

JANUARY 2024

HOSPITALITY HOTLINE

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



Member Message

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SUSAN L. JONES

Happy 2024 to all our incredible members! 🎉 As I reflect, here are some things I'm thinking I'll focus on as we move into the new year!

- Embrace a mindset of gratitude and positivity.
- Be open to change and new experiences. Sometimes the most growth happens outside of our comfort zones.
- Embrace challenges as opportunities for growth and learning.
- Nurture relationships and connections. Invest time in fostering meaningful connections with friends, family, and our community.
- Take moments throughout the day to breathe, reflect, and appreciate the present moment. Make your well-being a priority!

Hopefully, you can relate to the thoughts above. Inspiration can come from so many sources, find yours! Stay open to new experiences, embrace positivity, and believe in the potential for growth and joy in the year ahead! Let's make 2024 a year filled with shared accomplishments, growth, and wonderful experiences together. Wishing you all joy, success, and countless memorable moments in the coming year! 😊

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS ALLIED

Bold Moves, LLC

CoreCom Commercial Painting
corecomcommercial.com

M&T Bank
mtb.com

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDARS

Coastal Chambers Delmarva Mixer
Casino at Ocean Downs
January 24 (see pg. 9)

FAMLI Workshop
Hyatt Place - 16th St.
January 29 (see pg. 6)

OCHMRA NETWORKING DINNERS

6pm to 9pm

January 18
Vista Rooftop

February 15
Princess Royale

April 18
Harrison's Harbor Watch

Attention ALLIED MEMBERS:

Last Call - we have a few remaining exhibit booths available - call to reserve yours before they're gone!

OCEANCITYTRADEEXPO.COM



NETWORK

Largest hospitality gathering in the Mid-Atlantic. Meet the industry face-to-face!



SIP, SAMPLE, & SHOP

Touch and taste the newest, most innovative products on the market! Connect with the company reps to get the best deals!



CASUAL SELLING

Relaxed atmosphere of FUN makes selling easy! Come out of winter hibernation & kick off spring!

March 3 & 4, 2024
OCEAN CITY CONVENTION CENTER



Susan Jones
Executive Director



Kaylee Payne
Business Development & Marketing Associate



Kendra Paulman
Part-time Tourism Coordinator



Hospitality Highlights

WARM WELCOMES & CONGRATULATIONS

Home2 Suites won the Most Improved Overall Service Award - job well done! We also have **Harrison Group Hotels** who were honored with ConventionSouth's Annual Readers' Choice Awards.

Congratulations to **Shawn Harman, Fish Tales**, for being a grandfather to baby boy Alfonso Lee *aka Alfie*, and to **Bob Rothermel, TEAM Productions**, on the birth of his second grandson! A big congrats to **Hannah & Austin Purnell** on the birth of Harper Lee who was born on 12/7 and to the grandfather, **Adam Showell, Castle in the Sand** and **Barefoot Mailman &** grandmother, **Jamelle Showell**.

Waterman's Seafood Co. in West Ocean City has merged with **Fins Hospitality Group**, Waterman's will remain the same but be a part of the FINS brand - welcome to OC Fins Hospitality Group!



BEHIND THE BOARD RICK STAUB

Rick Staub is currently serving as the Three-Year Director of the OCHMRA. He is the Managing Director at the Princess Royale Oceanfront Resort. Rick grew up in a small town with limited employment opportunities. He started working as a dishwasher at the local Holiday Inn when he was just 14 years old. Throughout high school, he worked as a busboy and eventually became a line cook at the same property. After graduating from high school, he went on to study at Duquesne University. Later, he joined Winnegardner and Hammonds as a Sales and Catering Manager in Morgantown, West Virginia. After several years, Rick returned to Pittsburgh and worked as the Director of Catering for Servico Management Company. He then joined Hilton Hotels Corporation outside of Chicago in 1982, where he worked as an Assistant Director of Catering. In 1984, he returned to Pittsburgh to work at the Downtown Hilton and Towers as the Director of Catering. Rick's first opportunity in operations came in 1988 when he moved to Baltimore and became the Assistant General Manager at the former Omni Hotel on Fayette Street, managed by Beacon Hotels. In 1992, he got his first GM position at the Philadelphia Airport Guest Quarters Hotel with Beacon. He moved from there to Harrisburg and then back to Baltimore in 1996, where he worked as the GM for the Doubletree Guest Suites and Tremont Hotels until 2006.

In 2006, he accepted the position of Managing Director at the Loews Philadelphia Hotel in Center City, where he spent 13 years. After that, he worked as the Senior Vice President of the Philadelphia Convention Bureau for three years. During COVID, Rick and his wife Tina decided to downsize and move to Ocean Pines, MD in 2021. There, he was fortunate enough to work for RHG Hotels before moving to Princess Royale in May 2022.

Industry Insights



2024 Legislative Priorities & Anticipated Critical Issues

The Maryland Chamber of Commerce is working to educate lawmakers about the positive steps being taken by job creators to strengthen Maryland's economy.

Their top priorities for the 2024 Legislative Session include:

- Business Taxes
- Transportation Funding Solutions
- Data Privacy
- Military Retirement Relief
- Increasing Child Care Availability

To learn more in-depth about each bullet point, [click here](#).



Explore the number of visitors to Worcester County and their spending over the years, as well as a detailed analysis of visitor spending in Ocean City.

[Click here](#) to view the slide deck



To keep you in the loop with the OC Tourism, read their latest news :

[NOV / DEC NEWSLETTER](#)

FEATURED PARTNER:





December Dinner Meeting



Castle in the Sand elves - Josh & Connie White, Patricia & Michael Smith, and Joe Koziol



Neil Hitchcock from Oasis Travel, Tricia Walsh from NFP Insurance Agency, and Donna Haffer from Effectv



Nicole Burrell from Sun Outdoors Frontier Town, Norma Dobrowolski from OC Tourism Development, Jennifer Krumpholz & Michael Manley from Sun Outdoors Frontier Town



Princess Royale Crew - best wishes to Alexandra, we will miss seeing you around OC!

Thank you to all who attended the December Dinner Meeting, [click here](#) to view the rest of the photos from the night!
Special Thanks to [KRR Photography](#) for the pics!



Attention all business leaders! The Business Economic Outreach Network (BEACON) at Salisbury University is conducting its semi-annual Eastern Shore Business Sentiment Survey to gather insights into the economic conditions in Worcester County, on the Eastern Shore, and across the nation. Your valuable perspective is crucial in helping BEACON and the department understand the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. We urge you to participate in the survey by using [this link](#) or QR code below. Your feedback will help strengthen future plans for economic growth and contribute to a comprehensive understanding of business sentiments in Worcester County.



Tips for the Trade

What Millennials, Gen Z, Gen X and Baby Boomers Tell Us About Travel in the Year Ahead

Hilton's third-annual Trends Report spotlights the consumer trends that are anticipated to define travel in the year ahead.

- Travelers Will Invest in Their Sleep
- Travelers Will Value Connectivity and Personalization
- Culture and Experiences Will Drive Leisure Travel Decisions
- Business Travel Trends Will Redefine Expectations

[View the Full Report](#)



2024 Culinary Trends

Social media is making foodies of us all. The top "Macro Trend" in the 2024 What's Hot Culinary Forecast — according to more than 1,500 culinary professionals—is incorporating social media trends into restaurant menus and marketing. In the food categories—dishes, ingredients, flavors and condiments—comfort and community dominate.

When it comes to beverages, energy and health are the keynotes.

[Click here for Report](#)

FEATURED PARTNER:



(410) 543-0693 • WWW.RRCOATINGSINC.COM • DAN@RRCOATINGSINC.COM



Business Briefs

Worcester Technical HS Youth Apprenticeship Program

Maryland has recently passed a legislation that requires 45% of graduating seniors to have earned an Industry Recognized Credential (IRC) or complete a Youth Apprenticeship (AMP) program by school year 2030/31. Worcester Technical High School (WTHS) is currently focusing on IRCs, but the school system also wants to grow its AMP program. Employers can become approved employers for the AMP program and provide mentorship and on-the-job training to students. There are incentives for employers, such as a \$1000 tax credit for each student who completes the AMP program with them. An event called the Youth Apprenticeship Interest Luncheon will be held on February 14th at Worcester Technical High School for those interested in becoming an approved employer. Learn more: Brian Phillips BCPhillips@worcesterk12.org

FTC Seeks Ban on Restaurant “Junk Fees”

In October 2023, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) proposed a new rule that would require U.S. businesses to remove all service fees and surcharges. This rule would mandate operators to display the total price for a service or good, which should include all costs except shipping and government charges. This would cover various fees such as delivery fees, credit card fees, service fees for non-managerial compensation, and large parties (5 or more) auto gratuity.

The final ruling timeline is on track for Fall of 2024, and it could be enforceable as early as January 2025. If this rule is adopted, restaurant operators would have to become less transparent with their customers, rewrite their compensation models, increase menu prices, and make considerable changes to established business practices.

The National Restaurant Association is working to resist this regulatory overreach. Still, they implore operators to submit their comments to the FTC to help push for an extension of the deadline for comments from January 8th by 60 days. They are asking you to voice your opinion about the Trade Regulation Rule on Unfair or Deceptive Fees by submitting your comments. [CLICK HERE](#) to submit a comment.

Learn more about the proposed ban [here](#).

Art League of OC Film Festival

The Art League is offering sponsorship and advertising opportunities for the 8th Annual Ocean City Film Festival, which takes place during a 4-day shoulder-season March weekend, providing you with the chance to reach a desirable market segment.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the event and how you can become a sponsor!





Community Connections

COTA[®]

Bingo for Emily

Sterling Tavern

Main Street, Berlin

January 17th

6:00 - 9:00 PM

DOOR PRIZES

— Chinese Auction Items! —

— 50/50 Drawing! —

Benefit: COTA (Children's Organ Transplant Assoc.)

In honor of Emily Sachs Heiner,
Double Lung Transplant Survivor.

COTAforEmilysLungs.com

FEATURED PARTNER:



(410) 543-0693 • WWW.RRCOATINGSINC.COM • DAN@RRCOATINGSINC.COM



MEET YOUR FAMLI

Maryland's Family and Medical Leave Insurance

Presented by:



About the Workshop:

Join us to learn more about the new Maryland FAMLI program.

Maryland has launched a new paid family and medical leave system. FAMLI will ensure workers can take time away from work to care for themselves or a family member and still receive up to \$1000/wk for up to 12 weeks. Employers will be required to participate. Learn more about the program and the timeline by joining us on January 29th.

Visit the link below to register:
oceanpines.chambermaster.com/eventregistration/register/15226

 3 - 4pm

 January 29, 2024

 Hyatt Oceanfront 16th St.

 FREE

REGISTER TODAY





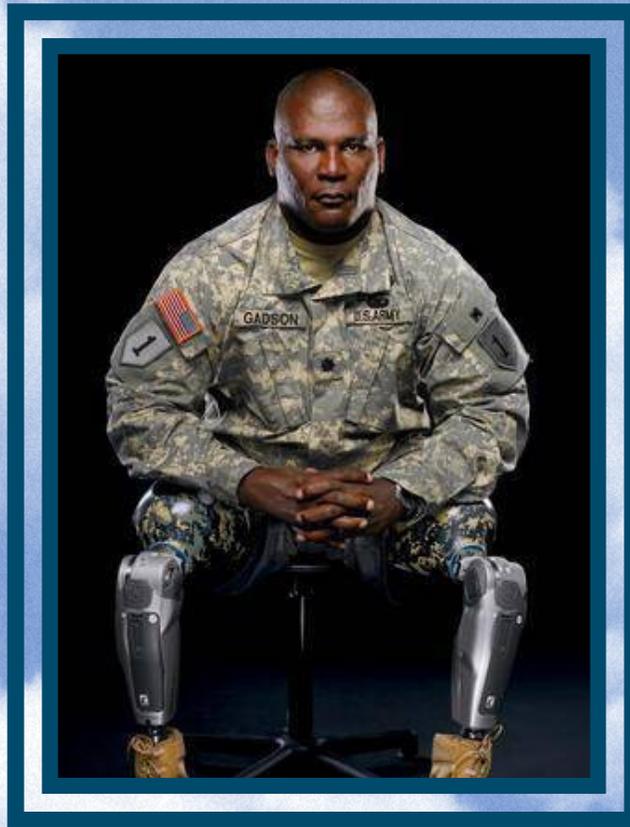
Ocean City, Maryland
Chamber of Commerce

MLK WEEKEND
Dreamfest
2024

Dreams & Determination

MAYOR'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

FEATURING COL. GREGORY GADSON



SPECIAL PERFORMANCE BY THE MORGAN STATE CHOIR WELCOME FROM MAYOR RICK MEEHAN



TOWN OF OCEAN CITY
MARYLAND



Ocean
City MD



Ocean City, Maryland
Chamber of Commerce



TOWN OF OCEAN CITY
MARYLAND



Dreams & Determination

EVENT PRICES

TITLE EVENT SPONSOR: \$5,000



bit.ly/ocmdDreams2024

- 8 seats per table
- Table identified with name of organization
- Program recognition
- 8 tickets to ALL of the 2024 DreamFest concerts
- Meet and Greet with Greg Gadson – Guest Speaker
- On-site Video Board (Boardwalk) ; TV and kiosk promotions at the convention center
- OCMD Chamber digital advertising: 3 months of sponsored ads and 3 push notifications in the Experience OC app; web banner ad for 3 months

MEET THE SPEAKER SPONSOR: \$2,000

- 8 seats per table
- Table identified with name of organization
- Program recognition
- 8 tickets to one of Friday or Saturday's 2024 DreamFest concerts (\$800 value)
- 8 PAC single memberships (\$800 value)
- Meet and Greet with Greg Gadson – Guest Speaker

TABLE SPONSOR: \$1,000

- 8 seats per table
- Table identified with name of organization
- Program recognition
- 4 tickets to one of Friday or Saturday's 2024 DreamFest concerts (\$400 value)
- On-site Video Board (Boardwalk) ; TV and kiosk promotions at the convention center

INDIVIDUAL SEATS: \$50



bit.ly/ocmdDreams2024tix

COASTAL DELMARVA CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Winter



MIXER

NETWORKING ❄️ MUSIC ❄️ FOOD ❄️ PLAY

Join us for a fun-filled evening of networking with our neighboring coastal Chamber of Commerce friends while enjoying a complimentary drink, light appetizers, and music by **Revival Sound Productions**. You may even **WIN BIG** with many fantastic door prizes and \$10 in free play from Ocean Downs Casino!



OCEAN DOWNS CASINO

Events Center
10218 Racetrack Rd., Berlin, MD 21811

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2024 | 5:00 - 7:00 PM



Music Provided by:



Scan the QR Code to Register | 410.289.6733

2023

YEAR IN REVIEW

Ocean City, Maryland Tourism Highlights

This year was all smiles with the launch of the new brand platform and iconic new brand identity. The Ocean City Department of Tourism & Business Development worked to bring robust research and a solid strategy to life through the creative development of the “Somewhere to Smile About” advertising campaign. Marketing efforts primarily focused on supporting leisure travel, along with niche campaigns for Meetings & Conventions and golf travel. Paid media, earned media, public relations, brand activations and key partnerships all helped to build a holistic story for the new brand and positioned Ocean City as the East Coast beach destination where a seriously carefree culture makes life feel lighter.

Somewhere to Smile About Campaign: Paid Advertising Results

312,054,776

TOTAL IMPRESSIONS

LEISURE

Broadcast TV, Digital OOH, Print, Digital, Video, Paid Social and Paid Search

21,371,036

TOTAL IMPRESSIONS

GOLF

Programmatic Display, Programmatic Video, Global Golf Post Package and Paid Search

8,647,503

TOTAL IMPRESSIONS

MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

Print, Digital, Programmatic Display, Paid Social and Paid Search

CATCH A RIDE

BRAND EXPERIENCE ACTIVATION



279,136,541

TOTAL PROGRAM IMPRESSIONS

4,720

CONTEST ENTRIES

WHERE WE WENT:

- PHILADELPHIA
- BALTIMORE
- WASHINGTON D.C.

38

SMILING
WINNERS

AWARDS WE WON:



HSMAI Adrian Awards
Gold President's Award



MT&T Summit
Best Media & PR
Campaign Award



Celebrity Partnership: David Feherty

We continued our partnership with golf pro and veteran broadcaster, David Feherty, who served another year as an Ocean City golf ambassador. With social media posts and additional Ocean City appearances, including the Oceans Calling Celebrity Golf Tournament, Feherty brought his lighthearted humor and skill to get golfers to the greens in Ocean City, Maryland.

Earned Media: Great Family Adventure Show

The OCMD episode has aired **125** times across **378** networks, with an estimated viewership of **3.9M**. Estimated media value is **\$389, 808**.



Earned Media & Influencers

15 creators shared over **313** posts resulting in **109,100** engagements reaching more than **2.6 million** consumers.

Media Relations

Overall, the team helped generate over **2,000** editorial placements in major industry leading outlets reaching more than **17 billion** readers in just the first 11 months of the year.



Our efforts contributed to a **\$4.8 million** increase in room tax fiscal YOY.



1

Program your thermostats

Keeping your thermostats as little as 1 or 2-degrees lower in the winter can be impactful to reducing energy usage and yield cost savings.

**2**

Make use of the right lighting

LEDs can yield savings of up to 78% in electricity lighting costs. Another easy option is to install occupancy sensors, as well as maximize your use of natural lighting by opening blinds to let the sun naturally warm your space by a few (free) degrees.

**3**

Turn off equipment when not in use

From computer monitors to appliances, turn off & unplug equipment and appliance to conserve energy usage. This could include everything from office equipment to small kitchen appliances.

**4**

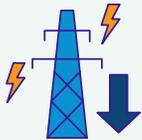
Maintain or upgrade your heating system

Regularly change filters, schedule routine maintenance so that it doesn't fall to the wayside, properly seal heating ducts, and/or upgrade to energy efficient equipment.

**5**

Reduce peak demand

Reduce your usage – when possible – during peak demand times, which are typically in the 9-5 range. Try staggering work hours, or running heavy, energy-intensive equipment during the evening or early morning hours.

**6**

Participate in a demand response program

Demand response is a financially rewarding energy solution that reduces your organization's energy usage during periods of high stress to the electric grid.

**7**

Conduct an energy audit

Have a professional perform a full assessment of your facilities, from lighting to air leaks, to set a baseline for energy reduction.

**8**

Consider a retail energy supplier

If you're in a deregulated state for electricity or natural gas, you can benefit from energy choice.

**9**

Adjust your water heater thermostat

Keeping your water heater at the 'warm' setting can contribute to reduced usage and improved energy savings.

**10**

Educate your employees & secure employee buy-in

Educate your teams on the benefits (both financial and environmental) and communicate effectively so that everyone is on board and doing their part.

