



Hospitality Hotline

Connecting the industry through
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

News from... THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Welcome New Members

ALLIED
OC Bay Hopper & Sail Alyosha

Jellyfish Festival Approaching

The inaugural Jellyfish Festival is right around the corner and we are excited to partner with the promoters to be one of the 2 non-profits managing the bars. This event takes place June 21-23 and features local and national music, freestyle motorcross events, pro-surfing demos, family fitness and activity zones and much more! Music during the day will be free until 4:30pm. If you haven't gotten your tickets for the national evening acts, there are still a few available. Check it out here.

Minimum Wage Seminar

On June 5th, the Chamber will host a seminar with attorney Doug Desmarais who will review the recently passed legislation which will unfortunately drive the minimum wage to \$15/hr. The version which passed was certainly less damaging than what was originally presented; thank you to so many who wrote letters and who went to testify. While we were able to preserve tipped wages, there are some provisions of the legislation which take effect June 1, 2019. The seminar is being held at the new 45th Street Aloft and is \$15pp. Please register to ensure there are enough seats. Click here for the registration link.

Marijuana in the Workplace

According to RAM's attorney Albert Randall, you do NOT have to allow employees to enter your place of business with their medical marijuana. It is still a federal crime and even if the employee is a card carrying medical user, you can prohibit them from bringing it to work. That prohibition could extend not only to the hotel/restaurant but to the parking lot as well (if owned by the business). Use during working hours can, and should be, prohibited. Mr. Randall's contact info is: arandall@fandpnet.com



Effective June 1, 2019

With the passage of 2018's HB166 (now Chapter 10), the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's Employment Standards Service would like to make Marylanders aware of upcoming changes to Maryland's wage and hour laws. The law requires annual increases in the State's minimum wage that begin on January 1, 2020. There are other changes that go into effect on June 1, 2019.

Some exceptions to the minimum wage have been eliminated. Effective June 1, 2019, the reduced 85% minimum wage rate provided for employees under 20 years of age for their first six months of employment and for all employees working for certain amusement or recreational establishments, including swimming pools, has been eliminated.

Employers may pay a reduced minimum wage (85%) to employees under the age of 18 as of June 1, 2019.

Another new requirement starting June 1, 2019: pending the adoption of regulations, restaurant employers who utilize a tip credit must provide employees with a written or electronic wage statement. The wage statement must be for each pay week in the pay period and show the effective hourly tip rate as derived from employer-paid cash wages plus all reported tips for tip credit hours worked each workweek of the pay period.

Cont.

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- Draft Beer Systems
- "5 Star" Quality Service Department
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Now Offering... Slush Puppie!

- Well-known and trusted national brand
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The Department has revised the minimum wage and overtime law posters to reflect these changes. Montgomery and Prince George's counties have their own minimum wage laws, so there are posters for Maryland and for Montgomery and Prince George's counties. The posters are available in English and Spanish. [Click here.](#)



THE DISH: Restaurant industry trends

HOW TO IDENTIFY AND REDUCE CONTROLLABLE COSTS IN YOUR RESTAURANT

By: Eugenia Schraa, Toast Tab

If you're struggling with your budget, you're not alone.

Restaurants operate on razor-thin margins; owners, operators, and managers are constantly reevaluating their inventory purchasing strategy and menu pricing strategy to offset operational costs throughout the business. Some of these operational costs are uncontrollable – like rent increases, third-party delivery, or minimum wage increases – while some are entirely controllable.

Restaurant Controllable Costs Worth Re-Examining

Late fees, tickets, and fines

Fees are a classic example of drops in a bucket – one might not seem like a lot, but fees can add up and deplete the budget for other areas of the business quickly. You can tackle and potentially do away with fees altogether with a little organization, judicious planning, and staff training.

Shop around to lower your electricity costs.

Electricity is a major hidden restaurant expense. While you might be able to limit some wasteful habits and appliances, switching to a cheaper supplier is the easiest way to save. If electricity is a big cost for your restaurant, it's also worth considering ways to manipulate the light in your space through conscious restaurant design. The right wall colors, counter surface materials, windows, and positioning of lamps and overhead lights throughout your space can maximize the amount of light without increasing costs.

Invest in smart restaurant technology.

While limiting electricity usage can be hard, one exception is installing a smart thermostat like such as Ecobee or Nest that allows you to track temperatures, schedule heating and cooling times, and make necessary adjustments from your phone or computer. Electric thermostats help you spend way less on electricity while maintaining staff and customer happiness. Similarly, now may be a great time to invest in a smart video camera. Be upfront with your employees about where the cameras are — you don't want them to feel that you're spying on them. You do, though, want them to feel that you're keeping a careful watch on what's going on in your restaurant. And that's going to be easy to do when you can peek at the footage at any time or place from your phone.

Eliminate early clock-ins.

Making sure you monitor employee hours with the aim to eliminate early clock-ins is not about nickel-and-diming anyone: It's about

making sure you treat all your employees fairly — without allowing anyone to indulge in a loophole that can breed resentment and take money out of another employee's paycheck.

It will also help you predict and plan for your labor costs; proactive action could mean big savings. Many point of sale solutions will have a clock-in enforcement feature that prevents staff from clocking in before their shift starts. Often times, you can configure this setting to prevent clock-ins 20, 15, 10, or even 5 minutes before a shift starts.

Reduce Food Waste with Proper Back of House Management

Food costs are one of the top controllable costs in your restaurant. You should be consistently analyzing and negotiating with vendors to ensure you're getting the best price possible. Along with vendor relationship management, teach the back of house – specifically your prep cooks – cutting and prepping techniques that keep food items fresher for longer, and maximize the amount of product that is going onto plates rather than into a compost bin or landfill.

Conduct maintenance regularly

Unsubscribe from the "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" mentality. You can reduce the risk of unexpected restaurant equipment failure by conducting maintenance regularly. Some equipment providers offer yearly maintenance packages. Yearly maintenance plans tend to operate at the local level, so you'll have to do a little research to see what's available in your area.

Think of yearly maintenance as insurance on your restaurant equipment: one-time investment that you'll be thankful you paid that one time things go awry.

Save on printing, paper, and headaches with kitchen display screens.

You can reduce – or eliminate outright – a need for kitchen printer paper by investing in investing in kitchen display screens. Restaurants that have a point of sale system with integrated kitchen display screen (KDS) technology reduce ticket time, human error, and the need for paper tickets. Not only will this upgrade make for smoother front and back of house communication and faster ticket and table turn times, but it will save you on printing and paper costs.

It's important to focus on ways to reduce overhead in your restaurant by taking a proactive approach to optimizing controllable costs.

[Read the whole article by clicking here.](#)



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The OC Chamber Seasonal Workforce Committee is looking for businesses, community organizations, churches and local citizens to sponsor bike lights for our seasonal workers this summer. Safety is so critical especially for our J-1 students, many of which have never been to Ocean City or the United States. We host more than 4000 students each summer to live and work on Ocean City and the surrounding area- they are in integral part of our community and economy.

The OC Chamber Seasonal Workforce Committee is getting a bulk rate for front and back LED bike lights and we need sponsors! You can sponsor one student, or one set of lights for only \$7 (include front and back lights that easily can be

Bike Lights For J-1s...we need your help!

installed on the students bike). Or you can sponsor a larger group depending on what you are able to offer.

We will be installing them for students throughout the summer and if you are an employer we can get you the lights to hand out to your workers personally!

Bike Light Sponsor Levels

One (1) Student \$7

Five Students (5) \$35

Ten (10) Students \$70

Twenty Five (25) students \$175

Seventy Five (75) Students \$525

One Hundred Students (100) \$700

Or any other amount you are comfortable with!!!

Checks can be made payable to the Greater Ocean City Chamber of Commerce

The Enslaved at Rackliffe House

An exhibition entitled *The Enslaved at Rackliffe House and Worcester County, MD: A Local Story*, opened to the public at Rackliffe House near Assateague Island National Seashore on May 21st.

The exhibition covers such topics as The Middle Passage, Growth of the Slave Economy, Resistance to Slavery in Worcester County, Methodism and African-American Life, and the US Colored Troops. It includes images as well as two cases of artifacts (one of which displays pieces discovered during an archaeological dig on the Rackliffe property).

"The full story of Rackliffe House cannot be told without a historically accurate portrayal of all the people who lived here," said Ed Phillips, Jr., President of Rackliffe House Trust. "2019 is a timely occasion to open this show as it marks 400 years since the first African came to the Americas."

Public and private records, as well as archaeological evidence, show the vital role that African Americans played. They were the economic engine that helped to create and sustain the wealth of 18th-century estates like this one.

Rackliffe House was built in the 1740s by Captain Charles Rackliffe, a wealthy seaside merchant-planter who owned 18 slaves. Their names are listed individually around the top of the exhibition's walls.

This exhibition covers the time from the colonial period until about 1870. It also tells a local story, focusing on Rackliffe and neighboring estates in Worcester County. Many of the names encountered in this exhibition (Purnell, Jacobs, Ayres, Jones, Derrickson, Henry, and Fassitt, for instance) remain in the area today, although the spelling of names varied over the years.



"The role which African Americans played is told through records that speak for themselves to explain the lives and workways of the enslaved in the Sinepuxent area of Worcester County," said Dr. Ray Thompson, former director of the Edward Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture, and curator of the exhibition. Thompson and the exhibition committee were assisted in planning the exhibition by historian Dr. Clara Small, Professor Emeritus at Salisbury University, and leaders from the local African-American community including Barbara T. Purnell and Rev. David Briddell and his wife Jane.

Rackliffe House Trust has planned a series of talks and lectures in relation to the exhibition. Dates and speakers can be found on at www.RackliffeHouse.org.



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Welcome back, **Renee Seiden**, who has returned to Ocean City working with the **Pinnacle Hospitality Group**. **Steve Butts**, **SailAlyosha & OC Bay Hopper**, has sailed around the world and anchored in Ocean City for the Summer- congrats! Best wishes on your next chapters, **Joel Brous**, who sold his iconic **Flamingo Hotel**, your years of service to the HMRA Board are greatly appreciated- we look forward to working with the new owners.

Condolences

Condolences to the **DiFilippo family**, **Hotel Monte Carlo & Monte Carlo Boardwalk**, on the loss of patriarch, **Carlo DiFilippo**. Condolences to **Rick Vach**, **Longboard Restaurant**, for the loss of his brother, **Joshua Vach**.



REST EASY: *Lodging industry trends*

HOW SMART HOTELIERS ARE PERSONALIZING THEIR ADS TO CAPTURE NEW AUDIENCES

One of the biggest mistakes hotel marketers make when planning ad campaigns and promotional offers are building these campaigns around very broad, one size fits all messaging. In their effort to appeal to everyone, these ads run the risk of appealing to no one.

The Good News: New ad platforms and ad technology (from google, facebook and Instagram, to travel intent and the OTAs) make it easier than ever to identify highly specific audiences so that you can tailor your ad messaging to suit them.

The Bad News: Staying current with the always evolving list of targeting options on those very same platforms is tougher than one might think. Hoteliers can not only target travelers at various stages of the purchase funnel, but based on past actions, sites they frequent and ads they've previously clicked on. You can even target travelers based on where they are at various stages in their life. It's called Milestone Targeting and it's changing the way hotel marketers think about ad personalization.

Based on our hotel digital advertising experience, here are a few options you can implement immediately to personalize your ad messaging to capture new, motivated audiences:

1. **Build your campaigns around romance milestones.**

A vast and lucrative audience for your digital ads are those who are celebrating or nearing major romantic milestones, such as engagements, weddings and anniversaries. By selectively targeting these users, you can present them with customized offers and promotions.

Recently Engaged

A good place to start is with the recently engaged audiences. Facebook and Instagram allow you to target those coveted newly engaged users after they flip the switch on their profile's relationship status. This allows you to push custom messaging. Resorts can pair these newly engaged audiences with

promotions like honeymoons offers or destination weddings.

Newly Married & Upcoming Anniversary

Want to push romantic weekend getaways to couples in your drive markets? You might try options for targeting the newly married on Facebook and Instagram. This option is available for newly married couples for up to one year. Similarly, you can target couples who have an upcoming anniversary. This is where hoteliers can get creative.

Perhaps you want to exclude women from the targeting and customize a message specifically for men, driving traffic to a custom landing page that talks about surprising their wives for their upcoming anniversary. Or vice-versa. Of course, that's just an example. But the point is: knowing what's possible in targeting allows hoteliers to get surgical with their targeting and pair that targeting with extremely personalized content.

2. **Target Parents For Family Vacations.**

Family travelers are a distinct and highly targetable demographic, with specific needs and preferences that you can build into your Facebook and Instagram ads. For example, hotels offering suites with kitchenettes can target families/parents by promoting these amenities as ideal options for families trying to vacation on a budget.

The same holds true for hotels and resorts that offer kid-centric amenities, like themed pools and guest-rooms, as well as services for parents (i.e. onsite childcare for parents seeking a little alone time).

To reach these travelers, Facebook and Instagram offer detailed options under "Parents." Target all parents, or drill-down according to the age of the children in the family. There are options for new parents (with kids aged 0-12 months), as well as parents with adult children (18-26 years), early school-age children (6-8 years), preschoolers (3-5 years), preteens (8-12 years), teenagers (13-18 years) and toddlers (1-2 years).



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*Out and About with
OCHMRA*



Thank you our great Worcester County tourism team for always promoting our beautiful area, and to the Worcester County Commissioners for declaring Travel and Tourism Week in Worcester County!



The Grand Opening of the Woodward Wrecktangle-a great addition to our Wellness Tourism!



Mayor Rick Meehan and Gov. Hogan recreating the iconic Umbrella Picture!



Enjoying a ride on the water on the new Sail Alyosha!



The First J-1 Safety night of the season with OC Fire, Beach Patrol & Police!



You're Invited!

TO A POOL PARTY AT
THE RESIDENCE INN OCEAN CITY!

WELCOME J-1 STUDENTS!

PLEASE JOIN US...
TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2019
4:00 PM - 7:00 PM

FOR FOOD, FUN & HELPFUL INFORMATION!



Event is FREE for all incoming J-1 Students and their employers.



HEALTH & SAFETY DEMONSTRATIONS:

OCEAN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT
BEACH PATROL
FIRE DEPARTMENT
WORCESTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
SEASONAL WORKFORCE COMMITTEE
AND MORE!

LIVE DJ ENTERTAINMENT!

PHOTO BOOTH!

GIVEAWAYS & MORE!



*Bring your
Bathing Suit!*

No Alcohol will be served or permitted on site.