advisories, proper cleaning/gutting/scaling before delivery, adequate ice from potable water, immediate placement and transport on drained ice, and proper labeling with fish type, date/time caught, who caught it, and where. (A food handler's course is strongly recommended.)
- **Participating Restaurants Must:** Comply with Maryland food safety laws; properly process, maintain custody, and serve the cooked fish only to program participants (not the public); and have written staff procedures detailing how to ensure participants receive their own fish, how to thoroughly clean and sanitize contact areas afterward, and how to return or discard any remaining fish.

### Preventing Foodborne Illness at the Restaurant:

- Inspect all fish upon delivery (*checking for sound, wholesome appearance; may refuse unsafe-looking fish*).
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize all equipment/utensils used for recreationally caught fish before startup, at the end of the day, and at least every four (4) hours while in use.
- Ensure enough space to process fish safely, prevent cross-contamination, and maintain product identity and custody.
- *Recommended:* Use separate, dedicated equipment/utensils, and avoid routine restaurant activity during preparation.

**Regulatory Authority:** Only licensed Maryland restaurants can participate. LHDs do not need to approve FSFs prior to participation. Non-compliance with cross-contamination standards or facility/equipment requirements may result in the immediate cessation of the Program within that facility until compliance is achieved.

# Industry Insights & Tips



## Marketing For People Who Have A Restaurant To Run

*What to do when word of mouth isn't enough*

Opening a restaurant takes hard work, creativity, and constant attention to detail. But success ultimately comes down to filling seats. While word-of-mouth is powerful, it does not happen on its own. In today's digital world, your marketing needs to work just as hard as you do to bring guests through the door.

For busy operators, marketing can feel overwhelming or easy to put off. But it does not have to be complicated. Simple tools like email and a focused social media presence can make a big impact in promoting your menu, specials, and events.

Here are a few easy ways to market your restaurant more effectively → [Click here to view](#)

## Learning Lobby: From Chaos to Calm Through Communication

As part of our rebrand, we're putting a spotlight on advocating, educating, and connecting our members. Our **Learning Lobby** series offers hands-on training for current and future hospitality professionals—covering everything from hospitality basics to allergy awareness and more.

Our next session is an interactive workshop focused on handling conflict in the workplace. Staff will learn how to:

- Address issues early with both guests and team members
- Navigate tough conversations with confidence
- Keep service standards high while reducing tension
- Set clear expectations across teams and shifts

Check out the flyer on **page 9** for all the details!

## A Look Ahead 2026 Legislative & Regulatory Updates



ServSafe helps you navigate the latest food safety & workplace regulations, helping you to remain compliant, reduce risk, & stay safe.

[Click here to download](#) ServSafe's Recent Legislation & Regulation 2025 Annual Review



# Member Mentions

## Celebrate Agriculture Appreciation Week on Maryland's Coast – August 1–9!

Worcester County Tourism and Economic Development is excited to host the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Agriculture Appreciation Week, showcasing our county's rich agricultural heritage.

This lively week coincides with:

- Aug 1: Blessing of the Combines (Snow Hill) & Peach Festival (Berlin)
- Aug 1–8: Great Pocomoke Fair (Pocomoke City)
- Aug 7–9: Worcester County Fair (Snow Hill)

Local businesses and organizations are invited to offer tastings, tours, demos, farmers market activities, mixers, or craft nights. Free events are preferred, but ticketed options are welcome.

Participants receive exposure through a media campaign that reached nearly 300,000 last year, plus photos and drone footage. To get involved, contact Brianna Dix at [bdix@worcestermd.gov](mailto:bdix@worcestermd.gov) by Friday, May 8. The schedule will be finalized by the end of June.



## Spots Still Available for 2026 Elks Hometown Heroes Banner Program

Veterans and active-duty service members from Ocean City or Worcester County can still enroll in the 13th annual Hometown Heroes Banner Program, hosted by Elks Lodge 2645. Selected honorees will have banners with their photo, name, rank, branch, and service era displayed on boardwalk light poles this summer for free.

Banners are presented at an October ceremony, honoring 439 veterans since 2014, now including those who served in the Gulf War, Afghanistan, and the War on Terror.

Nominate yourself or a loved one by emailing [hometownhero2645@gmail.com](mailto:hometownhero2645@gmail.com).

## OC Summer Work Travel Conference

If you employ, or plan to employ, J-1 Summer Work Travel students, don't miss the [2026 Summer Work Travel Conference](#). Join fellow Ocean City employers and visa sponsors at the **Holiday Inn Oceanfront (66th St.)** on **April 14<sup>th</sup>, 8am to 1pm**, for the latest updates, best practices, & expert guidance.

- Hear directly from the U.S. Department of State
- Connect with visa sponsors & local employers
- Learn about safety, social security, compliance, and student testimony
- Pick up some tips from an employer best practices panel
- Set your program up for a smooth, successful summer

**FREE** to attend (*includes continental breakfast*). Advance registration required - [Click here to sign up!](#)

# Community Connections

## Night at the Colosseum

Organized by Art League of Ocean City

Step into an evening of ancient revelry and modern creativity at Night at the Colosseum, a fundraiser hosted by the Art League of Ocean City. Join us for an unforgettable night celebrating our Gladiators for the Arts as we crown the Champion of the Arts and raise vital funds to support arts programming in our community.

Inspired by the grandeur of ancient Rome, this event will bring together friends of the arts for an evening filled with entertainment, friendly competition, and delicious Mediterranean flavors.

### Event Details

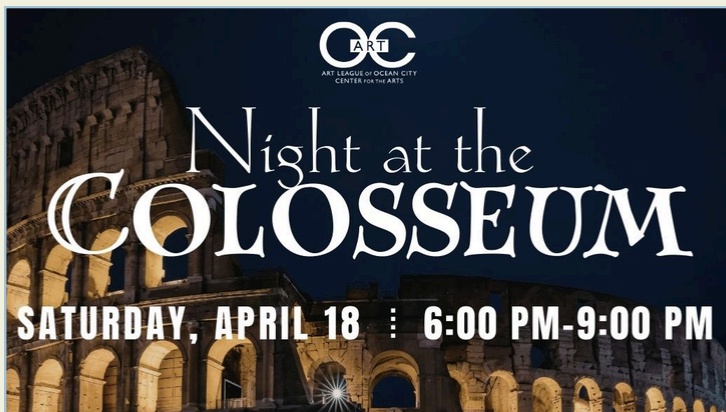
- Date: Saturday, April 18
- Time: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
- Location: Residence Inn by Marriott (300 Seabay Lane Ocean City)
- Tickets - \$75 per person

### What to Expect

- Live Entertainment throughout the evening
- Silent Auction featuring unique experiences, artwork, and local treasures
- Olympic-style follies and playful competitions celebrating our Gladiators for the Arts
- Mediterranean Mezze included with admission
- Cash Bar
- Open Seating

Dress the Part - Togas and tunics are encouraged for those who want to fully embrace the theme – but feel free to come as you are!

For more information [click here!](#)



## J-1 Welcome Bags - Donations Needed

From: Holy Savior Parish Center

Help us welcome our friends from around the world. Our J-1 Students will start arriving in May, and we once again would like to furnish them with Laundry Bags filled with goodies!

### We are asking for the following:

- |                                  |                         |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Paper Towels                   | Individual Servings of: |
| • Toilet Paper                   | • Cereal                |
| • Bottled Water                  | • Snack Items           |
| • Ramen Noodles                  | • Cookies               |
| • Small Cans Chicken & Tuna      | • Mac & Cheese          |
| • Bar Soap/Liquid Dish Detergent | • Spaghetti & Meatballs |

We thank you in advance for your generosity! Any items can be dropped off at Holy Savior Parish Center, located on 17<sup>th</sup> St., open Monday to Thursday from 9am to 3pm.



## 100+ Women Who Care May Meeting

100+ Women Who Care Worcester County brings women together to make a big impact in our community & strengthen Worcester County. By combining donations, we support and uplift local nonprofit organizations.

We meet for one hour to hear about and vote on nominated local 501(c)(3) nonprofits. Each member then writes a \$100 check directly to the organization chosen that night.

May 6<sup>th</sup> - Counter Clox (Berlin) from 5:30 to 6:30pm.

[Click here](#) to check out their Facebook Page!

# THANK YOU TO...



Thank you to **everyone** who exhibited, volunteered, provided lunch, and spoke or hosted a demo at the Expo—we couldn't have done it without you!

## Volunteers

**Beverly Meadows, Leslie Croney, & Suzanne Jackson**, Jolly Roger Amusement Parks; **Brandon Carroll**, Ocean Pines Handyman; **Buddy Dykes**, Doodle Design; **Carrie Coster**, Sun Outdoors Frontier Town; **Chuck Scott**, TD Digital; **Clare DeMallie & Marge Steele**, Cambria Ocean City Bayfront; **Courtney Blackford & Keith Whisenant**, Residence Inn; **Danelle Amos**, RevolutionX 1031 Exchange; **Dave & Patricia Shaffer**, Bold Moves LLC; **Deb Carven**, Apollo Edison; **Fred Thompson**, Palmer Gosnell; **Gaya Inting & Melania Anton**, Princess Royale; **Harry, Madalaine**, HBH3RD Consulting LLC; **Jody Thomas**, formerly RAM; **Kirsten Murphy, Maddie Wise, Wajih Alam, & Zoe Jankovic**, Aloft Hotel; **Marie Hopper**, Holiday Inn Express; **Meg Alvarado**, Happy Jack Pancake House; **Natalie Long**, Tide Together; **Nellie Shaffer & Sam**, Comfort Inn Gold Coast; **Robert Dixon**, Wor-Wic; **Ruth Waters**, formerly Harrison Group; **Steve Mealy**, Coastal Design; **Tom Tawney**, Best Western Plus; and friends **Donna Greenwood, Heather Ward, Helen Arthur, Jennifer How & Savannah How, Nancy Howard, Teri DiPerna, Vicki Shrier**

## Provided Lunch

**Buxy's Salty Dog Saloon & Dough Roller 41<sup>st</sup>**

## Members Helping With Speakers/Demos

**Chef Ann Marie Langton & Chef Peter Scioli**, Touch of Italy; **Dan Jasinski**, Stonebridge Companies; **Cori Grafer**, Restaurant Association of Maryland; **Ryan James**, Mother's Cantina; **Sunitha Madala & Veerendra Kumar Madala Halagappa**, RobotLab Bethesda

### EXPO PICS



[click here](#)

### EXHIBITOR LIST



[click here](#)

### EXPO PROGRAM



[click here](#)



## SAVE THE DATE



OC Spring Trade Expo is on March 7 & 8, 2027!  
See you next year!



**WOR-WIC**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## LEARNING LOBBY

# From Chaos to Calm Through Communication

-  **Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>**
-  **2 Sessions:**  
**Morning - 9:00am - 12:15pm**  
**Afternoon - 1:00pm - 4:15pm**
-  **Hilton Garden Inn 28<sup>th</sup> St.**
-  **Free: MUST RSVP - Limited Seating**

### *Interactive Leadership Workshop*

**Who Should Attend: Owners, Supervisors & Managers**

#### Takeaway Tools:

- Address conflict early with staff and guests
- Handle difficult conversations with confidence
- Reduce tension while maintaining service standards
- Set clear expectations across teams and shifts

**RSVP BY 4/3**



Scan QR code **OR** email Susan at  
[susanjones@OCVisitor.com](mailto:susanjones@OCVisitor.com)



Join us for our

# April Nibble & Network

THURSDAY, APRIL 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2026

OYSTER & SCALES - 306 DORCHESTER ST.



## MENU OVERVIEW

Cheese & Charcuterie Board  
Soup Station  
Raw Bar  
Passed Appetizers  
Carving Station  
Buffet

**Full Menu On The Back**



Networking & Food starts at 5:30pm • \$55pp inclusive

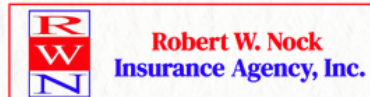
Please RSVP by Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup> to [susanjones@ocvisitor.com](mailto:susanjones@ocvisitor.com), scan the QR code or visit the link below.

<https://oceancitymdassoc.weblinkconnect.com/events/April-2026-OCHMRA-Nibble-Network-200/details>

Payment is required in advance or at the door | Reservations not honored may be billed



## SPONSORED BY:



# MENU



## CHEESE & CHARCUTERIE BOARD

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### SOUP STATION

**Crab Bisque**

**Lobster Bisque**

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### PASSED APPETIZERS

**Lobster Bites** steamed lobster | clarified butter | lemon

**Roasted Oysters** lobster cream | crab meat | shrimp | scallops

**Shrimp Croquettes** piparra pepper remoulade | fresh chives

**Mini Crab Cakes** bell peppers | mayonnaise | piparra pepper remoulade

**Fried Calamari** cherry peppers | piparra pepper remoulade

**Beef Satay** soy-marinated beef | macha mayo | lime wedge | pickled red onions |  
micro cilantro

**Roasted Cauliflower Bites** chimichurri | golden yolk emulsion

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### RAW BAR

**Clams** mignonette | cocktail sauce | lemon

**Oysters - Local & Blue Point** mignonette | cocktail sauce | lemon

**Cocktail Shrimp** steamed shrimp | fresh lemon | tangy cocktail sauce

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### CARVING STATION

**16-hour Smoked Brisket** strawberry bbq sauce | pickled onion

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### BUFFET

**Herb-Roasted Fingerling Potato Medley** chimichurri

**Chicken Satay** soy-marinated chicken | macha mayo | lime wedge | pickled red  
onions | micro cilantro

**Baby Gem Caesar Salad** croutons | shaved parmesan

**Guajillo Flank Steak** mushrooms | chile guajillo cream | shallots | chive oil |  
micro cilantro

**Crab Dip** jumbo lump | shredded cheddar cheese | parmesan | fresh chives | home  
baguette crostini

**House Salad** pickled apples | cucumbers | cherry tomatoes champagne vinaigrette

# Save the Date!



Join us for Worcester Technical High School's  
**"National Signing Day" Job Fair**



**Preparing our students to be:  
Enrolled - Enlisted - Employed**

**When:** May 4, 2026

**Where:** Worcester Technical High School  
6290 Worcester Highway  
Newark, MD 21841

**Time:** 11:00 - 11:50am Table Set-Up  
12:00 - 2:00pm Student Recruitment

**Who are we looking for?**

Local businesses looking to hire qualified and credentialed graduates.

**What is "National Signing Day"?**

Graduating seniors will be signing their intent for life after high school, whether that means they will be:

**Employed, Enlisted, or Enrolled.**

**Have Questions?** Contact WCPS Career Coaches:  
Jodi Cloud @ jrcloud@worcesterk12.org  
Josh Horsman @ jkhorsman@worcesterk12.org



The Sterling  
Tavern Presents

# 1ST ANNUAL CINCO DE MAYO SHOOTOUT

OCEAN CITY GOLF & YACHT

5 MAY  
2026

Benefiting



*Since 1972, Diakonia has been helping men, women, and families in Worcester County, Md. by providing emergency housing, food assistance, and resources to help them get back on their feet.*

11:00 Registration  
12:00 Mini Games  
1:00 Shot Gun Start  
Box Lunch Included



The Bearded Men Society is a nonprofit organization serving the local community for over a decade. They use social events to raise money & awareness for those in need. They pride themselves on donating 100% of funds raised to the cause. Find out more at [BMSOCMD.org](https://BMSOCMD.org).

Visit <https://diakoniaoc.org> to register your team

For Sponsorship opportunities please reach out to The Bearded Men's Society @ 443-880-8596 or The Sterling Tavern @ 302-593-4141



# CINCO DE MAYO SHOOTOUT

Golf Tournament

May 5, 2026

Ocean City Golf & Yacht

**Hole In  
One  
\$3,000**

One foursome  
Boxed lunch sponsorship  
Banner  
Name on social media posts  
Three signs along course

**Eagle  
\$2,500**

One foursome  
Banner  
Name on social media posts  
Two signs along course

**Par  
\$2,000**

One foursome  
Banner  
Name on social media posts  
One sign along course



**TEAM OF FOUR \$900** Register before March 17 \$100 discount!

**FLAG SPONSOR \$250**

**TEE SPONSORSHIP \$100**

**DIAKONIA** INC.

<https://diakoniaoc.org>

Help for Today & Hope for Tomorrow