

FEBRUARY 2021

HOSPITALITY HOTLINE

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



Member Message

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUSAN L. JONES

While the pandemic may have altered our business practices, our resilience and resolve continue to strengthen. As a non-profit trade association, we rely on member support both financially and emotionally. Your feedback and fortitude continue to give me guidance and assist me in paving the path of our purpose. One such path has led me to develop a partnership with OC Today in the production of EXPO Marketplace. Since we can not "gather" for our annual tradeshow, we are intent on connecting industry buyers and sellers via the new **EXPO Marketplace**. Space in this online catalog starts at \$300, details on page 7 or call me at 410-289-6733. The **EXPO Power Panels** slated for **March 8th** are lining up to be amazing! These Facebook Live sessions will provide industry insight and direction. Leading the lodging panel will be Chip Rogers, President of the **American Hotel & Lodging Association**. Mark your calendar for March 8th!



Welcome New Member

ALLIED

JC Ehrlich Pest Control



MARYLAND
TOURISM
COALITION

Make plans to participate in
MD Tourism Day
February 12th 9am-10:30am
Register at this link:
MD Tourism

AHLA

State of the Industry

In 2021, many challenges remain for hotels. Despite obstacles, hotels across the country are resilient and focused on creating an environment ready for guests as travel begins to return in 2021. View the full report at this link:

[AHLA Industry Recap](#)

NRA

Economic Outlook

View this link:

[Restaurant Forecast](#)

47TH ANNUAL



SPRINGTRADEEXPO
Ocean City Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association

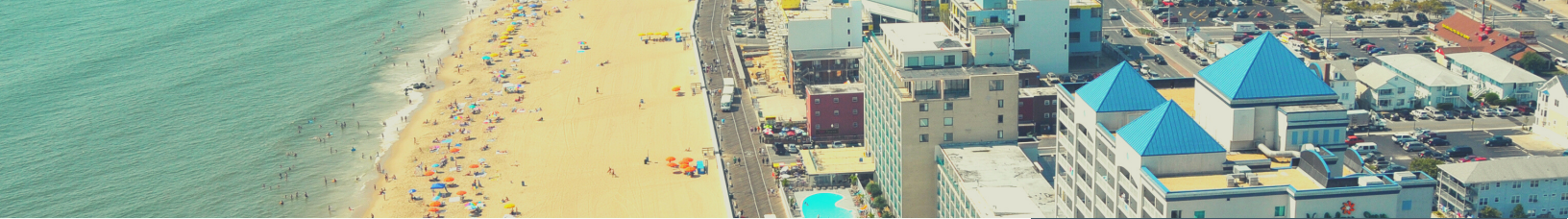
Coming Soon!

EXPO
MARKETPLACE

Your catalog resource for
Hospitality Products & Services



OceanCityTradeExpo.com



Business Brief

MD Hotel Grant: Worcester County Economic Development unveiled the Maryland grant application for hotels on January 25th. These are grants, not loans! Questions, call 410.632.3112 or to apply, go to this link: [Choose Maryland Grant Link](#)

2021 Workforce: The OCHMRA Employee Task Force is working diligently to develop initiatives for a work and play at the beach campaign. This would target surrounding colleges to encourage American students to come to the beach (much like they used to!)

Worcester County Tourism & Economic Development is working on organizing Job Fairs to connect Worcester County residents with employers. These Job Fairs will be similar to those held last Spring and will be held outdoors at Worcester County Parks. More details will be forthcoming. Additionally, the Chamber of Commerce partnered with Junior Achievement (JA) and their traditional spring Job Fair will now be held in conjunction with JA. Contact Lachelle or Nancy at 410.213.0144 for details.

A Fond Farewell from BJ's on the Water

.....and our Best Wishes for an enjoyable chapter to Billy & Maddy Carder!



BJ's on the Water

It has been 41 years of late nights, early mornings, canoe races, band set ups, amazing sunsets, seafood skins, friends becoming family, some tears, LOTS of laughs, golf tournaments, weddings, birthdays, date nights, parties, the list could go on and on. Throughout 41 years, BJ's on the Water has become a home and brought many memories for thousands of employees and especially, for the owners, Billy & Maddy.

With emotions flowing, and hearts extremely heavy, we have decided to hang our hats. It is time to end an era. We are officially selling.

Most of you know Billy's health has been... well, not the greatest. Through successful cancer treatments and his heart needing a little help operating and now Maddy joining the club with a couple operations of her own, PLUS trying to run a restaurant in COVID-19 times, it is time to take a step back so they can finally relax.

Sunday, January 31st, will be our last day as BJ's on the Water.

We would love to see each and every one of you. To those who can't make it, please know we are extremely grateful for the many years of loyal support.

Also, please remember we are still only operating at 50% and closing at 10pm. We plan to follow all rules and regulations as we have since May.

Thank You & Much Love,

♥ The BJ's Crew



Shore Craft Beer & OCDC invite you to participate in 2021's Love on Tap VIRTUAL Shore Craft Beer Fest FebREWary 26 - 28.

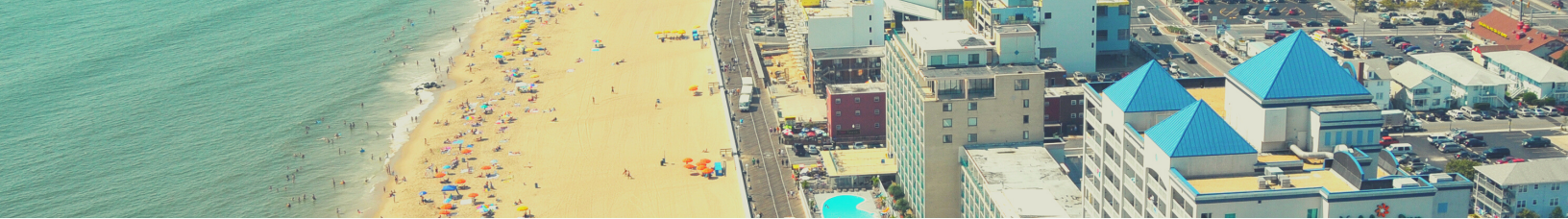
Take a craft beer tour around the Eastern Shore without leaving your home - or choose a hotel package, log into exclusive content from breweries and chefs around Maryland and the Shore .

Complete details are at this link:

[LOVE ON TAP](#)



Ocean City Film Festival is a fantastic event produced by the Art League of Ocean City. The 5th Annual Film Festival is coming March 4th-11th as a virtual event. Schedule, selection, and tickets will be available February 1st.



Hospitality Highlights

WARM WELCOMES & SAD GOODBYES

A warm welcome to **Michelle Burke** who joined the team at **Worcester County Tourism and Economic Development**. Congratulations to **Jessica Gray** on her new position as Sysco Eastern MD Marketing Manager. Welcome aboard to **Kim Fox**, Chesapeake Smart Energy Solutions newest representative. Eastern Shore Coffee & Water welcomed coffee guru **Mike Davis** to their operations. Welcome Mike! Commander Hotel has a few new faces, welcome **Shawn Damiano** and **Theresa Davis**. Real Hospitality has added **JJ Tabone** to it's regional team, welcome JJ!

Bob and Amy Rothermel, TEAM Productions are glowing as they are new grandparents - enjoy the bundle of joy! Kudos to the **Ocean City Development Corporation** and the **Downtown Association** on merging to join forces and forging forward to continue all their great work downtown!

A huge thank you to **Harrison Group** and **Tito's** for their generous donation to the United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore DINE & STAY United program!

The **Buckingham Hotel** has merged into the Commander family and will be known as the **Commander Beach House**.

Condolences to **Sally Kneaval Foster** with Trimper's Rides on the loss of her father.



OCHMRA TRADE EXPO POWER PANELS March 8th

As we announced last month, we are not able to hold an in-person tradeshow as we have traditionally held for the last 46 years. However, we will still be connecting industry buyers and sellers through EXPO MARKETPLACE. Currently, we are in the midst of selling ad space for this online catalog which will be available in March. It's coming together nicely - we are super excited to unveil it soon!

EXPO Power Panels will be held via **Facebook Live** on Monday, March 8th on the Expo Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/octradeexpo> - make sure you like us! These panels will provide a deep dive discussion into timely topics with industry thought leaders and influencers. We'll be featuring two panels; one lodging focused and one restaurant focused. The Lodging Power Panel will feature Chip Rogers, President of the **American Hotel & Lodging Association**, Vince DiFonzo representing the **Delaware Hotel Association** and Ben Seidel representing **Maryland Hotel & Lodging Association**. An outstanding industry advocate, Carrie Leishman of the **Delaware Restaurant Association** will join **Maryland Restaurant Association's** Marshall Weston for the restaurant Power Panel. More to come!

Mark your calendar - March 8th - 10am - 12pm

COVID CORNER

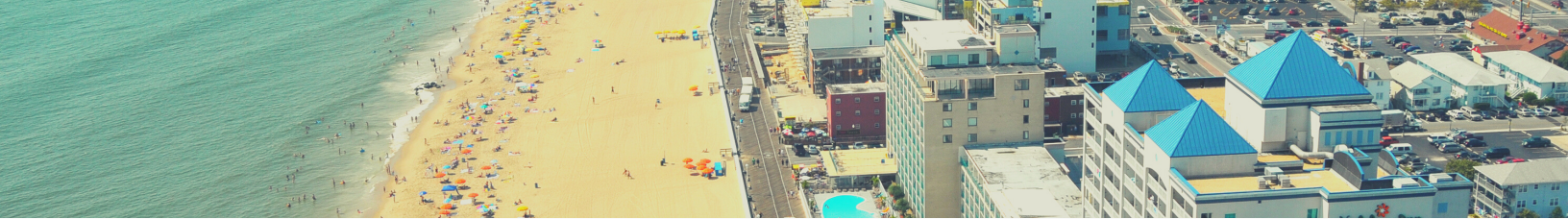
On January 26th, MD entered Phase 1C of the vaccination plan. We anticipate hospitality staff will be Phase 2. Public confidence continues to increase and it appears pent up travel demand is also on the rise with increased vaccinations.

MD is dependent on the Federal government for allocation of vaccines. To learn the latest on vaccines, visit [THIS LINK](#)

[MD VAX](#)

There is also a great CovidLink site which has a lot of frequently asked questions and answers. Here is a link to that page:

[COVIDLINK FAQ](#)



Community Connections

SHOES FOR RECOVERY



DONATE YOUR GENTLY WORN, USED AND NEW SHOES TO

WGP WARRIORS AGAINST ADDICTION

Help us raise funds to help someone get into Recovery, Reduce the Stigma and Educate the public.

Drop Locations

Worcester Youth and Family – Berlin

Ocean Pines Community Center

Worcester County Health Department – Snow Hill

Scheduled Contact Free Drive Thru

Saturday, January 30, 2021 – Wicomico Youth and Civic Center 9:00 am to 11: 00 am

Saturday, February 6, 2021 - Pocomoke Walmart Parking Lot 9:00 am to 11: 00 am

Saturday, February 13, 2021 – Ocean Pines Library Parking Lot 9:00 am to 11: 00 am

Saturday, February 20, 2021 – Snow Hill High School Parking Lot 9:00 am to 11: 00 am

Saturday, February 27, 2021 – Berlin Walmart Parking Lot 9:00 am to 11: 00 am

Accepting men’s, women’s and children’s sneakers, boots, dress shoes, flip flops, sandals in usable condition

If you or your organization would like to have a special collection or act as a drop off site,

Contact: Debbie Smullen wgpwarriors2021@gmail.com 410-870-5161

VIRTUAL TOUR - OC LIFESAVING STATION MUSEUM

Virtual tour of the Ocean City Lifesaving Station Museum brought to you by Beach to Bay Heritage Area and the Rural Maryland Council. Explore Ocean City's early years and the role of United States Life-saving Service. **Click this link: [TOUR HERE](#)**

Summer Work Travel **COMMUNITY SUMMIT 2021**

In partnership with  BridgeUSA

For the past four years community leaders and organizations from across America have met for an annual summit to discuss the J-1 visa Summer Work Travel Program and to share best practices, trends, and growth opportunities to implement in their own communities. This summit traditionally brings together key stakeholders from across the spectrum including chambers of commerce, DMOs, industry associations, host employers, municipal leaders and departments, volunteer organizations, and visa sponsors.

This year, InterExchange has been working alongside a group of visa sponsors and representatives from the U.S. Department of State to transition this traditionally in-person event into a completely new virtual format.

I'd like to draw your attention to a session being held on February 3rd at 2pm ET that may be of particular interest to you and the Ocean City Hotel Motel Restaurant Association. You can also view additional scheduled sessions and Summit details below my signature.

Chamber, DMO, and Industry Associations - How We Support the SWT Program (panel discussion)

REGISTRATION LINK: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-support-group-virtual-summit-2021-registration-134692349443>

We look forward to having you join us for in-depth discussions surrounding the Summer Work Travel program. Feel free to encourage your membership to register as well. I hope to see you there and please reach out to me if you have any questions.

Regards,
Clay



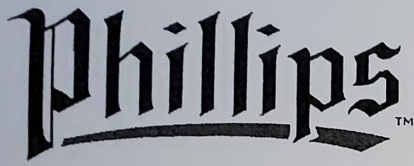
Clay Lewis

InterExchange Work & Travel USA

917-747-4894

Full agenda at this link: [SUMMIT 2021](#)

Registration at this link: [EventBrite Link](#)



For Immediate Release:
Michelle Torres, Corporate Director of Marketing
443.928.7735
MTorres@phillipsfoods.com

THE PHILLIPS FAMILY ANNOUNCES THE PERMANENT CLOSURE OF THE BEACH PLAZA HOTEL

The Beach Plaza Hotel, located oceanfront at 13th Street on the Ocean City boardwalk, has now permanently shut its doors. With the necessary closure of founder Brice and Shirley Phillips's estate, difficult decisions had to be made about how to move forward with the various estate assets, and the Phillips Family has now entered into a contract for sale for the entire property.

"Through our over 50 years operating on the Boardwalk, we've loved getting to know all our guests who stayed with us year after year," said Steve Phillips, son of founders Brice and Shirley Phillips. "The Beach Plaza Hotel was a wonderful home base for thousands of beach vacations, weekend getaways, wedding and anniversary celebrations and reunions, and we're so grateful to have been a part of these unforgettable memories in Ocean City." Since opening in 1967, the hotel had employed hundreds of loyal staff members that the family credits for creating the welcoming, friendly environment that kept guests coming back again and again.

Existing reservations for 2021 have been cancelled and refunds are being issued now - please reach out to the Beach Plaza Hotel at info@beachplazaoc.com with any questions or concerns.

The Phillips family's original Ocean City restaurant location, Phillips Crab House, is gearing up for a delicious 2021 season, with tentative plans to reopen for weekends starting in late Spring.

Phillips Seafood is anchored in tradition with roots on Maryland's Chesapeake Bay, and remains family owned and operated by the Phillips family. Renowned for award-winning crab cakes and an unwavering dedication to quality, Phillips Seafood has served millions of families, vacationers and seafood lovers since 1956. For more information, visit www.phillipsseafood.com.



January 24, 2021

After a challenging 2020 for the restaurant and hospitality industries world-wide and our collective confronting of a new normal, the Taustin family plans to use this period of transition as an opportunity to continue the family's long-standing tradition of innovation and transformation. "With the formation of the Taustin Group, we looked at each of our entities to see how we can meet the needs of the day and develop our properties to their fullest potential while being at the forefront of the next chapter of the Ocean City experience," says CEO Cole Taustin.

Next month, the construction of Pier 23 will begin in West Ocean City where Mad Fish Bar and Grille once stood. Pier 23 will be Ocean City's first waterfront container food port. This new restaurant will be a destination for quality entertainment in a setting unlike any other in town. We will offer a relaxed outdoor retreat surrounded by decked out shipping containers, each with their own unique options; Tacos, Deli, Grille, Ice Cream, or a full bar. The final container is the stage for our line-up of DJs and live performers.

BLU Crabhouse & Raw Bar will continue to serve OC locals and tourists alike in its 10th Anniversary season. BLU will reopen in Spring 2021 highlighting expanded and enhanced indoor and outdoor dining experiences. BLU has always been a predominantly outdoor destination, and, with various renovations and additions, our traditional Happy Hour experience will return in 2021 in conjunction with new dining areas and outdoor bar seating.

Given the specific impact of the COVID pandemic on buffets, the largest opportunity for the Taustin Group will be on the front of the 24th street property where the Embers Restaurant has stood for over 70 years. In 1985, when The Embers Restaurant became an All-You-Can-Eat Seafood and Prime Rib Buffet, it was the first of its kind in Ocean City. "We are turning the page once again after a long and successful chapter in our history at the beach. The Embers will transform during this period, and all of us are very excited for you to see what is next," said Cole Taustin.

Coming in 2022, the project will feature a versatile space that will integrate the existing BLU Crabhouse and Embers Island Miniature Golf while providing additional shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities. The Taustin Group will remember its roots as it transforms this property into a destination with something to enjoy any time of day. "The Embers has so much history," says Taustin Group President Jay Taustin, "and not just for our family, but for many OC locals and visitors. We plan to pay homage to our past as we venture into the future and lead the way once again in redefining what Ocean City has to offer." The Taustin Group will release continuing updates including renderings, architectural highlights, and eventually photos of our construction progress for each of the projects. For additional information as it becomes available, follow any Taustin Group company on their website and social media outlets.



2021 EXPO MARKETPLACE - SPACE RESERVATION FORM

EXPO MARKETPLACE will be easy-to-search by featuring ads in categories (see attachment for category list). It will be marketed to Attendees the same way we have encouraged attendance in the past and there is no charge for an Attendee to receive the catalog. A link will be sent to our entire Attendee email list and be placed on the OceanCityTradeExpo.com website for 6 months. Featured and Premium Exhibitor will also get extra push through New Products & Show Specials to email lists and on Expo site.

_____ **Supporting Exhibitor / Vendor \$300** - one half page ad with website linked **Half Horizontal: 6" wide x 4.5" deep Half Vertical: 3" wide x 9" deep**

_____ **Featured Exhibitor/ Vendor - \$500** - one full page ad, website link AND listing in the New Products Show Specials Section **Full Page: 6" wide x 9" deep**

_____ **Premium Exhibitor / Vendor - \$800** - two page spread with website link, listing in the New Products Show Specials Sections and video link (exhibitor provides video) **Two-page spread: 12" wide x 9" deep**

_____ **Premium Placement - Inside cover -- \$1300** - one full page ad, listing in the New Products Show Specials Sections and video link (exhibitor provides video)

DEADLINES:

Ad reservations due Friday, February 12

Copy for ads being composed due Wednesday, February 17

Camera-ready materials due Wednesday, February 24

Company: _____ Contact Name: _____

Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

Payment Info: check or credit card (circle one)

Check must be received by February 12 - payable & mailed to OCHMRA 5700 Coastal Hwy #302 Ocean City MD 21842

Credit Card # _____ Expiration: _____ CW: _____

To reserve space, submit form to:

Susan Jones, OCHMRA - susanjones@ocvisitor.com - fax 410-289-5645 OR

Elaine Brady, OC Today - ebrady@oceancitytoday.net - fax 410-723-6511

Questions, call OCHMRA at 410-289-6733