

# HOSPITALITY HOTLINE



HOTEL • MOTEL • RESTAURANT • ASSOCIATION • INC.

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

5700 Coastal Hwy. #302 Ocean City, MD 21842 • (410) 289-6733 • OCVisitor.com • Inquire@ocvisitor.com



Susan Jones  
Executive Director



Kaylee Payne  
Business Development & Marketing Associate

## Member Message

From Executive Director, Susan L. Jones

It's finally here! We absolutely love this time of year when everything comes together—selling exhibit space, coordinating nearly 60 volunteers, creating the marketing materials, tackling the endless to-do list... I could go on and on! It truly takes a village to pull off this amazing annual event.

A lot of thought and effort has gone into curating content that's both engaging and valuable. Partnering with the **MD Tourism Coalition** has allowed us to take the workshops, known as the *Solutions Showcase*, to the next level. Be sure to mark your calendar for the **US Travel Association's** Keynote on Monday, March 3rd at 9:30 am! Also, don't miss Sunday's Keynote by **Jason Brooks**, a regular speaker at the Vegas & NY Hospitality Shows, who will present "**Leading with the Right Mindset.**"

Last year's inaugural Spotlight Stage was a huge hit, and we're bringing it back with exciting features like **Ask the Experts, Behind the Brand**, and the brand-new **HipSips!**

Several exhibitors are offering **Show Specials and New Products**, check them out at this link: [Specials Link](#).

The complete **exhibitor list** can be accessed here: [2025 Exhibitors](#)

*Hotels, Restaurants & Attractions* -- last chance to pre-register to attend the Expo for FREE - do so by February 27th: Click here to register - [ATTEND](#) 😊

## OCHMRA SPRING TRADE EXPO



Sunday, 3/2 - 11am to 5pm  
Monday, 3/3 - 10am to 4pm

Open to the Trade Only | No One Under 21

### FEATURED PARTNERS:



(301) 262-7880



(410) 543-0693

# Hospitality Highlights

Whats new in the industry?

## WARM WELCOMES & CELEBRATIONS

**Hyatt Place** is thrilled to announce the promotions of Executive Housekeeper, **Jinky Fernandez-Snead** to Assistant General Manager, **Conor Perry** to Housekeeping Manager, and welcome Chief Engineer **Stephen Hershberger** to the team. **Farmers Bank of Willards** welcomed a new Loan Officer, **Sarah Slaysman**, to their team! We want to give a warm welcome to **Tammy Parrot** who joined the **James Hospitality** team as the new GM at the **Crystal Beach Hotel**. **Becker Morgan Group** ranked #75 in Building Design+Construction's 2024 Giants 400 Report, which highlights the nation's top architecture/engineering firms among a record 602 participants! **A1 American** proudly acquires **PetrA-1**, a fitness industry supplier, and **Promo Car Care**, a leading provider of car wash wipes and accessories.

## SAD GOODBYES

We extend our deepest condolences to the **Jolly Roger Amusement Parks** family on the passing of **Steve Pastusak**. Our hearts also go out to **Garvey Heiderman** of **The Hobbit Restaurant** on the loss of his father, **Tommy Heiderman**, who recently passed away in Florida surrounded by loved ones. **Bill Eaton** who was a Cornell University Professor passed last week, condolences to sisters **Jackie Ball** and **Caryl Cardenas**. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

## WELCOME NEW MEMEBRS

### ASSOCIATE

**Fin Outdoor Recreation**  
findf.in

### ALLIED

**5**  
energyby5.com

**Belair Road Supply**  
belairroadsupply.com

**Rescue One - Training For Life Inc.**  
rescue-one.com

**Stewart Builders Group**  
stewartbuildersgroup.com

**ShoreCraft**  
shorecraft.biz

**Valcourt Exterior Building Services**  
valcourt.net

Join us in supporting hospitality workers in need! Now through March 9, **50% of proceeds** from Every Leader Needs Followers will support the **North Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association's Hospitality Worker Relief Fund** for Hurricane Helene recovery.

**Why buy this book?** Not only will you be supporting a great cause, but you'll also gain powerful leadership insights from Jason Brooks (HospiVation - Speaking, Coaching, Leadership), who will be the Keynote Speaker at the Spring Trade Expo on March 2!

**SUPPORTING HOSPITALITY ONE BOOK AT A TIME**

Help Raise Funds for North Carolina's Hospitality Worker Relief Fund!  
These funds will be specifically designated for Hurricane Helene Relief

Order your copy between February 1 & March 9, and 50% of all proceeds from book sales will be donated!

Logos: NC RESTAURANT WORKERS RELIEF FUND, HOSPIVATION (MANAGE | LEAD | COACH | REPEAT), H.M. OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND

QR Code

Book Cover: **EVERY LEADER NEEDS FOLLOWERS**  
10 Keys to Transform Restaurant Managers to Hospitality Leaders  
NEVER LEAD ALONE AGAIN  
JASON E. BROOKS

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# SOLUTIONS SHOWCASE WORKSHOPS

Our *exclusive* Solutions Showcase Workshops are designed for industry go-getters. Explore groundbreaking strategies, emerging trends, & actionable "how-to" knowledge that will redefine your approach.

## SUNDAY - MARCH 2

2nd Floor | Room 210



### KEYNOTE SPEAKER - JASON BROOKS

**1:00pm - Leading with The Right Mindset: Managing vs Leading vs Coaching:** Learn the art of using the right approach in situations to help yield the ultimate results in conversations, challenges, and team development; knowing which mindset and methodology is appropriate for the given situation is the key to success! Attendees are given actionable steps they can execute on Day 1 to build a productive team through the power of relationships.

### SOLUTIONS SHOWCASE WORKSHOP

**3:00pm - Lodging Market Review & Forecast** - Utilizing an STR custom trend report, join **CAS Advisors** as they provide a synopsis of the national lodging market, followed by a more in-depth analysis of the Mid-Atlantic submarket. Trends in occupancy, ADR, and RevPAR will be discussed, as well as current factors that could affect those metrics.

## MONDAY - MARCH 3

2nd Floor | Room 210

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER - US TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

*Sponsored by Valcourt Exterior Building Services*

**9:30am - The State of the Travel Industry:** The travel industry holds immense potential to boost both the American economy & spirit. However, it also faces challenges from an evolving political landscape & a long-standing difficulty in effectively conveying its value. As a vital part of our economy, communities, and way of life, the travel sector is irreplaceable. Join the U.S. Travel Association to stay informed on the latest developments in the nation's travel industry.



### SOLUTIONS SHOWCASE WORKSHOP

**12:00pm - Prime Cost: Your Key to Making \$\$\$** - Join Ryan James from David Scott Peters team as he shares how to get your magic number at or below 55%! That's right - your total cost of goods sold + labor cost combined will be no more than 55% if you follow this system.



# SPOTLIGHT STAGE

The Spotlight Stage features industry leaders with product demonstrations and discussions. Seize the opportunity to learn from those who have mastered their craft.

## SUNDAY - MARCH 2

Dockside Hall

**11:30am - Ask the Expert - Allergens 101:** Join Chef Robert McKeon CDM, CFPP for an in-depth exploration of allergens – essential knowledge for your staff!

**12:30pm - Behind the Brand - Genera:** Meet Genera, an American manufacturer of compostable molded fiber packaging, made from grasses grown in the US. Learn about their high-quality products that help brands achieve sustainability goals, deliver on consumer preferences, and strengthen the circular economy. Offering a wide range of stock foodservice packaging, with customization available.

**1:30pm - Ask the Expert - My Utility Advisor:** Delmarva Power Discounts and Savings. Simple ways to reduce your operating expenses with Maryland State/Delmarva Power Programs you have already paid for. Ask us how the Empower MD tax fund can improve your business' bottom line overnight for zero out of pocket cost.

**2:30pm - Ask the Expert - ROI Savings of Proactive Maintenance:** Join us for an interactive Q&A to discuss common challenges and solutions, including regular inspections, proactive maintenance, budgeting, and minimizing repair costs, all aimed at maximizing ROI for building exterior maintenance.

**3:30pm - Hip Sips - Zenjoy:** Join the conversation and learn all the new beverage trends! Made in Maryland, Zenjoy is an adaptogenic tea made for stress and anxiety relief.

## MONDAY - MARCH 3

Dockside Hall

**11:30am - Ask the Expert - Risk Management:** Get valuable tips and tricks from RAM's partner, Food & Beverage Insurance Services, on how to avoid lawsuits – your essential guide to effective risk management!

**12:30pm - Ask the Expert - What's New in Food Code:** Join ServSafe Author and Contributor Chef Robert McKeon as he walks you through all there is to know with new food codes.

**1:30pm - Hip Sips - Sobar Secure:** Shake up your beverage menu with adult non-alcoholic drinks! Sobar will share the latest trends in the largest growing segment of the beverage industry.

**2:30pm - Behind the Brand - Fallen Pine Oyster Education & Beer/Wine Pairing:** Join Fallen Pine Oysters and the Maryland Department of Agriculture & Seafood as they provide education on choosing oysters for raw bars and explore beer & wine pairings!

# The FUTURE of Hospitality is Here!

*Avalon Hospitality Group Lands in Ocean City*



**David Caron**

Chief Operating Officer  
[david@avalonhospitalitygroup.com](mailto:david@avalonhospitalitygroup.com)

*Our culture is one of individualized service and continuous improvement, strengthened by a collective "task force" approach to every client project and property.*

Contact us today to schedule an appointment.

**(864) 346-1789**



**Robin Grazioso**

Vice President Sales & Marketing  
[robin@avalonhospitalitygroup.com](mailto:robin@avalonhospitalitygroup.com)

**Innovative,  
Personalized,  
Proven**



AHG specializes in hotel management for full-service and select-service properties across the United States.



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- > Project Management
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- > Sales & Marketing
- > Food & Beverage

**Get More Than You Expected** Give us a call at **(864) 346-1789**

# YOU'RE INVITED!



## CHARTING THE COURSE: Co-Creating a Shared Vision for Ocean City's Tomorrow

**MARCH 14 • 10 AM**  
**Ocean City Convention Center**

Ocean City isn't just where we live, work, and play—it's a special place that's truly "somewhere to smile about." Every team member is a vital piece of this coastal community, and your unique perspective and ideas help shape our future, especially as we celebrate our 150th anniversary this year.

In this interactive workshop, we'll dig into what's working well, dream about what's on the horizon, and design practical steps to co-create a future we can all be proud of. We'll harness the energy, creativity, and strengths of everyone in the room to elevate engagement and align around a shared vision that inspires us to get excited about what's ahead.

Whether you're navigating the boardwalk, managing behind the scenes, or greeting visitors with a smile, this is your chance to help shape a thriving workplace and community that reflects the best of Ocean City. Let's work together to ride the waves of possibility and create a future worth celebrating—a future that's truly "shore" to bring a smile!

**150**  
Years of Smiles  
ococean.com

Register online at  
[ococean.com/150](https://ococean.com/150)

Rachel  
DRUCKENMILLER



# Remembering Steve Pastusak

Celebration of Life  
Sunday, March 9th 2:00pm-5:00pm  
The Ashore  
10100 Coastal Hwy  
Ocean City, MD

Remembering Steve Pastusak—a visionary, a leader, and a cherished member of our community. His passion, dedication, and kindness touched so many lives, and his legacy will continue to inspire us all. Rest in peace, Steve. You will be deeply missed.



## Honoring Thomas Heiderman

Tommy served on the OCHMRA Board of Directors in the early days of OCHMRA. He opened The Hobbit Restaurant in Ocean City in 1977. "Old timers" will fondly remember it as the little white cottage on 82nd Street. Tommy's vision of expanding The Hobbit became a reality when he built the second restaurant on 81st Street and the Bay, opening in 1983. He operated in that location for 22 years. He planned and designed the third and current iteration of The Hobbit, which opened in 2008. The last nearly 50 years of The Hobbit Restaurant have given Tommy and his family some of the most wonderful memories of their lives.

There will be a **Celebration of Life for Tommy on Sunday, May 18th at The Hobbit Restaurant from 3:00-7:00 PM.** In lieu of flowers, a donation in Tommy's honor can be made to the "Tommy Heiderman Worcester Prep Athletic Fund", at [CFES.org/donate](https://www.cfes.org/donate) or mailed to Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, 1324 Belmont Ave. Ste. 401, Salisbury, MD 21804. Please note the "Tommy Heiderman Worcester Prep Athletic Fund" in the comment section.

The full obituary can be found [here](#).