

HOSPITALITY HOTLINE



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



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Dates for your Calendar

Hotel GM & Director of Sales Round Table

Residence Inn

May 1 - 11am to 1pm

Details on pg. 7

Springfest

Ocean City Inlet Lot

May 2 - 5

OC Chamber Legislative Wrap-Up

Cambria Ocean City

May 10 - 9am to 11am

Details on pg. 4

MD's Coast Mixer for NTTW

94th St. - Art League of Ocean City

May 20 - 4pm to 6pm

Details on pg. 12

Member Message

From Executive Director, Susan L. Jones

As we embark on the spring season, let's do so with open hearts, open minds, and a shared sense of purpose. One way to help and provide a sense of purpose is by participating in DINE STAY PLAY United where your efforts support those in our backyard while giving you extra exposure! (learn more on pages 4 & 8).

As association members, we have the power to shape the summer experience in our resort town. We are all ambassadors for Ocean City! Let's showcase the beauty, charm, and hospitality of our community to visitors and residents alike, ensuring that everyone who comes here feels welcome and valued!

April showers are certainly bringing the May flowers; now let's pray that May will provide the warmth and sunshine to bring the visitors!

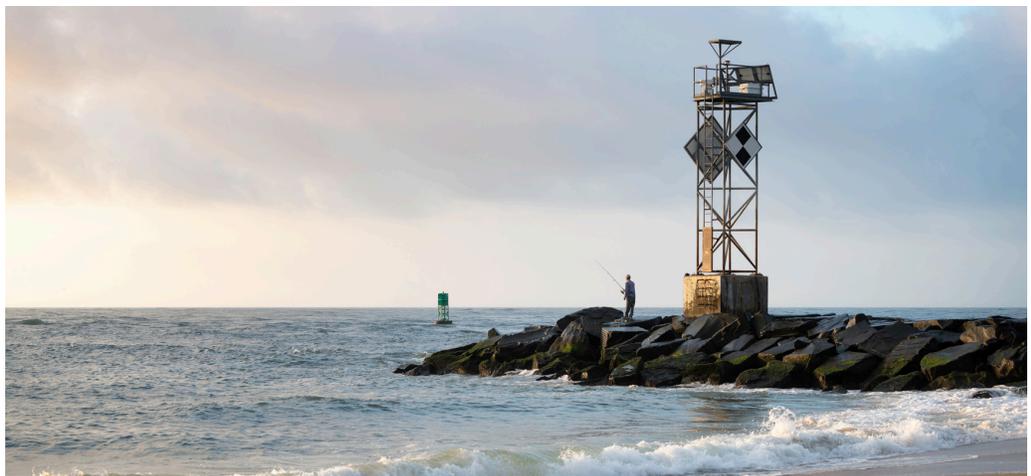
Cheers to a great start to the season! 😊



Susan Jones
Executive Director



Kaylee Payne
Business Development & Marketing Associate



Hospitality Highlights

Whats new in the industry?

WARM WELCOMES & CELEBRATIONS

MD's Hotel & Lodging Association Stars of the Industry proved to be an OC success - Kudos to **Bozhidar Ayala** for winning Manager of the Year! Congrats also to **Mark Elman** who was nominated for General Manager of the Year along with **Jamie Spicer** for being nominated for Sales person of the Year, **Alma Lopez** for being nominated for Housekeeper of the Year, **Perla Villafana De Leon** for being nominated for Guest Services of the Year and **Eli Maynor** for being nominated for the Front of House person of the Year. Great work team Hilton! **The Cambria** welcomed a new Sales Coordinator, **Clare DeMallie** - congrats! Shout out and congrats to **Tara Nunan** who joined **Ashore Resort & Beach Club** as their new Director of Revenue Management. Congratulations to **Renee Seiden** of **Harrison Group Sales** on the birth of her grandbaby, Jax Jude Deppe, born 8 lbs., 10ozs. Kudos to many milestones --- **Macky's Bayside Bar & Grill** is celebrating their 30th year of being on the Bay, **Buxy's Salty Dog Saloon** is celebrating 25 years of operation at its 28th Street location and **Jolly Roger Amusement Parks** is celebrating their 60th anniversary of providing family fun!

FOND REMEMBRANCE

As we head into the 2024 season, I'm sure many of you will miss Jayne Sawyer's weekly availability calls. Her husband, Pete, recently shared a poem she wrote and sang to the tune of one of her favorite songs, "My Little Corner of the World."

My Ocean City by the Sea

Come along with me
To my Ocean City by the sea

We can play all day
on our Atlantic Ocean and the bay

I always knew
That you would love it too

So welcome to
My Ocean City by the sea

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

ALLIED

OC Mobile Ads
OCMobileAds.com

Paul Davis Restoration
pdrdelmarva.com

Pro Real Estate Cleaning LLC
prorealestatecleaning.com

Shore Industries
shoreind.com



LOTTA JAYNE SAWYER
February 17, 1948 - September 20, 2023

BEHIND THE BOARD - JEREMY BRINK

Jeremy Brink is a 2-year Director of the OCHMRA. He is a part-owner and operator of two restaurants in Ocean City - Ocean 13 and Captain's Galley Crab Cake Shack. Jeremy has been working in the food service industry in Ocean City since he was a teenager. In his early twenties, he started his own entertainment company and worked as a DJ, building relationships all over the town known as DJ Jeremy. Owning his own restaurant/bar was always his dream and he worked hard to make Ocean 13 and Captain's Galley Crab Cake Shack a family-friendly place that both locals and tourists love.

In his free time, he enjoys playing music with his son Gavin Hades, giving back to the local community, and being involved in charity work. Jeremy is the guitar player in two local bands that he started - Side Project and Cecilia's Fall. He also travels across the United States with his 17-year-old son, who plays music with some of the biggest names in Rock and Roll!

Jeremy is heavily involved with the Believe in Tomorrow Charity and won the Prom King award in 2022. In addition to being on the OCHMRA board, he is also a part of the AGH Foundation and Special Events Committee for the OC Chamber.



FEATURED PARTNERS:



(410) 543-0693



(410) 779-1275



Member Mentions

2024-2025 OCHMRA Board of Directors



Pictured L to R: Rick Staub, Lorrie Miller, Michael James, Mike Gershenfeld, Garvey Heiderman, Jeremy Brink, Dan Jasinski, Ruth Waters, Megan Alvarado, and Chad Olenchick.

(not pictured - Cole Taustin, Dave Robinson, Keith Whisenant, and Nadine Horsey)

On Thursday, April 18, we installed our 2024 - 2025 Board of Directors. Garvey Heiderman of The Hobbit was installed as the incoming President. Dan Jasinski of Real Hospitality Group became 1st Vice President and the 2nd Vice President is Rick Staub of Princess Royale. The newly installed Secretary-Treasurer is Ruth Waters with the Harrison Group Hotels & Restaurants.

The Three-year Board of Directors installed included Megan Alvarado of Happy Jack Pancake House, Keith Whisenant of Residence Inn, and Dave Robinson of Boardwalk Hotel Group. Two-year Directors included Lorrie Miller of BlueWater Hospitality, Chad Olenchick of Cabanas Beach Bar & Grille, and Nadine Horsey of Pit-n-Pub. Serving as One-year Directors are Jeremy Brink of Ocean 13/Captain's Galley Crabcake Shack, Cole Taustin of Taustin Restaurant Group, and Michael James of James Hospitality Group. As a new addition, the Allied Member Representative is Michael Gershenfeld of Handy Seafood. Ryan Wilde of The Tides Inn is the Immediate Past President.

In existence since 1971, the OCHMRA is a private, non-profit organization, which exists to connect the industry interests through advocacy, education, and partnerships with the goal of advancing Ocean City as a leading tourism destination. OCHMRA assists in solving common issues relative to the industry and acts as a clearinghouse for dissemination of information. The new Board will have their first meeting on May 18th.



Phil Cropper and Caitlin Evans, instructors of the Culinary & Hospitality Program at Worcester Tech receive \$5,000 from Susan Jones & Shawn Harman on behalf of OCHMRA.

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Once again, we've partnered with the United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore to produce **DINE STAY PLAY United**. Since the campaign began, 30+ restaurants have participated in Dine United, 11 hotels have participated in Stay United, and in 2021 we added entertainment venues to create Play United. To date, we have raised over \$322,000! This program is a great way to get added exposure for your business!



How It Works

Hotels, restaurants, and entertainment/attraction venues give back to the community and create local impact in Worcester County throughout the summer. It's simple - participants choose a promo item and track sales from Memorial Day through Labor Day through your POS system, and a portion of the proceeds (your choice!) benefit UWLES - OR pledge a donation amount of your choice to give at the end of the season.

Why it Works

Helping Local Neighbors. All proceeds stay local for UWLES and their 41 nonprofit partners to help vulnerable neighbors who in Worcester and nearby Lower Shore counties.

Marketing Works for You (see page 8 for complete list)

Participants will be highlighted throughout the summer via multiple marketing channels including: UWLES website, social media, digital, print, radio & television.



Megan Alvarado and Donna Torrey from Happy Jack Pancake House received the first-ever Spirit Award from United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore for participating in their Dine, Stay, & Play United.



OC Chamber Legislative Wrap-Up

Join the Ocean City Chamber for breakfast at the Cambria to discuss this past legislative session. Senator Mary Beth Carozza and Delegate Wayne Hartman will be there ready to discuss and answer any questions.

[Click here](#) to register

Location/Date/Time:

Cambria -13 St. Louis Ave.
Friday, May 10
Welcome & Breakfast: 9:00 AM
Discussion: 9:45 AM

Fees/Admission:

\$10 for members
\$20 for non-members
Includes a continental breakfast



AI + Hotels = A Digital Marketing Machine

AI is helping hotel marketers streamline digital marketing efforts and optimize user experiences. AI chatbots are a simple yet robust tool that collect precise insights into what customers are thinking, enhance personalization, provide dynamic content, and enable proactive marketing strategies. However, it is important to manage AI algorithms to mitigate unintentional biases.

To learn more about how AI can help you, [click here to read the full article!](#)

Historic Sites Tour of Ocean City

Spend the day discovering the history of your favorite beach town at the Ocean City Museum Society's in-person Historic Sites Tour on Saturday, May 11 from 10am to 5pm. The event is self-guided with the option of a guided tour at 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM.

When you purchase your tickets early online, you can sign up for one of two guided tours of select sites included in the Historic Sites Tour. Enjoy a walk as your guide shares stories of old downtown Ocean City. This guided portion will be about an hour and a half walk from the Inlet, up to City Hall, and back down the boardwalk to the Ocean City Life-Saving Station Museum, a mile-and-a-half round trip of walking.

[Click here](#) for more information & to register!

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Junior Achievement - Volunteers Needed

Junior Achievement of the Eastern Shore is looking for bright lights in our community who are interested in making an impact on the students. **On May 28th and May 30th from 9am to 1pm students from Berlin Intermediate School will attend JA BizTown!** JA BizTown combines in-class learning with a day-long visit to a simulated town. This popular learning experience allows elementary school students to operate banks, manage restaurants, write checks, and vote for mayor. Students are able to connect the dots between what they learn in school and the real world.



JA offers comprehensive training and provides a program overview for volunteers. As a volunteer, your responsibility is to ensure that students remain focused on their prospective businesses.

Recently, we volunteered at the Center, and it was an incredibly fulfilling experience! We interacted with 18 groups, with around 4-6 kids in each group, and helped facilitate discussions on travel and budgeting for it.

Check out this video [Perdue Henson JA Center Video](#)

[Click here to sign up to volunteer](#)

BUSINESS BRIEFS

TIPS Training

Worcester County Health Department is offering TIPS Training. Become certified in the responsible sale of alcohol for only \$45/person.

Details:

- **LOCATION:** Ocean Pines Library 11107 Cathell Rd., Berlin, MD 21811
- **DATE & TIME:** May 22 at 9am

To register, contact Lynn Suarezapecheche at (410) 632-1100 X1109 or Lynn.Suarezapecheche@maryland.gov



Family and Medical Leave Act Update

The Maryland General Assembly recently passed a bill making some changes to the Time to Care Act (the law that set the stage for Maryland's family and medical leave insurance (FAMLI) system). The impacts of the bill fall into 3 main categories: additional time, administrative changes, and clarifications and corrections.

Most significantly, the bill changed the timeline:

- The contribution period for the State Plan will now begin July 1, 2025
- Benefits will now be available starting July 1, 2026

[Click here](#) for more details on changes to the Time to Care Act.



Ocean City, Maryland
Chamber of Commerce

On April 15th, the Ocean City Chamber hosted their Summer Work Travel Conference. In case you missed it you can view the slide deck [here!](#)

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12 Steps to Recharging Your Hospitality Spirit for 2024

By: Doug Kennedy, HNN Columnist

2024 will surely hold its ups and downs, let us focus on that which we can control. Let us remember that it is not what happens to us, but what happens in us, that makes the difference for us. As they say in all 12-step programs, admitting you have a problem is the first step toward overcoming it. If you are still reading, perhaps now's a good time to say these words: "I have become a sometimes-cynical hospitality employee". Good job reads, now let's get started on the 12 steps!

Step One: It's Okay To Vent

We all need our go-to person to vent to, but I suggest that this be someone other than your roommate or life partner! Perhaps a member of your "work-fam," who you can form a pact with to always be there for each other.

Step Two: Avoid Ruminating

Once you've vented, let it go, as retelling it can feel like reliving it. Psychologists call this "ruminating," which is to repeatedly obsess on a negative thoughts about a situation or person.

Step Three: It's Okay To Laugh At Situations, But Not People

Laughter is surely a terrific stress reliever, and we all get a kick out of the "clueless" things guests say, ask and do. Such as "What's the weather going to be during my visit? (A visit that is months away!)" or "Are there sharks in the ocean there?" or "Why do you need a credit card at check-in?"

Step Four: It's NOT Okay To Demean Guests

Avoid falling into the trap of resenting "all" guests based on the actions of a few. Otherwise, negativity will grow like the Kudzu weed, an invasive species of vine that grows super-fast in a forest, soon covering the entire tree canopy, blocking out all sunlight so that everything underneath dies in the darkness. For example, never say "All guests these days only complain to get something for free." Realize that most guests just want to be heard.

Step Five: Accept That Guest Complaints Are a Numbers Game

How many actual guest rooms do you have? (Remember, suites may have two or more rooms.) On average, how many guests per room? For a hotel, let's say you have 200 rooms and an average of 1.75 guests-per-room, that's 350 complaint opportunities per sold-out night! Remember that most guests do not contact us to say "Hello, I just called to say that everything is working perfectly today, and the place is spotless!" Therefore, remember the number of complaints per guest is actually quite low.

Step Six: Understand the Challenges of Travel Bring Out the Worst Side of Even the Nicest People

When you encounter cranky or disgruntled guests, stop to think about all they have likely gone through before arriving in your lobby. What stresses did they encounter at the airport or on the plane? If they arrived by car, what traffic delays? If traveling with kids, what annoyances or stressors did they endure?

Step Seven: Understand that Human Emotions Can Swing in Either Direction

We are emotional creatures living in a physical world. Rather than rushing to judge others as "mean," "rude" or to label them with "four-letter words," think about the possible "back stories." What is going on with their health or the wellness of their family members? What is happening with their job or personal relationship with the person they are standing next to? Is it really just a vacation, or perhaps the only time they get to spend together as a family or couple all month? Or for a procedure in a hospital, or worse yet if you ask me, for their child or spouse's medical test or procedure?

Step Eight: Make It Your Job To Flip Their Vibe

The spirit of hospitality flows like a satellite signal to a cell phone tower, and each of us sends a "signal" to everyone we encounter. Are sending out a weak analog signal? If so, you'll be overpowered daily by the negative vibes of others. Instead, choose to blast out 5G Positivity! Walk into work focused on a mindset that you are going "flip the vibe" of everyone you encounter.

Step Nine: Use Hospitality Communications Tools

Greet others first before they greet you. Hold eye contact for an extra second or two, and a smile will naturally break out on both faces. Recent studies in medical fields have confirmed that smiles actually trick the body into releasing those "feel-good" hormones. Listen attentively and be fully present. Use impeccable telephone hospitality and you will speak with nicer callers!

Step Ten: Empathize Before You Apologize

To defusing an upset guest or co-worker, provide them with a sense of validation. Try to understand how they might feel in the context of their situation, and then apologize! An apology is not an admission of guilt; it simply shows that our intentions were good.

Step Eleven: Use Your Power of Release Over Negativity

Don't give others the "remote control" to your emotional well-being. No one can make you angry, no one make you upset, and no one can insult you, unless you give them the power to do so.

Step Twelve: Start Your Day With Gratitude

Before you grab your phone from the nightstand and scroll through Facebook or email, pause to be grateful. For your health, your family, your job, your co-workers and your guests — yes, even the difficult ones. Gratitude is truly a superpower.

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PAGE 6

Community Connections

Building Business in OC

Connect, Collaborate, & Strategize Future Meetings & Events



GM & DIRECTOR OF SALES

Round Table

AT THE RESIDENCE INN
BAYSIDE ON 61ST STREET



Interactive Discussion



Lunch Included

New Date

Wednesday
May 1

11:00am - 1:00pm

Join OCHMRA &
Kim Mueller
OC Tourism Director of Sales
Tom Perlozzo

OC Director of Tourism &
Business Development

RSVP by Friday, April 26 to (410) 289-6733 or SusanJones@ocvisitor.com



United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore



Marketing Benefits

Rack Card

- Distribution to past, present and future participants and community distribution at large!

Social media highlights

- Shout Out – UWLES will highlight and promote all participants throughout the summer on our Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter pages.
- Will promote using our social media hashtags: #uwles #TogetherWeLIVEUNITED #DineStayPlayUnited, and can add your hashtags as well!
- UWLES has created a Dine Stay Play Facebook Group for participants to utilize for promoting their business as well as for sharing updates for the program.



Reels

- Reels are more popular than ever. Reels showcase the energy of your venue, allowing you to engage your followers and customers via a sharable and lasting medium.
- A UWLES team member will visit your establishment 1-2 times throughout the season to promote your participation through a creative and eye catching reel on our social media feed (Facebook or Instagram)

On-site marketing materials

- Public Facing Posters – Program posters to display your participation around your organization
- Window clings – Features the Dine Stay and Play United logo for customers to see.

Print & Digital

- Sponsored Online Ads on several platforms
- Promotional ads through Independent News & Media publications both print & digital
- Market reach will cover Lower Shore of Maryland and Delaware



Radio

- Ads will be run on 6 iHeartMedia Delmarva stations (Froggy 99.9, KISS 95.9, MAGIC 98.9, Q105, WJDY1470 News & Radio and Fox Sports Delmarva AM960.
- Ads will be run on Delmarva Public Media stations

Television

- Commercials promoting Dine Stay & Play United will run on WMDT 47 ABC throughout the summer

United Way Website

- uwles.org/DineStayPlayUnited – Customers can find a full list of the current year’s participating organizations including your logo and a listing of your special(s). Logos are directly linked to your website to drive customers to each business!

Constant Contact E-Marketing

- E-blast – Over the summer United Way will promote Dine, Stay and Play United to over 15,000 community members.

Award

- Spirit Award given to one participant who embodies the qualities of a Dine Stay Play Champion.

MARKETING TIMELINE

- 📌 May - Promotion items/specials due to UWLES for marketing material
- 📌 May 27th - Official start date of program
- 🏠 If no specials, materials will say "a portion of proceeds benefit..."
- 🏠 September 2nd- Last day of program
- 📌 May 20th-24th - Deliver promotional materials to participants
- 📌 Winter/Spring 2025 - Participant Recognition / Celebration



Protect Your Business From Fire

Avoid Spontaneous Combustion

BAR TOWEL & LINEN FIRE SAFETY

These fires occur when combustible materials, such as bar towels and linens with high cotton content, heat up to the point of ignition.

If the heat generated by oxidization is not dissipated, the material can continue to heat to the point of ignition. This can result in a spontaneous fire.

Four distinct times that spontaneous combustion often occurs:

1. Improperly discarding soiled bar towels and oily rags
2. Laundry waiting in carts or trucks for processing
3. During the dryer cool-down process
4. Laundry removed from the dryer awaiting processing or distribution

MORE ON THE
OTHER SIDE



WHAT IS SPONTANEOUS IGNITION (COMBUSTION)?

Self-ignition of combustible material through chemical action as oxidation of its constituents



FIRE PREVENTION MEASURES IN HOTELS & RESTAURANTS

While it is nearly impossible to **eliminate the risk of fire** in industries that work with linens, there are several steps that staff can take to help reduce the risk of fire:



DISPOSE OF OILY RAGS AND BAR TOWELS PROPERLY
Placing oily rags in a specifically designed Oily Waste Can can drastically reduce the likelihood of spontaneous ignition.

CHECK YOUR TEMPERATURES AND DETERGENTS

Ensure that wash temperatures and detergents are appropriate for removing oils. Washing fabrics correctly guarantees the removal of all fats, grease, and oils, reducing the fire risk.



CONFIRM LAUNDRY IS CLEAN BEFORE DRYING

If you notice any unusual odors coming from a pile of laundry, it's important to return them to the wash. Be aware and if anything seems off, take action to prevent potential fire hazards.

REMOVE LAUNDRY PROMPTLY

Ensure the dryer is completely cooled down and remove laundry promptly. Doing so can release heat and decrease the chance of a fire.



AVOID LARGE STACKS OR PILES

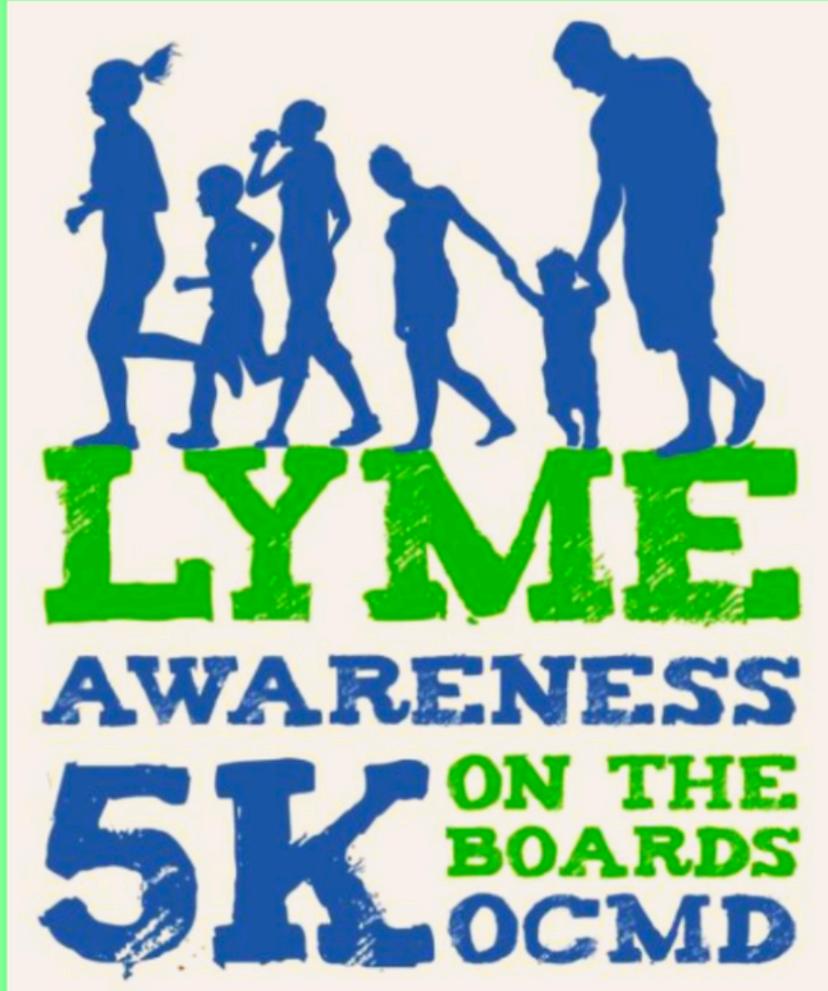
Unattended piles of linens can heat up rapidly and potentially catch fire, especially if there are flammable contaminants present.

Contact Us

OCFM@oceancitymd.gov

410-289-8780

MAY 11, 2024



**8TH ANNUAL
WALK & FUN RUN**

SCAN TO
DONATE



**REGISTRATION @ 8AM
THE OCMD INLET
PARKING LOT
RUN BEGINS @ 9
POST RUN PARTY AT
THE BRASS BALLS SALOON
AUCTIONS, RAFFLES &
DOOR PRIZES**

SCAN TO
REGISTER



REGISTER ONLINE AT FIGHTTHEBITEOC.ORG

MARYLAND'S
Coast

WORCESTER COUNTY

MIXER

Worcester County Office of Tourism
And Economic Development

MARYLAND'S **Coast**

Invites you to a networking opportunity for our
local businesses and community leaders.

Complimentary appetizers will be served.

**Join us at the
Ocean City Center
for the Arts**



ART LEAGUE OF OCEAN CITY
CENTER FOR THE ARTS

**502 94th Street
Ocean City, MD 21842**

R.S.V.P. Here

**Come Celebrate
National Travel & Tourism Week!**



NATIONAL TRAVEL & TOURISM WEEK

MAY 19-25, 2024

**MONDAY,
MAY 20, 2024
4:00 p.m.
to 6:00 p.m.**