



MARYLAND INSIGHTS

DIVISION OF TOURISM AND FILM
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



Maryland and DMO Partners Featured at Highlands Creative Economy Conference

The Highlands Creative Conference Summit is a presentation of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area. This year's summit on August 3 focused on improving visitor experience for sustainable tourism. Concurrent sessions featured presentations on Maryland examples of best practices and tools and examples for improving visitor experience. The three Maryland destination marketing organizations, pictured above, talked about the successful ways of engaging with new audiences, and the resources the organizations can offer to partners that are effective and low cost. One of the items presented to the audience was the [Maryland Office of Tourism's industry web site](#), which contains the [How to Work with our Office Checklist](#).

Pictured: Sarah Duck, Vice President of Tourism and Marketing, Garrett County and Deep Creek Lake Tourism; Liz Fitzsimmons, Managing Director, OTD; Ashli Workman, Executive Director of Allegany County: The Mountain Side of Maryland.



Deputy Secretary Signe Pringle Participates in “Heels and Reels” Tournament

Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Signe Pringle believes in Fish & Hunt Maryland. Deputy Secretary Pringle is an avid fisherperson and enjoys the open seas in her quest for trophy fish. She recently participated in the 15th Annual Ocean City Marlin Club Ladies Tournament, or the “Heels and Reels” as it has come to be known, which was held August 4 and 5. This tournament benefits the OCMC Auxiliary Scholarship Fund.

Pictured: Signe Pringle



Assistant Commerce Secretary Tom Riford Presents Citation at 7th Annual Chesapeake Bay Balloon Festival

Assistant Commerce Secretary Tom Riford was on hand to present a Secretary's Citation at the Friday morning kick-off event for the 7th Annual Chesapeake Bay Balloon Festival on August 4. Visit Harford County, the Harford County Office of Economic Development, the Cedar Lane Sports Foundation and the county's agricultural community sponsored the event, which featured scores of hot air balloons and was also a celebration of agri-tourism. It is the largest balloon festival in the mid-Atlantic.

Pictured from left to right: Terri Spies, Alex Spies, Scott Powers, Tom Riford.



Be a Part of International Underground Railroad Month

September is International Underground Railroad Month. Please let us know what new products or programs furthering the Underground Railroad visitor experience in Maryland you have launched this year, details of Underground Railroad events and programs for September 2023, or if you are just in the planning phase. The Maryland Office of Tourism is ready to amplify news about your events, programs, and products. Our staff will be doing media promotions for Underground Railroad events happening during September. To be part of these special promotions please enter your events [here](#) by Wednesday, August 16. If you have any questions, please contact anne.kyle@maryland.gov.

Photo Credit: JIII Jasuta Photography.



Montgomery County Hosts MATPRA Media Marketplace

The Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance held its annual media marketplace in Montgomery County July 31-August 2. This year marked the marketplace's return to Maryland after a 7-year hiatus and welcomed nearly 90 attendees of DMOs and journalists. The MATPRA Media Marketplace offers a unique opportunity for both PR professionals and travel journalists to promote regional themes as well as discuss story ideas, arrange visits to destinations and talk about what's new. Several Maryland DMOs also participated in hosting journalists in their destination through pre- and post-FAM tours.

Pictured: OTD staff with MATPRA's Maryland members.



Vote for Maryland Favorites in the *USA Today* 10Best Readers' Choice Awards

Several Maryland sites and events are finalists in the *USA Today* 10Best Readers' Choice Awards including the Babe Ruth Birthplace and Museum, the University of Maryland, M&T Bank Stadium, Oriole Park at Camden Yards, Butler's Orchard, Milburn Orchards, Summers Farm, Gaithersburg Oktoberfest, and Allegany County. Voting is open and runs for four weeks ending Monday, August 21. Cast your vote for local favorites at [*USA Today*](#) and please consider sharing the contest URL with your social network.

Photo Credit: J Herbst



Participate in #MarylandMondays

#Maryland Mondays, OTD's weekly promotional giveaway program, is a great way to bring awareness to you or your partners' events, destinations, and activities. With a combined social media presence of more than 255K followers, #MarylandMondays generates buzz through our Visit Maryland Now! consumer newsletter as well as via social media outlets. Each Monday a new contest begins and runs through the following Sunday, with winner(s) selected Monday morning. The giveaways are scheduled 2-3 weeks before an event and promote the event and/or partner during the promotion period. The winner is randomly selected at the end of the promotion via a third-party application. If you're interested in partnering with us go to the [Visit Maryland website](#) or Ana Hall-DeFoor at ahall-defoor@visitmaryland.org to discuss scheduling your giveaway.

Photo Credit: Visit Annapolis



Grant Opportunity

Maryland Humanities is now accepting grant applications for its Marilyn Hatza Memorial Strengthening the Humanities Investment in Nonprofits for Equity (SHINE) Grant fund. This program will provide 95 General Operating Support grants worth \$10,000, to non-profit organizations that provide humanities programming throughout the state of Maryland. The application closes September 1, 2023. Two virtual Q&A sessions are scheduled for August 16 and August 29. For more information visit [Maryland Humanities](https://marylandhumanities.org).that



Promote Your Events on VisitMaryland.org

Do your partners know how easy it is to add events to [VisitMaryland.org's events calendar](#)? If you or an organization or attraction in your region is hosting an event, it's easy to get the word out through VisitMaryland.org's events calendar. With tens of thousands of regular visitors, it's a great tool, and with our self-entry portal, it's never been easier to use! If you're wondering if an event has the right stuff for the VisitMaryland.org calendar, you'll find the inclusion criteria here, [follow this link](#) for a step-by-step guide for self entry, or if it's not your first rodeo, jump straight to the entry portal [here](#).

Photo credit: Karmen Osei

IN THE NEWS

Chestertown, Maryland: Small Town, Big Fun

Maryland Hall's Largest Annual Fundraiser, Arts Alive, Turns 25 This Year!

Lights, Camera, More Action in Maryland

Cove Point Lighthouse Featured in Article on Lighthouses Where You Can Spend the Night

Two Maryland Resorts Among Mid-Atlantic Favorites

Maryland State Fair Returns for 3 weekends of Fun This Summer

Maryland State Fair Announces 2023 Thoroughbred Racing Schedule

Slurp! Bay Restaurants Celebrate National Oyster Week

Maryland Department of Natural Resources Acquires Old South Mountain Inn Property

Maryland Minute

Each week, the *Maryland Minute* provides highlights and insights on this weekend's events around the state. [Maryland Minute](#) is featured on Audacy radio stations in Baltimore and Washington, D.C., WERQ on Baltimore's WBAL-AM 1090.

Maryland Travel Tips

For the latest on events and everything going all around Maryland, view the latest edition of [Visit Maryland Now!](#)

