



June 2015

# Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through  
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

News from...

## THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Welcome New Members Allied Members

OC Massage  
Fox Theatres

### College Beach Week

In an effort to keep communications open, please be advised that returning the weekend of June 5th – 7th will be College Beach Week. The Town of Ocean City has taken a proactive approach and met with the event organizer. They have communicated to them, as well as all other groups, that anyone is welcome as long as our visitors obey the same rules everyone else is expected to obey. You may notice an additional police presence. Rest assured, there is a coordinated effort among surrounding agencies to maintain peace and order throughout June. A HUGE thank you to the following members for helping us with lodging needs: Beach Plaza, Castle in the Sand, The Commander, Grand Hotel, Howard Johnson Plaza, Quality Inn Boardwalk, Park Place Hotel, Sahara Motel and the Talbot Street Inn.

### Help Us Help You

If you haven't already done so, remember that you are entitled to put your brochures in the 40th Street Visitors Center. Thousands of visitors and convention and consumer show attendees stroll through the center, so make sure you have your info in front of them!

## Ocean City Hotel Week & Midweek Summer Splash Promotions

In an effort to increase visitation at the end of the summer, we have brought back the Hotel Week promotion. Beginning on Sunday, August 30 and running through Thursday September 10, (excluding Labor Day weekend) participating lodging members will offer Beach Bargains and Free Nights. Participating properties will feature free night stays and beach bargains. For example, stay 3 nights, get 4th free, stay 4 nights get 5th night free; 3 night stays receive 15% off rate, 4 night stays receive 20% off and 5 night stays receive 25% off. Specific deals can be found by going to [www.oceancityhotelweek.com](http://www.oceancityhotelweek.com).

If you haven't already signed up to participate, give us a call and we'll get you set up!



Have you sent in your deals for the Midweek Summer Splash promotion? This promotion will showcase your deals which can be in any format, provided they are offered Sunday - Thursday. Your special will be

uploaded to our Deals page which feeds into [www.ococean.com](http://www.ococean.com) deals. Make sure you send us your offer!



## LET'S WORK TOGETHER

You are invited to participate in the Ron Jon Referral Program. Ron Jon provides discount cards for distribution to your guests and you earn a rebate for every card redeemed at Ron Jon Surf Shop. No limit on rebate earnings.

To participate or receive more information, contact Tracey Gray at [Traceyg@rjss.com](mailto:Traceyg@rjss.com) or 321-799-8880 x1048.



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## REST EASY: Lodging industry trends

By: John Boe

### THE FOUR CORNERSTONES OF SUPERIOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

The heart of any company can be found beating inside the walls of its customer service department;

Providing superior customer service after the sale is a smart business decision that pays long-term dividends.

All the money that companies spend on sales training, marketing research, advertising, and PR initiatives to attract new customers is wasted if they can't keep their customers satisfied after the sale.

Your satisfied customers' positive "word-of-mouth" endorsements have always been and always will be your company's greatest asset and most effective marketing program.

The only surefire way to keep a customer happy is to consistently go the "extra mile" and exceed his or her service expectations.

Several years ago, I read a fascinating article about a survey that asked people to list the top character traits they expected from a customer service representative, CSR. The survey data clearly identified four key character traits that dominated the feedback list.

As you review the list below, think about how your customers would rate your character traits and the quality of service you provide.

#### The Four Cornerstones of Superior Customer Service

##### 1. Positive mental attitude.

A smile can be felt over the phone, but so can a frown. First impressions are extremely important and there's absolutely no substitute for a cheerful disposition and a positive mental attitude. Customers don't want to deal with grumpy, negative-minded CSRs who project a less than professional attitude. The survey showed that a positive attitude topped the list of the most valued character traits.

##### 2. Respectful.

All customers deserve to be treated with respect, even if they're difficult to work with or upset. Being rude or displaying unprofessional behavior is the fastest way to lose a customer for life. Cursing, name calling, sarcasm, belittling, shouting, or arguing with a customer is never justifiable under any circumstances. When you show respect to your customer, you'll eventually gain his or her respect in return.

##### 3. Proactive.

Don't just be reactive, be proactive. Proactive support is all about identifying and resolving customer service issues before they become a problem. You can be so successful with proactive customer service that you can often solve problems before your customers even realize they exist. Customers expect a CSR to be results-oriented. The best CSRs are inventive and show initiative when solving customer complaints.

##### 4. Dependable.

If you can't be counted on to keep your word and deliver on your promises, your customers will drop you like a bad habit. When you make a commitment to a customer, always remember to under promise and over deliver. Your word is your bond and your customers expect you to live up to your promises. A dependable CSR keeps his or her customers continuously updated and return e-mails and phone calls quickly.

"One customer, well taken care of, could be more valuable than \$10,000 worth of advertising."  
- Jim Rohn



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## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: JOEL BROUS



Hospitality was ingrained in Joel Brous at a young age. The Flamingo Motel has been a part of the Brous family since 1963, when Joel's father, George, bought the motel, just one year after it was built by hotelier Hugh Wilde Sr. Starting with just 23 units, the original building still stands, 50 years later. When his father died tragically, his mother Rose, had big shoes to fill to run the hotel. Her sons Joel and Nick, immediately stepped in and delivered towels to guests, cleaned the pool and helped with the daily chores. Following in his mother, Rose's, footsteps, Joel also served as OCHMRA President 2001-2002.

Joel graduated from Worcester Country School (now Worcester Prep) and then went on the play lacrosse at Penn State and received a degree in Civil Engineering. In addition to remaining active as a Past President, Joel serves on Ocean City's Planning and Zoning board. Joel and his wife, Christine have four kids, Dryden (17), Hattie (15), George (14) and Henry (11). In the little spare time he has, he enjoys coaching lacrosse and skiing in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.



## THE DISH: *Restaurant industry trends*

Email is one of the most effective ways restaurants can build relationships with customers, increase sales and get the most bang for their marketing bucks. In fact, roughly one-half of fine dining operators are planning to invest more in email and text message marketing in 2015. Here are ten pointers to ensure you make the most of your messages:

- 1. Be relevant.** Personalize your message and make your email's content relevant to your customers. Give them what they want: Create a "VIP" experience by offering promotions you don't provide through other channels.
- 2. Be creative.** Announce exciting offers, news and events with messages that will grab your customers' attention. As the quantity of commercial emails increases, make sure your email stands out in guests' inboxes.
- 3. Select your vendor wisely.** Find a vendor that follows responsible email practices, is easy to use, and has quality customer service. Deliverability is a key component of your email program: Don't overlook its importance to your response rate.
- 4. Integrate on- and off-line channels.** Let your customers know about your email program in your store, through community events, in print and online. Provide incentives for your staff and customers to help spread the word about your program.

## 10 EMAIL TIPS FOR RESTAURANTS

- 5. Authenticate your email.** Support email authentication initiatives and make certain that your service provider complies. That ensures your messages get in the inbox and not in the spam folder.
- 6. Identify yourself.** In every message, include your restaurant's contact information and familiar branding. Your guests will feel more comfortable when they recognize you. If they have questions about your offer or need directions, your contact information helps them easily reach you.
- 7. Be open and responsible.** Let your customers know about your email privacy policy. Tell them about new practices and technologies you implemented to safeguard them from spam. Being open about your email operations helps build customer trust.
- 8. Manage message frequency.** If you over- or under-email your customers, you run the risk of them unsubscribing. Send one or two messages per month to keep them interested but not overwhelmed.
- 9. Shape customer experience.** What you say and when you say it does more than informing a customer about your product: it helps create a customer experience. Remember that for each email you send.
- 10. Integrate with social media.** Don't miss the opportunity to extend your relationship with guests. Add links to your social media profiles on Facebook, Twitter and other networks. Collect "likes" and followers' information from social sites, and funnel new guests into your email program. Use social media publishing.



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Welcome **Patricia Ilczuk-Lavanceau & Dan Hallon** to the team at **Adams Radio Group**. Congrats to **Tara Nunan**, new at **Harrison Group**, joining Dan & the crew at **Quality Inn 54th St**. Welcome to the new management team at **de Lazy Lizard**, General Managers **Ben Vatayuk** and **Jen Robins** and executive chef **Mitch Cook**. Welcome new owners of **Captain's Galley II**, **Ken Church**, **Hugh Cropper IV**, **Dr. William Greenwood**, & **Joe White**. **Jennifer Bland**, **Mikes Carpet Connection**, just welcomed baby girl Emma Marie to her family. **Ocean City Brewing Company** welcomed new manager, **Kerry Cettei** to the team. **Fenwick Inn** has welcomed new General Manager, **Michael Gayle**, and new Sales Manager, **Lisa Mannon**.

*A very BIG thank you to all the Hotels & Restaurants that have hosted OCHMRA & our Tourism partners in preparation for the Summer season:*

*Atlantic House B&B, The Breakers Hotel, The Clarion, Crystal Sands Motel, Harrison Group & Hemingways Restaurant, The King Charles Hotel, Maridel Motel, Spindrift Motel*

***Do you have Seasonal J-1 Students this summer? Please direct them to "like" the Seasonal Workforce Facebook page, run by the Seasonal Workforce Committee, part of the Ocean City Chamber of Commerce. It keeps the students updated on all the cultural activities available to them such as Shorebirds games and meeting Mayor Meehan, as well as community sponsored free meals. Click here to share!***

Congratulations to the team at Jolly Rogers on the opening of new Cyclone Cart Coaster!



Congratulations to the new owners of Captain's Galley II, **Ken Church**, **Hugh Cropper IV**, **Dr. William Greenwood**, & **Joe White**.

**THE ART LEAGUE OF OCEAN CITY**  
**CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

**Golf Tournament**



**Saturday, June 27 - 9 am**  
**Bay Golf Club, Berlin**

*A benefit for The Art League of Ocean City  
in memory of artist Betty Grace Everson*



**REGISTRATION - \$90 PER PLAYER**

includes continental breakfast, lunch, cart, tee gift and range balls.

Sponsorships are available.

Registration 8 am - Shotgun start 9:00 am - Lunch 2:00 pm - Awards 2:30 pm

**PRIZES AND RAFFLES!!**

Hole in One, Longest Drive, Closest to the Hole. Two \$500 cash raffles.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER, CONTACT**

John Everson 443-614-0058 johneverson9@yahoo.com

Dick Elliott 301-520-8964 elliottvargas@yahoo.com

Art League of Ocean City 410-524-9433 artleagueofoceancity.org