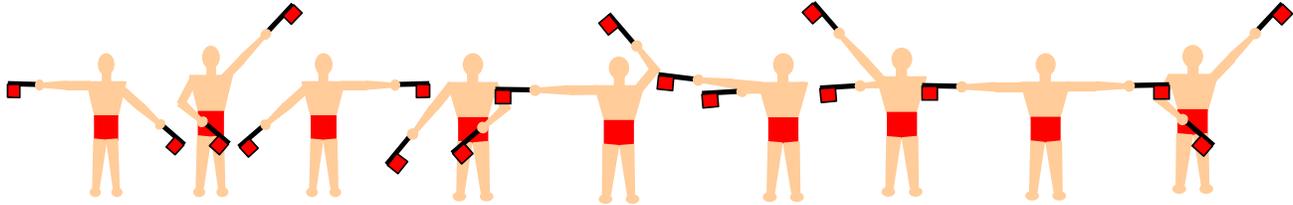


Ocean City Beach Patrol



Edition 60

Newsletter

Fall 2015/Winter 2016



Over Eighty Years
of Saving Lives

Maintain Your Role
in this Fantastic
Tradition!

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Message From the Captain

The End of an Era, and the Start of a New Chapter

Twenty-two years ago the Beach Patrol operations and headquarters was moved from Worcester Street (where the Police Boardwalk Substation now stands) to the abandoned Police Department complex located on Dorchester Street. Police operations had been relocated to the newly constructed Public Safety Building at 65th street. At that time this was only a temporary home until the property was developed as part of the Town's "Model Block" program. Eventually the largest building in the Dorchester Street complex, including jail cells, property division, and the police dispatch center, was demolished, leaving us a parking lot. After losing that building we began using the second floor of the old district court building as our training room and Junior Beach Patrol offices. We invited the Police Department Bike Patrol to use the first floor of this building since we had no plans to use it for our operations. Because of the "temporary" nature of our stay and the presence of asbestos throughout the buildings we did not improve or maintain the property beyond emergency repairs. As a result, this town property began looking in disrepair and the buildings were becoming structurally compromised due to their exposure to the elements. But as of this past month, that 22-year temporary home of the Beach Patrol is now only a memory.

Now we begin a new chapter in the Beach Patrol story. This past summer was very unique, and saw things happen that may not be repeated in any of our lifetimes. We operated simultaneously out of two locations as we completed the move from Dorchester Street to our new home on Talbot Street. This situation created its own very unique challenges and opportunities. Although we have completed the move out of our old headquar-

ters we have not yet completed the move into our new building and probably will not until the end of this next season. Although we attempted to duplicate the various areas we had designated in the old three-building complex into this single building, we do not have as much storage space and we are packed in tight in several of our first floor operation areas, including uniform storage, equipment, workshop and garage. Currently we are working to make those areas meet our needs. However, we are both thankful for, and appreciative of our new home and know it will make our operations more efficient.

This past summer we had a dedication of the new Beach Patrol Headquarters and I had the opportunity to thank those involved in making it happen. I want to again thank some of the people who were most instrumental in making this all possible. The group most responsible for this amazing facility are the Citizens of Ocean City Maryland. However, the two individuals who remained committed to building the Beach Patrol a home to call its own and kept it in focus for many years were the Director of Recreation and Parks Beach Patrol Division Tom Shuster and City Manager and Councilman Dennis Dare. As City Manager Dennis Dare had always assured me that it was his goal before he retired, to build a new Beach Patrol Headquarters, since we were the only department that had never had a new building. When he left the city manager position it looked as though he would not be able to see this goal realized. However, as a City Councilman, he was not only able to vote for the project but was able to see it to completion. As Director of Recreation and Parks, Tom Shuster served as the spokesperson in moving the desires and needs of Patrol forward with the design committee along with Ward Kovacs and input from the officers and staff of the Patrol. Of course Tom's role was so instrumental that his



name has been cast on the building's dedication plaque for posterity.

However, none of this would have been possible without the support of the Mayor and City Council. And in this case, it was unanimous support. Without hesitation each member of the council affirmed the vote to approve the inclusion of funding in the bond sale. Members at the time were, Council President LLOYD MARTIN, Council Secretary MARY KNIGHT, and council members BRENT ASHLEY, DOUG CYMEK, DENNIS DARE, JOE MITRECIC and MARGARET PILLAS. Although Mayor Meehan is not a voting member of the council his influence is powerful among citizens and elected officials and his support was critical.

The final and critical piece came when the Executive Board of the "Ocean City Development Corporation" (OCDC), in working with the Mayor and several council members came up with a generous plan to assist the Town financially with this project. Although Glenn Irwin is the face of OCDC that we all know, he is the executive director and answers to an executive board which at the time was made up of Robert Givarz - President, Jay Knerr - Vice President, Igor Conev - Secretary, Charles Barrett - Treasurer and Todd Ferrante - Past President. Each of these are well respected businessmen in the Ocean Community and having their backing was a critical component in this process. Individual board members took the time to explain the importance of this project to anyone who they felt could help in the process. Many of these people came forward to add their support, including former Mayor and current State Senator Jim Mathias as well as OCBP alum, Congressman "Dutch" Ruppersberger.

Once approved the project had many hands working together. Under the direction of then City Manager, David Recor many departments and individuals had a significant role. Of course the project never would have been completed on time or on

budget had it not been for the tireless efforts and expertise of City Engineer Terry McGean and his staff who oversaw the entire project.

Although the planning began while the Beach Patrol was a division of Recreation and Parks, the actual construction took place under the leadership of our current Director Joe Theobald. His continued support and trust during the year-long process and his allowing us to work directly with the architect and construction manager to create a facility that fits our mission and our needs was greatly appreciated.

One of the most important factors that made the overwhelming support of our community possible was the professionalism, dedication and selfless giving to others of past and present members of the Beach Patrol over the past 85 plus years. This allowed us to have a reputation that created an atmosphere that motivated others to not only support the idea but to actively pursue it. Although several thousand individuals have served the Town within the Beach Patrol organization, I felt the need to commemorate three individuals who each gave the majority of their lives to the building and forming of the Patrol we have today. To honor these individuals we will dedicate a floor to each one: The third floor which is the administrative offices is dedicated to Captain Robert Craig, The second floor which will be used for training and the Junior Beach Patrol youth program is dedicated to Captain George Schoepf, and the first floor which is primarily vehicle and equipment storage has been dedicated to Lieutenant Warren Williams. (See article on the dedication plaques on page 11. A very heartfelt thanks to everyone involved with making our new Beach Patrol headquarters a reality. Although, this building is only wood, block and mortar, it symbolizes so much more in its importance to the Ocean City community and what the Town has represented since it became a sea-side resort over 100 years ago. Now we have a fitting landmark to be proud of and to use as we continue to strive to exceed all expectations, as we have always done!



John P. Dunnigan Photography

John takes our group pictures each year. If you didn't get all the prints you wanted last year, its not too late. Parents love to get pictures of their children as gifts, especially awesome Beach Patrol shots. Email John if you have gift giving ideas that include photographs of the Beach Patrol.

johnpdunnigan.com

Dedication Plaque located on the 1st floor of Beach Patrol Headquarter.



Welcome rookie class of 2016

I want to again welcome you into the Beach Patrol family and to the greatest adventure of your life and I hope that this is just the beginning of a lifetime of wonderful Ocean City memories. Although you have taken the preliminary and most important steps toward a career with the Ocean City Beach Patrol when you successfully completed the pre-employment physical skills test and demonstrated to your testing administrators that you have the “Right Stuff”, this is just the beginning of the adventure and not the end. Passing the “test” is a challenge you will always remember with great pride, but now the real work begins for you and the Surf Rescue Academy instructors and the Patrol’s leadership.

We have the responsibility of turning you into a Surf Rescue Technician and you have the responsibility of arriving in the spring ready to take on the challenges of Surf Rescue Academy. We will provide you with the most comprehensive open water surf rescue training being taught by the best instructors available anywhere. To be successful you must use these next several months to prepare both personally and physically for the “Greatest Adventure of your life”. To prepare physically you must continue to work on maintaining and improving your physical conditioning and specific skills. Although we talked about where you needed to improve during your final interview you should take time to look at our training web resources www.ocean.com/ocbp and contact our coordinator of training, Sgt. Muller for training tips. Although it may be difficult to find a pool to train in during the winter, and running in the sand may only be possible at the beach, you MUST find a way to maintain your training and increase the intensity as you approach the start of SRA. Reporting to SRA out of shape or not prepared to participate at the physical level required of all rookies, will result in the loss of your position.

Although official offers of appointment to Surf Rescue Academy will not happen until April 2016, I will be sending you a link by e-mail in early February, to a Google Docs form that will update your status and help the patrol with planning. Once you receive the official offer in April and have confirmed your availability and submitted official documentation, your responsibility is to be fully prepared for the rigors of SRA and to be ready to perform at the highest levels both physically and mentally. As long as your availability is until at least Labor Day, Monday, September 5, 2016 you will be guaranteed a reserved slot in a Surf Rescue Academy, however, several appointments will also be given to others based on performance, past connections with the patrol and late season availability. We have scheduled 2 off-site tests and a final Ocean City test for Surf Rescue Academies for the 2016 season. Our next Pre-Employment Physical Skills Evaluation (PEPSE) will take place at Salisbury University on Sunday, February 28, 2016 with a second PEPSE on Saturday, March 12, 2016 at York College in Pennsylvania. Now that you are a part of our family you

have a shared responsibility to help recruit quality candidates that you would like to work with this summer. If they are not available to attend one of the off-site PEPSE opportunities they may still try-out for a position for our 2016 season on June 4th in Ocean City. However, they will not be eligible for the Surf Rescue Academy that begins on May 22nd and will miss approximately 4 weeks of paid work. Also, once all positions are filled we will stop hiring for the 2016 season.

To prepare personally you need to finalize all of your living arrangements as soon as possible. You may contact current members of the patrol through Facebook or e-mail me barbin@oceancitymd.gov and I will put you in contact with resources to find housing which includes available employee housing. Whatever else you do..... be ready! And remember... this is the beginning of the greatest adventure of your life..



The above pictures were taken of the swim and soft sand sprint from the June 2015 test. Some of these candidates passed the test that day and were offered an appointment in Surf Rescue Academy. We hope to get more rookies at our next off site test. Remember to keep recruiting.

It's our people that make us successful!

When I look at the make-up of the 2015 Beach Patrol I am amazed at what it reveals. First and foremost the experience of our organization surpasses the National average in full-time career professions. Of the 190 employees listed on our roster this past season, over 1/3 (35%) have worked for the patrol for five or more years. What makes this statistic even more impressive is that 86% of our employees do not live in the local area and must relocate each season to continue working for the patrol. In many cases these individuals have permanent homes and mortgages and must rent a place each season. Some of them bring spouses and families. These are impressive numbers for a seasonal operation that does not provide any employee benefits (except amazing working conditions) and has only 1 full-time employee.

During the 2015 season we saw a diverse group of employees both by gender and home towns. The permanent address list showed 55 to be non-Maryland residents, with 23 from Pennsylvania and 14 foreign workers (12 Canadians). Our female contingent continues to be a strong demographic with a 23% representation which remains higher than our average of females over time, and more than in 2014. With all these numbers we still have under 4% of our staff in off- the-beach roles, with the remaining staff dedicated to on-beach operations. When you look beyond the numbers, what this all really means is that we have a highly trained, professional, dedicated and experienced staff each season. This all would not be possible if "WE" did not provide an inviting and quality work experience. This starts with the relationship between veterans and our newest employees and continues into the camaraderie that is nurtured in each crew. It is further supported by the fair and equal treatment from supervisors and the openness in our promotional process that lets everyone know that there are no hidden agendas or backroom deals. Thanks to each of you, anyone looking at the Beach Patrol can tell "WE" are doing something very right. Of course we think we are doing well, but when outside groups ask us for information on our success and even schedule the Beach Patrol to present to other professional organizations about our recruiting and retention practices, that reinforces that we "know what we are doing" and have a history that demonstrates our success.

Congratulations to the following individuals who have met the following longevity milestones. Although we are a seasonal / temporary operation it is true testament to everyone's dedication and professionalism that 35% of our staff have 5 or more years and over half of those have over 10 years working for the Town of Ocean City and only 26% were first year SRTs. We celebrate all of our employees who have committed to work for the Patrol whether for a season or a decade, but we present longevity awards for 5 year increments. We had one of our employees this past season who achieved significant tenure with the Patrol: SRT Mike Bangert just completed his 20th season.

5 years

Hessler, Karen
Leszczynski, Rob
Mechling, Tom
Padley, Andrew
Reck, Lauren
Shobe, Abbey
Stang, Colin

Over 15 years

16 years - Brabitz, Jeff
16 years - Konyar, Jason
17 years - Cowder, Ryan
17 years - Foy, Jake
17 years - Muller, Mark
17 years - Tyler, Debi
19 years - Falcon, Jamie
19 years - Postell, Mat
19 years - Reed, Kevin
20 years - Bangert, Mike
21 years - Haight, Dave
22 years - Phillips, Colby
26 years - Cawthern, Rick
26 years - Weingard, Brent
31 years - Stone, Mike
32 years - Uebel, Tim
33 years - Kovacs, Ward
33 years - Lee III, Skip

15 years

Davis, Ben
Malone, Stella



OCBPSRA

The following individuals currently have SRT-II (old Basic) certification and are eligible to apply for the training position of Assistant Crew Chief for the 2016 season. SRTs who have previously served in the role of ACC can apply for the position again, however it is the desire of the patrol to have 17 first time ACCs to allow more individuals to receive this additional training. The Assistant Crew Chief training position is a critical step in the process of developing a strong candidate pool for leadership succession. It allows the Beach Patrol leadership to observe and evaluate your future potential based on criteria referenced performance of the essential Crew Chief tasks. Note: There are several SRTs who have completed all the criteria to receive SRT II certification, except the additional required NIMS courses. You may complete these courses at any time and your certification will be updated.



Fink, Tyler (08/01/2014)
 Lagace, Lucie (06/22/2012)
 McIntyre, Meghan (08/21/2010)
 Reed, Kevin (09/25/2011)
 Sears, Jarred (08/25/2011)

The following individuals who are not current Crew Chiefs have earned the SRT-III (old Advanced) certification and are eligible to apply for promotion to Crew Chief for the 2016 season. All SRT-IIIs have previously served in the training position of Assistant Crew Chief and may re-apply for that position as well as Crew Chief since there are always far less openings at the CC position compared to the 17 annual openings at ACC. At this time I am anticipating four openings for Crew Chief for the 2016 season. You will be asked to indicate your desire to apply when you return your *Preliminary Intent Form* through Google Docs in February as well as in your *Return Employment Agreement* in April. If you are interested in applying for one of the open Crew Chief positions, you will be asked to complete an application that will be reviewed by the selection committee in early May so that offers can be made prior to Surf Rescue Academy I. Note: There are several SRTs who have completed all the criteria to receive SRT III certification, except the additional required NIMS courses. You may complete these courses at any time and your certification will be updated.

Keefe, Joseph (08/09/2012)
 Krabbe, David (08/21/2012)
 Linnell, Kalani (08/12/2010)
 Lurie, Tucker (08/14/2014)
 Martirano, Vincent (06/04/2015)
 Miller, John (07/03/2009)
 Ritter, Jacob (06/23/2011)
 Stang, Colin (08/12/2013)
 Wilder, Joshua (06/02/2013)
 Wilkinson, Jr., William (07/07/2011)
 Wojciechowski, Matthew (05/25/2014)

The following individuals who are not current Sergeants have earned Instructor certification and are eligible to apply for promotion to Sergeant for the 2016 season if any opening exist. All OCBPSRA Instructors have previously served as a Crew Chief and may re-apply for that position as well as any potential Sergeant openings. At this time I am not aware of any openings at the Sergeant position for the 2016 season, but hope to finalize the status of the current Sergeant group before March. Regardless of information on openings, you will be asked to indicate your desire to apply when you return your Preliminary intent form through Google Docs in February as well as in your return employment agreement in April. If you are accepted as an applicant for an open position, you will be asked to complete an application packet that will be reviewed by a selection committee as early in the Spring as possible. Any promotions will be completed as early as possible but no later than prior to Surf Rescue Academy I. Note: There are several Crew Chiefs who have completed all the criteria to receive Instructor certification, except the additional required NIMS courses or Safe Boating. You may complete these courses at any time and your certification will be updated once we receive a copy of your certificates.

DeKemper, Steven (08/15/2010)
 Fisher, Harrison (06/15/2012)
 Foy, Jacob (07/29/2002)
 Haight, David (07/21/2003)
 McGrath, Kelly (05/26/2012)
 Mechling, Thomas (05/20/2015)
 Pogonowski, Daniel (05/28/2011)
 Sanzotti, Damien (05/25/2012)
 Wagner, Travis (07/12/2009)

Captain's Note: You should have received a review of your OCBPSRA certification record by E-mail. Make sure you verify the accuracy of your record and use the link at the bottom of the form to respond to Google Docs. A list of SRTs who have OCBPSRA SRT II certification and have not held the training position of ACC and non Crew Chiefs who have achieved SRT III certification is included in this newsletter. SRT II is required to apply for Assistant Crew Chief, SRT III is required to be an applicant for Crew Chief and Instructor is a pre-requisite for Sergeant.



Testing and Recruiting

Recruiting and Testing; The Season is Underway!

submitted by: 1st Lt. Skip Lee

Hats off to the incredible Recruiting team assembled under Mat Postell's leadership. The team is making connections, marketing OCBP, and creating the kind of personal relationships we all know and understand to be the most effective way to recruit future guards.

But just because Mat, Tom, Harrison, and Travis are doing this work now, it does not mean we all should put on the brakes or choose not to share the employment opportunities and incredible work experiences we all know and love with others. Please, please, please have the conversation with a friend (or a stranger for that matter) who you think would be successful as an SRT and someone you can see yourself working with next summer. Recruiting is all of our responsibility and we thank each and every one of you for the time and effort you have put forth to bring the candidate to the test and for the work you will do to promote our upcoming Pre-Employment Physical Skills Evaluations (PEPSE) in the months ahead.

Speaking of PEPSE, the summer of 2015 offered what I would agree were the two toughest testing days in a row that anyone can remember. The ocean, currents, and waves created a challenging setting in which to take our test and truly, only the strong survived. Congratulations to those who have been offered appointments to Surf rescue Academy. You can walk with confidence knowing what you accomplished was not the norm but rather something much more difficult than usual. And to the Testing Officers who brought their expertise, their patience and wisdom to the test, I thank you. From the moment you introduce yourselves to the wide-eyed candidates to the last moment when you say "I can see myself sitting next to this person," your professionalism shines brightly. I appreciate each person who brings all they have to the test to create for the candidates the most realistic and appropriate testing experience possible and I believe the candidates we have appointed to Academy will do very well because of what you did for them.

A special shout-out goes to Youcef Maktouche for bringing more candidates than anyone else to a test last season. Youcef won a \$100.00 prize for his efforts. I will offer the same award for this year's Strongest Recruiter – the employee who brings the most candidates to the test...verified by them actually stating on their Candidate Survey that YOU recruited them and told them about the OCBP. This is but a small token of my personal appreciation for the work that we all do to share the OCBP with others and to grow our own staff as we do it. It's never too late to talk Beach Patrol, so



start today!

2016 Pre-Employment Test Schedule

Sunday, February 28, 2016 11:00am Salisbury University
Maggs Pool Start Recruiting NOW!

Saturday, March 12, 2016 11:00am York College
Grumbacher Sport and Fitness Center

Saturday, June 4, 2016 11:00am Ocean City
Dorchester St. and Boardwalk

Saturday, June 18, 2016* 11:00am Ocean City
Dorchester St. and Boardwalk

**if necessary*

Captain's Note: I want to first thank Skip for supporting the recruiting effort so much that he is making the \$100.00 prize for top recruiter "personally" (not public funds). I also want to give everyone a sobering statistic that will hopefully stress the need to individually make recruiting a personal goal. Following the 2 PEPSEs that were held in 2015 for the 2016 Surf Rescue Academies (SRA) we have 15 quality rookies. Although these candidates were some of the best we have ever appointed to SRA, we need more. In the first two 2013 PEPSE's we had 30 rookies and in 2014 had dropped to 25. If we want to have the coverage that gives Mike Stone the most flexibility then we need to make sure that we encourage every capable person we each know to attend one of the next 2 PEPSEs.

EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

Thank You Thursday

submitted by: Kristin Joson

The Beach Patrol will continue a public outreach venue on our official Facebook page that we began last fall. We call it "Thank You Thursday" and it features a weekly posting of an "ata-boy" letter that Captain Arbin has received complimenting one or more of our Beach Patrol staff. We thought this would be a good way to keep a Facebook presence in the "off-season" when the public is less aware of the Patrol and keep the public thinking about beach safety and the coming summer.

Lt. Kovacs did a great job last year and enjoys putting the Thank You Thursdays together with a picture and a safety message. We posted our first "Thank You Thursday" on Thanksgiving and continue to post each week until we are back in season next May. We only post with the permission of the person who sent it and often receive additional accolades when they respond to the request that Captain Arbin sends them. Captain Arbin has been working diligently to get the emails approved for the public to read on our Facebook page. So far everyone that he has asked has given a very positive response and said "YES" please post it. The comments and "likes" from those who viewed them on Facebook last year

were overwhelmingly positive and often generated many additional complimentary comments that are posted as well as people re-sharing it to others.

This seems to be the perfect venue to share the gratitude from beach patrons and also reminds others of the professionalism that they may have taken for granted. It lets the public know the many great things our lifeguards do on a daily basis and it gives credit and recognition at the same time. Another important feature is that we highlight a safety tip that goes along with the Thank You Thursday. When we started the new Thursday feature we saw a wonderful response to the posts and many people choose to share some of the posts which brought a huge increase in the amount of traffic to the Beach Patrol Facebook page.

As more and more people are drawn to our page, we have a great opportunity to further our mission of educating and informing the public about beach safety. If you have not visited our facebook page, check it out and Keep looking for "Thank you Thursdays" and re-post and share with everyone you know (education is everyone's responsibility). You may be the next SRT featured or a member of a crew that has received a group commendation. We featured two crews the first two weeks in November 2014. We hope you enjoy this outreach opportunity and help us spread the word about "Thank You Thursday" and the most important aspect of our mission, education!

The following is an excerpt from one of our most popular posts from last season: *A young man named Jeff overcame tremendous hurdles at a very young age. In the early 1990's he was diagnosed with what, at the time, was considered terminal cancer. He had always dreamed of someday being a lifeguard like those he saw when his family vacationed in Ocean City. He got to be an honorary OCBP member for a day. Thankfully his cancer went into remission. But the story doesn't end there. Jeff and his family never forgot how much his day as a lifeguard meant to him. 20 years later the family came back to vacation and thanked Captain Arbin and Lt.*

Kovacs. You can view the full story on our Facebook page.



Greetings from your USLA Chapter

submitted by: Sgt. Ben Davis

As another summer fades into memories, it is a great time to reflect. But for lots of us, we quickly shift our focus to improving things for next summer. Sending athletes around the region and around the country costs a good deal of money. In the past, our fundraising efforts have been very last minute, which resulted in many small contributions -- which essentially were gifts from local businesses.

This fall, we began the process of incorporating the Ocean City Beach Patrol Chapter of the United States Lifesaving Association. This will allow us to seek larger donations. A local attorney -- who has connections to the beach patrol -- has both volunteered his services and paid a number of the fees towards this cause. We express our greatest appreciation to Mr. John B. Robbins, IV of Robins & Robins in Salisbury, MD for taking our cause forward.

I am happy to announce we shall now be called the Ocean City Maryland Beach Patrol Chapter of the United States Lifesaving Association, Inc. -- a not for profit corporation in the State of Maryland. Our tax exempt status is pending, but expected to be approved.

What does this mean? Once complete, in January or February of this year upcoming, we will be able to solicit tax deductible donations from larger sponsors around the region. My hope is to have fewer large sponsors, and to reduce or eliminate out of pocket costs for athletes who are representing us in regional and national competitions.

How can you help? Sending letters soliciting donations cold has a low success rate. If you have connections with large business in the region, and can help make a personal connection, it will increase our chances. I also need suggestions of businesses to solicit donations from. Please do contact me with any suggestions.

Sgt. Ben Davis
Treasurer,
OCBPMBUSLA, Inc.



Educating the Public through Social Media

submitted by: Kristin Joson

We never know how many “likes” a photo will receive of one of our lifeguards on the OCBP Facebook page. Last summer the berm that stretched from the inlet to Delaware reached well over 30,000. Views and a Thank You Thursday post of Lt. Kovacs being reunited with a cancer surviving beach patron after 25 years got more than 38,000 views.

Like other public safety agencies in Ocean City and around the country, everyone is using social media as a way to interact, educate and communicate with the public. Social networking offers a way for us to market our department by posting and tweeting stories about positive interactions between the lifeguards and the visitors and residents of Ocean City. At a time when public safety departments nationwide are under increased scrutiny, some say social media has become important for public safety departments to show all sides of the work they do. Each year Captain Arbin reminds everyone at our weekly meetings about image and perception. A guard sitting on a stand or an officer riding up and down the beach on a quad may look a particular way to one patron and a completely different way to another beach patron. There are always going to be different perceptions yet there is always so much more we want the public to know. Lifeguards have many hours of calm, scanning and patrolling but there are also moments of trauma and we all know it can be a dangerous job. Social networking is just one of the ways that we let the public know about the many facets of jobs.

Because social media is a primary way many people receive information, we simply must take advantage of the opportunities it offers. It's an effective tool, but it has to be used responsibly. It's great to talk about the good things, but it's also important to talk about the challenging things. We constantly are trying to get a safety message out no matter what is going on. Social media also allows the public to see our guards as real people. We try to make it interesting and profile some of the guards in our safety articles. This allows people in our community to see that if they see the guards off the beach without their uniform, they are no different than anybody else. We all have jobs and interests outside of the beach patrol.

We have thousands of followers on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Getting our safety message out becomes even easier when followers “like” and “share” photos, videos and other items. And because social media is so easy to use, by clicking and sharing you contribute by educating someone who might not know about certain dangers such as sand cave-ins or the best way to get reunited with a lost child on the beach. Social media responsibilities for most departments have fallen on public information officers who have some interaction with the public but who typically spend most of their time talking with reporters or gathering information to disseminate in news releases. Now they use social media to communicate with everyone. I am always thinking, “What does the public want to see and need to hear?” It's mainly about safety messages, but there really is so much more.

While we continue to explore new ways to use social media, it will never replace the one-on-one interaction that our guards have with beach patrons. However it is a good supplement to the EDUs that we do and the safety seminars as well as other outreach efforts. We love getting our messages out through social media but it can never become our primary means of engaging the community and beach patrons. It is a tool that we have added on to an already robust outreach initiative.

So if you have not already done so please make sure you are following the OCBP on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Share our posts with your friends so our safety messages reach everyone. Continue to share pictures and current beach patrol activities with me so that I can post them on our social media accounts. Going through your crew chief is also a good way to get an idea for a post or pictures to me. Through education and social media we can reach more people and save more lives.

Captain's note: In addition to the various forms of social media that the Beach Patrol is using, we are also very active in print media being featured in several of the free newspapers that are distributed each week in and around Ocean City. Thanks to Kristin Joson's work in the off season we are once again going to be featured in both of the hard back hotel books that are distributed in the best hotels in Ocean City. Remember, education is the first part of our three part mission.

OCBP NEWS



Junior Beach Patrol - 25th Anniversary!

submitted by: Lt. Mike Stone

Based on my calculations next summer will be the 25th summer for the Junior Beach Patrol Program. Hard to believe that the small program, which was started during the summer of 1992 (by Ric Cawthern & Matt McGinnis) has grown into one of the top Recreation & Parks programs for the Town of Ocean City as well as a Nationally awarded program. Each summer well over 200 young people between the ages of 10 & 16 participate in the Junior Beach Patrol (JBP) camps.

It is hard to imagine the Ocean City Beach Patrol (OCBP) without the JBP program as it has become not only an outstanding educational camp, but a direct link for many young people to become Surf Rescue Technicians (SRTs) on the OCBP. I know of several current employees who took part in JBP and have moved through the ranks to even become Crew Chiefs. From a professional standpoint that is a powerful influ-

ence as I am responsible for assignments & scheduling on the Beach Patrol. We have employees coming to us with both experience & knowledge of how the Beach Patrol operates and what is expected of future employees. JPB participants also develop both an appreciation and respect for the ocean and how unpredictable Mother Nature can be.

On a personal note, I can also relate to being a young person starting out as an employee some 32 years ago during the summer of 1984. I was encouraged to try out that summer by two of my friends (Dave Meehan & Russell Shiflett) who were already working for the OCBP. I had vacationed in Ocean City with my family but had no real knowledge about working as an ocean lifeguard. I passed the test and spent the next day with a Crew Chief (Steve Buckman at Middle Inlet) and was assigned to Crew 17 up North as a rover the next day. We did not have many rescues up there that summer and I really missed out on being educated and experiencing rip currents. It wasn't until the next summer, when I was sitting in Crew 13 in front of the Pyramid, that I really found out what rip currents and making rescues were all about. We had a rock pile on both 94th & 98th streets and often made rescues there because of the rip currents that would form near those areas. I was 19 during my first summer and was actually 20 when I found out what guarding was all about!

How does that relate to JBP? Well nowadays a young person can start on JBP at the age of 10 and go through several levels until they are 16. Most of our JBP participants are between the ages of 10 & 14 though. Once they have completed all of the levels they can apply to be a JBP Assistant Instructor when they reach 15 & 16. We have had several JBPAIs do that and take the Beach Patrol test as 16 year olds and start working the next summer as Probationary SRTs once they are 17. If my math is correct, someone could start JBP at 10 (five years), be a JBPAI at 15 & 16 (two years), an SRT at 17, and by the time they reach 19 they will have **ten** years experience with the OCBP (including **three** as an SRT). I was 19 when I started and many of the employees who come to us from the JBP program have so much more knowledge than I did at that age. I could mention the many names of employees who are currently involved with the JBP program but would be sure to miss someone. I do have to mention Lt. Ward Kovacs and CC Liz Vander Clute as they oversee the JBP program. We have several Crew Chiefs who are involved as day leaders or coordinators, and many SRT's who help staff the camp. I just want to thank them for their hard work and let them know how important and valuable the JBP program has become. For me it helps give us committed, educated employees that makes my job easier every summer. I am looking forward to another great summer and can't wait for the JBP program to start.



Watercraft Duty in 2016

submitted by: Kristin Joson

Watercraft duty is a fun way to spend the workday with the OCBP and now is the perfect time to take your safe boater's course so you can make it a part of your 2016 summer. You can take the course online now and be ready for Jet Drive training and certification at the beginning of this summer season (check the employee calendar on-line for scheduled Jet Drive trainings). In the State of Maryland, you are required to have completed a safe boater's course prior to operating a motor vessel.

You have two options to complete this requirement:

Find a course near you: or

Take the course online: <http://www.boat-ed.com/maryland/> or (Google "safe boater's course" in Maryland) This course costs \$29.50

Boat Ed's (boat-ed.com) Maryland online course has the same boating safety content as the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) classroom course. This course is Maryland DNR Approved. Registration is free and you pay only if you pass. It is a 3.5 hour course that you complete at your own pace over time.

Complete the course at a location near you or online, and bring your card with you at check-in. Get it done, start the course today, so you too can have Rescue Craft duty this summer!

Captain's note: If you obtain any certifications related to your position with the patrol send a copy to Beach Patrol so we can add those certifications to your OCBPSRA record and your personnel file. In addition to a Safe Boater's Certification, we would also like to have copies of any water safety certifications, SCUBA as well as emergency medical certifications. An updated copy of your OCBPSRA record was e-mailed to you in mid November. On it, we asked for a confirmation of its accuracy. If we are missing information it is your responsibility to make us aware so we can do any necessary research and correct your record, before you apply for a position or attend any specialty certifications.



Photograph courtesy of Tom Lurie Photography and Film

What a Difference a Year Makes

submitted by: Lt. Ward Kovacs

Last year at this time I was pounding away at my keyboard writing articles for the Fall Newsletter. All the while, there was a constant rumbling and pounding from one block north as the pilings that would support our new headquarters were being driven into the ground. Now, I am working in the new building and the pounding and rumbling is coming from one block south as the old facility is being leveled by excavators. As I took pictures of the different buildings coming down, I had the opportunity to speak with the contractors on several occasions. One day I went across the street and saw all of the demolition crew standing and looking at the large opening that they had torn into the wall of the old equipment room. I said, "I remember Skip building those shelves twenty-two years ago". The foreman said, "He did a good job with them, 'cause we can't get them to come down". They eventually got the shelves down, but not before seriously considering bringing in a bigger excavator.



Summer Housing

Help with Housing

submitted by: Lt. Ward Kovacs

With the demolition of our old beach patrol compound, we also lost 2/3 of the employee housing that we once had available to our employees. This housing was especially useful when recruiting new employees who had not lived in Ocean City before, and had not established relationships with other SRTs that led to renting places together. It is important that you secure housing early so that you don't have to worry about it when spring arrives and there are final exams and other things to worry about. Also, be careful who you are dealing with when renting, whether it is a private home owner or a real estate agent. Last year, several of our employees were taken by a scam on Craig's List that cost them thousands of dollars even before they arrived in town to find a rental unit that was uninhabitable and under heavy renovation. If you would like me to check on a realtor or check out a rental unit that you are considering, I would be happy to do that on your behalf, saving you a trip to Ocean City. This would absolutely not be a problem for me since I am here every day. Please let me know if I can check listings for you or any other way that I can help from here. Lt. Kovacs wkovacs@oceancitymd.gov

Beach Patrol Housing

We have a house in off of Pacific Ave (91st street beach) that we are looking to rent for the season.

Thanks

Eugene and Julie Riddle

410-428-5590

Summer 2016 Housing

Two rooms available for rent in a house in Ocean Pines for 2016 season. Please email Sgt. Mark Muller for details. mwmuller@gmail.com

Local News

Commemorating Key OCBP Alumni

submitted by: Kristin Josen

New Beach Patrol Headquarters all dressed up for our first Christmas. What a great sight as visitors enter downtown Ocean City.



Now that we are finally moved into the new OCBP Headquarters and slowly getting settled in, it is time to add the finishing touches and turn a Beach Patrol building into our Beach patrol home. We are in the process of hanging annual group photos that we have collected along with other artifacts and memorabilia. Some of these items date back to the earliest days of the patrol. We are also dedicating each of the three floors to a key alum, each of whom gave more than 40 years to the Patrol, yet never the pleasure of working in a building that was specifically designed and built for the Patrol. To honor these individuals we have dedicated a floor to each one: The third floor which is the administrative offices will be dedicated to Captain Robert Craig, The second floor which will be used for training and the Junior Beach Patrol youth program will be dedicated to Captain George Schoepf, and the first floor which is primarily for support functions houses vehicles and equipment storage, will be dedicated to Lieutenant Warren Williams. We will have a photo and a plaque commemorating each of them. The following will be engraved on the plaques:



Captain Robert S. Craig

Robert Craig joined the beach patrol in 1935 and became captain in 1946, a position he held until he retired in 1987. During his tenure, Craig oversaw the expansion of the patrol as the Town stretched north through the 40's, 50's and 60's. He also introduced the beach patrol to rescue equipment and techniques that he had seen

used by other lifeguard agencies around the country. Craig became known for the integrity and values that he instilled in the many young men and women that he mentored through his many years with the patrol. The patrol's senior officers have offices on the third floor of our headquarters, which is dedicated to Captain Craig, the patrol's longest serving administrator.

Captain George A. Schoepf

George Schoepf joined the beach patrol in 1950 and rose through the ranks to Assistant Captain where he served for many years until his promotion to captain in 1987. Captain Schoepf began guiding the Ocean City Beach Patrol into a position of national prominence in the field of ocean lifesaving



George Schoepf, Captain

in the early 1980's. He was a founding member of the United States Lifesaving Association, and in 1988, introduced the first formalized surf rescue training for all new employees. He was a strong advocate for the patrol's competition team, and inspired a competitive spirit and a drive for success in those served under his leadership. The second floor of our headquarters building is largely comprised of classroom and training resources and is dedicated to Captain George Schoepf.



Warren A. Williams

Warren Williams became a member of the Ocean City Beach Patrol in 1963. As a Lieutenant for the majority of his 41 year career, he employed his engineering and mechanical expertise to maintain the patrol's fleet of boats, trucks and ATVs. When Warren wasn't patrolling the beach, he would most often be found in the garage working on vehicles. Warren was known for his compassion and genuine love for those

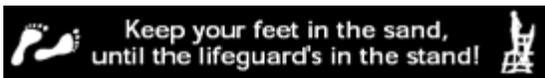
he worked with on the patrol. The first floor of our headquarters houses much of our motorized fleet and is dedicated to Lt. Warren Williams.

OCEAN CITY BEACH PATROL

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For winter correspondence
please send to:
Town of Ocean City
PO box 158
Ocean City, MD 21843
Attention: Beach Patrol

Email: barbin@ococean.com



We're on the Web
www.ococean.com/OCBP

12 **Calendar/Important Dates**

November 16– 27 Beach Patrol Budget Preparation

November 27– 29 Beach Patrol Budget Presentation to Director

January 1 Penguin Plunge, Mayor's Open House

February 27 Strategic Planning Weekend

February 28 off-site Salisbury University PEPSE

March 12 off-site York, PA PEPSE

March 31 Mailing of Spring Newsletter and Invitations to return

April 22 Employee Agreements due back

May 7 – 8 CC paper work, Officer's Work weekend

May 14—21 Opening Set up

May 22—29 SRA I

May 23—27 Returning Drug Test

May 21—22 Paper work Equipment pick up for veterans

May 28 7:00 am Prayer Service and First Day Guarding

June 4 Pre-Employment Ocean Test

For a complete, up- to- date 16 month calendar click on the Employee link on the home page of the Beach Patrol website

OCBP WEB www.ococean.com/ocbp

Do You Want OCBP License Plates?

If you do, you must complete the following:

- Obtain an application by requesting one
- Complete the application form with vehicle information and owner information
- Sign the application and send a check for \$50.00 back to Headquarters
- The Captain must sign off on approval and mail to the MVA.



Important, Important!!!!!!

- In order to insure your W2 and your tax refund get to you, contact City Hall with any corrections on your permanent address.
- Also contact Debi if your phone number, mailing address or email address changes. DebiOCBP@aol.com
- You should contact or cc Kristin with your email address change so she can keep the website updated and current.

The mission of the Ocean City Beach Patrol is to provide for the safety and well-being of the beach patrons of the Town of Ocean City, Maryland, who participate in beach and ocean-related activities. This mission includes **educating** the public, **preventing** potential accidents, and **intervening** when necessary and appropriate, both on the beach and in the adjacent Atlantic Ocean waters. The Patrol intends to fulfill its mission by:

- Recruiting the most highly qualified candidates.
- Employing qualified individuals for administrative and educational positions, competent surf rescue technicians, and public-minded surfing beach facilitators.
- Training personnel with the most current information, technology and equipment.
- Outfitting personnel with current, well-maintained, and appropriate equipment.
- Upholding the highest standards of professionalism; to present knowledgeable, capable, and reliable Surf Rescue Technicians to the general public.