



Hospitality Hotline

October 2019

Connecting the industry through
Advocacy, Education and Partnerships

News from... THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Welcome New Members

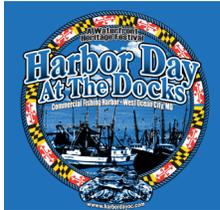
ALLIED
DH Companies
Spot On

Make a Date with Delicious!

Mark Your Calendars ~ **October 13-27 is Fall Restaurant Week!** Dining out is a great way to support your fellow members and provide more business so staff can be kept busy. In turn, you'll find great deals, great food and a great excuse to not have to cook! Participating restaurants can be found at www.oceancityrestaurantweek.com

TKU Bikefest Volunteers

Once again, Bikefest weekend was amazing ~ ZZ Top was certainly over the top! Each year, we are able to add to the Association's bottom line through managing two beer booths at the inlet. We certainly could not barback without the assistance of our awesome volunteers! A **HUGE THANK YOU** to: Danelle Amos & Jackie, *Beach Walk Hotel*, Patricia & Dave Shaffer and Danette Fleming *Branch Out Marketing*, Earl Conley *Bank of OC*, Tom Tawney *Cayman Suites*, Suzanne Jackson, Terri DiPerna, Will and Amanda Lynch *Commander Hotel*, Jean Borysowski *Dough Roller*, Byron Green *Hampton Inn Bayfront*, Debby Wells *Nick's Golf*, Chief Hoffman and Billy Gallagher *Pit-n-Pub*, Gigi & Todd LeKites, *PKS* and Courtney Blackford and Mackenzie Kayda *Residence Inn OC*. We couldn't have done it without you all - many thanks!!



HARBOR DAY AT THE DOCKS A MARITIME HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Last held in 2012, we are excited to be a part of the return of Harbor Day at the Docks on **Saturday, October 19th** from 10am-5pm. This maritime heritage festival will be held at the West Ocean City Commercial Fishing Harbor and features maritime artists, fisherman demonstrations,

free kids activities, live music, food, Phillips crabcake eating contest and culminates with a Blessing of the Fleet at 5pm.

The festival showcases the marriage of our rich fishing history and culture of our community. The US Coast Guard cutter will be on-site to describe their important safety measures while at sea. Large commercial fishing boats will share a glimpse into their lives as they teach kids how to band lobsters and describe their research with horseshoe crabs and tiger sharks. Hand-on demonstrations will bring their maritime world to life on the land.

The event will be held rain or shine. Shuttle service will be provided from the West OC Park-n-Ride courtesy of the Francis Scott Key shuttle. The event is free to attend. Please join the OCHMRA, OC & OP Chambers, Art League of OC, Marlin Club Crew, Martin Fish Co. and the Worcester County Recreation and Parks as we celebrate the fishing industry!

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Congrats to **Kathleen Dillon** who moved from the front desk to Sales Manager at the **Aloft!** Welcome to **Laurie Hobday** who has joined the **Clarion Fontainebleau** Sales team. Wedding bells rang for **Sarah Chandler** of **Eastern Shore Coffee & Water** who tied the knot with Greg Bromley. **Matt & Courtney Taylor** of **F.A. Taylor and Sons** welcomed their first child, Broderick into the Taylor family ~ grandfather **David** is beaming with joy too! **Susan Blaney** returned to **Diakonia** as the Volunteer Coordinator ~ congrats Susan! **Fisher Architecture** is celebrating their 10 year Anniversary ~ way to go **Keith & Caitlin Fisher!**

Condolences

Condolences to **Diane Kaeufer** of the **Dough Roller** on the loss of her mother Donna. **Milt Warren** of **Delmarva Two-Way Radio** also lost his dear mother. And, condolences to the **Ayres family** on the loss of long-time Ocean City solicitor Guy Ayres.

The Greater Ocean City Chamber of Commerce will be celebrating **Distinguished Women of Ocean City** on **October 23rd** from 6-8pm at the Doubletree Penthouse. The ladies being honored have made such a difference in our business and tourism community. With October as "the month of the woman" and 2019 as "the year of the woman" (celebrating the 100th anniversary of our right to vote), this is the perfect opportunity to have this event. A limited number of tickets are available and are at www.oceancity.org under Chamber Events.

Those being celebrated are:

Carol Withers, Donna Greenwood, Marty Trimper, Chris Butler, Pam Stansell, Michelle Fager, Stephanie Meehan, Lauren Taylor, Annemarie Dickerson, Jill Ferrante, Rina Thaler, Anna Dolle Bushnell, Maddy Carder, Cheryl Taustin and Laura Deeley Bren. *Congratulations to these amazing Ladies!*

FOX THEATRES DISCOUNT TUESDAYS

All day on Tuesdays, Sun & Surf and Fox Gold Coast will have discount Tuesday where all seats are only \$5. 3D Shows will have an additional \$1.50 charge. A new \$5 popcorn and drink combo will also be available all day Tuesday. Restrictions will apply such as special event pricing and black out dates around major holidays.

Ghost tours are back on Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 pm at **Ripley's Believe it or Not** on the boardwalk.

Each Friday and Saturday **now through November 3**, ghost seekers can embark on a guided tour discovering authentic evidence of paranormal activity collected by professional paranormal investigators.

When the lights are out and the music is silenced, tales of Ripley's haunted exhibits join the rich history of Ocean City ghosts in an adventure that just might bring ghost seekers face to face with unseen guests.

Space is limited so make you reservations now at <https://tickets.ripleys.com/oceancity/> or by calling 410-289-5600.

Saturday, October 12th, the **OC Museum Society** will have its **2nd Annual Historic House Tour** from 10-4pm. This event will allow you to step into the past as you tour some of Ocean City's oldest homes, churches and establishments. An educator will be on site to discuss the unique history of each building. www.ocmuseum.org for details and tickets.



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REST EASY: *Lodging industry trends*

By: SiteMinder Guest Experience

AIRBNB AND THE HOTEL INDUSTRY: 3 LESSONS TO LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD AT YOUR PROPERTY

When it comes down to it, the 'threat' of home-sharing businesses such as Airbnb is not universally the same to every hotel. Depending on location, size, and brand some hotels won't feel a ripple, some will be more concerned, while others may actually see it as another opportunity to broaden their hotel's online distribution.

Whether you're oblivious to the home rentals market, concerned by it, or eager to connect with it, there are some key learnings to be found in why it's so successful and how your property can achieve the same level of enthusiasm among your hotel guests.

Lesson #1

Your hotel cannot afford to be generic.

The very nature of home sharing means guests are staying in unique properties such as vacation homes and each will appeal to its own niche market.

An experience is something modern guests crave more than anything and home sharing is perfectly aligned with this notion. The rooms sold on Airbnb have been created for this very purpose; to engage a human desire for comfort, style, and stimulation – regardless of whether that's for a business trip or a family vacation.

To mirror this hotels need to focus on a core, unique, offering for travellers. You can't win over every market but you should think about what your hotel has that other properties don't, then build and expand your messaging around that. For example, maybe it's your stunning architecture, one-of-a-kind views, themed hotel rooms, or vintage bar.

Lesson #2

Once your hotel establishes its values, it needs to win them.

One more advantage that guests speak about when enjoying homes experiences and places is the flexibility. Complaints around hotels often centre on the rigidity of the stay, fine print, and false advertising.

Consistently delivering on service quality and guarantees will go a long way to keeping travellers on side at your hotel. If your brand is synonymous with being the cleanest, most comfortable place to stay, travellers will depend on this expectation to be fulfilled.

Vacation rental services can't always guarantee a consistent level of customer service that is typically seen in the hospitality industry. In some scenarios travellers staying at Airbnb properties can spend a lot of time waiting for their host, being shown around, having everything explained to them, requesting help or maintenance, trying to contact their host etc. It isn't always the most seamless

or convenient experience because usually there are no staff – only homeowners.

There are still a lot of guests who enjoy the simple pleasures of a clean, comfortable hotel with friendly and helpful staff to attend to every need. Furthermore, things like strong water pressure and quality wifi are essentials guests require, but aren't always given at home-sharing properties. At the very least if your hotel can deliver on this time after time and play to its strengths, you should have no problems securing bookings.

Lesson #3

Your hotel needs to promote local services.

One major benefit a guest receives when purchasing a stay in a short or long-term rental is immersion in their destination's locale. From the second they 'check-in' they're among the local community and their host will be best placed to offer great advice on local experiences and attractions.

Here are a few reasons why creating a connection to the local area is a good idea:

Guests look to their hosts to be their guide so use content on your website to recommend local hotspots such as amusement parks.

Farm to table is a strong food and beverage trend and particularly accessible in home-sharing accommodations. Your hotel can also create localised menus and incorporate local seasonal produce into their menus.

Implementing local design into your hotel will create a more harmonious experience for guests and also strengthen your storytelling to win over guests.

Become your own hotspot by allowing local neighbours into your hotel. Think about inviting local chefs to give cooking classes or artists to show their work.

Grounding your hotel in the local area and making sure you promote this on your website will assure guests they'll be receiving the authentic, unique experience they were looking for.

When it comes to matching home sharing services, prioritise the needs of your guest and stick to your strengths. If you can give travellers the grounded, authentic, and unique experience but with better on-site services and features, you'll be able to compete for your slice of the disposable income pie.

In fact, now that Airbnb is hosting hotels on its platform, you may even be able to use it as a distribution channel to win more bookings.



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THE DISH: *Restaurant industry trends*

BEER-CENTRIC TRAVEL IS ON THE RISE by: Angie Giroux, Smartbrief

When 42% of Americans say they prefer beer to wine or liquor – and it's the third-most popular beverage after water and tea – it makes perfect sense that many hospitality companies from the airport to the destination to the spa, have jumped on the beer wagon, seeking ways to set themselves apart. "Beer tourism is definitely a new phenomenon," says Allan Wright, owner of Taste Vacations and organizer of the annual Beer Marketing & Tourism Conference. "Compared to wine tourism, which has been established for many decades, traveling for beer has really only become popular in the last five years or so."

Flying high with beer

Many travelers are beginning their beer-centric travel on the runway. BrewDog Airlines, for example, lifted off in February between London and the brewery's home base in Columbus, Ohio. The brewery has taken the extra step of crafting limited-edition beer that adapts particularly well to the high-altitude issues of smell sensitivity and taste reduction – a helpful feature during the in-flight beer tastings. Some airports aren't waiting for BrewDog to venture their way. The Squatters Airport Pub in the Salt Lake City International Airport is open year-round from 6 a.m. to midnight with a vast beer menu from the city's first brew pub, Squatters Pub Brewery. For a while, Pittsburgh International Airport hosted the popup Voodoo Brewery pub, bringing a sense of place far beyond the city-labeled swag to the airport and to passengers who can't leave the airport during layovers.

Drink without driving

Tours abound around the world for those with a taste for hops. Hospitality companies have tapped their local markets with trips as simple as "party bikes," such as Minneapolis, Minn.'s multi-seat Pedal Pubs that requires all riders to pedal from pub to pub while a guide handles serving beverages aboard. Taste Vacations offers tours designed for small groups in Belgium, Colorado and North Carolina, creating multi-day vacations for private and public groups, including lodging, guides, meals and brewery visits—all centered around beer.

"There are many aspects to beer tourism. On a basic level, beer tourism can simply mean going out of one's way to visit a local brewery when traveling for work or pleasure," Wright says. "Slightly more complex is to actually plan a vacation to a city or region known for its beer, such as Asheville, N.C., or Belgium, and incorporate brewery visits into your travels."

The trend also extends beyond destinations widely known for beer, and therefore to those beyond the typical craft beer demographic, Wright says. "While craft beer drinkers tend to skew younger, tourists (those with the money and time to travel) traditionally skew older. So we are actually seeing that

beer tourism can include people from across the spectrum," Wright says.

In Florence, Italy, Curious Appetite's private artisan Italian craft beer tasting, which includes beers featuring ingredients like saffron, chestnuts, flowers and more – offers a customizable experience that teaches guests about Italian beer-making techniques and lets them meet producers. Of course, the highlight of beer-imbibing worldwide is Oktoberfest in Germany. Every year, for one week, more than 6 million people unite in Munich to celebrate life and an array of beer – nearly 2 million gallons of it in 18 days in 2017. Brauereigasthof Hotel Aying's rooms come with complimentary Ayringer beer, and the property has a brewery as well as a tavern and garden. The Landhotel Beverland has beds in wooden barrels, beer saunas and 62 themed rooms spanning the Middle Ages to "Star Wars."

Chill at either end of the day

Beer is reputed to be good for the skin, which explains why Prague's Beer Spa has a handful of soothing options. Guests can lounge in handmade, royal oak whirlpool tubs filled with hops, brewer's yeast and malt, which are said to open the pores, boost skin regeneration, ease fatigue and stimulate metabolism. The spa treatment – during which guests can drink as much light and dark Krusovice beer as they wish – is followed by a wheat straw bed for relaxation, with a finale of a warm fireplace and homemade beer bread.

Edgewater Hotel on the shores of Lake Mendota in Wisconsin offers the New Glarus Brewing Co. Serendipity Massage, which is "inspired by the tasty fruit beer Serendipity and uses a specialized Cranberry Seed and Apple essential oil," Kristen Kuchar writes, while the scrub used for its Door County Brewing Co. Silurian Stout Body Treatment features shea butter, sugar and Arabica bean extract. Beer isn't just for cold-weather locations. The Signature Beer Treatment at The Atlantic Resort & Spa in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., opens with a citrus beer body exfoliation and body wrap. Beer scalp and hair treatments are on the menu too.

Opportunities abound

With more consumers interested in beer-related travels, the trend has grown to a point where it is having an effect on economics, says Taste Vacations' Wright, adding that cities like Portland, Ore., and Denver, Colo., see surges of beer tourists for major festivals that can draw tens of thousands of visitors. "When a brewery is positioned in a non-tourist location, such as a closed-after-hours business district or an area in need of economic revitalization, beer tourism can positively affect an entire community," Wright says. "Most breweries in the United States are small and reliant on tap room sales; beer tourism can provide a huge impact on a brewery's bottom line."



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ADA "DRIVE BY" LAWSUITS NOW IN OUR AREA

In the past two years, nearly 15,000 lawsuits have been filed under the ADA targeting property owners and businesses. In 2018, the number of ADA Title III lawsuits filed in federal court grew by more than 33 percent from the previous year, surpassing 10,000.

"Drive-by" ADA lawsuits are a recurring problem for businesses across the nation, with serial plaintiffs making threats against hotels, restaurants, and other places of public accommodation for alleged ADA violations. These are not the traditional physical barriers, but rather targeting *websites* being "accessible." Locally, we are starting to see our members receive demand letters threatening lawsuits unless they pay a settlement for minor, easily correctable ADA infractions. One of our Board members recently settled for over \$10,000 even though their property is ADA compliant! Many businesses do not have the time or resources to challenge these lawsuits and settle out of court. Because the ADA is a federal law, most of these ADA lawsuits are brought to federal court. You may want to talk to your website provider and add an "Accessibility" tab with "more info coming soon" as a placeholder to let unscrupulous attorneys know you are addressing the issue.

Learn more by clicking here:

One epic conference

Women of Hospitality
FIND. MEET. LEAD. INSPIRE.

Connection, inspiration and leadership for today's women of hospitality!

Explore your *passions* and unleash your *potential*

- Interactive breakout sessions
- Powerful keynote speakers
- Connection to industry movers & shakers

plus:
Documentary film screening on October 21st

A FINE LINE
A connection to the future

KEYNOTE: Dawn Sweeney
Founder, Sweeney Hospitality

KEYNOTE: Kara BioGuardi
Singer, Producer, Author

10.22.19 **The Queen, Wilmington**

REGISTER TODAY!
www.WomenofHospitality.com

BAY BRIDGE ROADWORK
WESTBOUND RIGHT LANE
CLOSING SEPTEMBER 30th
Major Delays Starting September 24th
Due To No Two-Way Traffic Operations

LEARN MORE

Get Bay Bridge Updates: 1-877-BAYSPAN • Twitter @TheMDTA

- Ocean City Fire Department
OPEN HOUSE 15th Steet
Saturday, October 6th 10am - 2pm**
- Fire Safety Demonstrations
 - Fire Truck Tours
 - Fire Safety Smoke House
 - Food & Give-a-ways for the Family
 - CPR Training
 - Fire Extinguisher Training
 - Complimentary Blood Pressure Checks



SHORECRAFT BEER Fest

Sunset Park 5th Annual

Octoberfest

October 26th 2019, 12:30- 4:30pm

30+ Local Craft Beers & Mead
Live Music by Johnny Bling
Food Trucks & Vendors
Pet Friendly! 

Buy
Tickets

NOW!

General Admission
1:30-4:30
VIP starts 12:30

ShoreCraftBeerFest.com

