



Ribbon-cutting at Robin Park playground

Town of Ocean City officials celebrated the completion of a new playground in Robin Park with a ribbon-cutting ceremony last summer. The neighborhood park located on Robin Drive west of Coastal Highway now has a state-of-the-art, ADA-accessible

playground. The playground features new climbers, slides, swings and safety surfacing designed for children ages 5 to 12 years old. The project was funded by a grant from the Maryland Community Parks and Playgrounds program.

City receives recognition for financial reporting

The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting has been awarded to the Town of Ocean City by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR). The certificate of achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

An Award of Financial Reporting Achievement has been presented to Martha Bennett Lucey, Ocean City Finance Administrator, as the individual designated

by the town as primarily responsible for preparing the award-winning CAFR. This is the 23rd year Lucey has received the award.

The CAFR has been judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program including demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the CAFR.

The GFOA is a nonprofit professional association serving approximately 17,500 government finance professionals with offices in Chicago and Washington, D.C.

OC Fire Department receives grant for carbon monoxide detectors

The Ocean City Fire Department is pleased to announce that the Volunteer Fire Division was recently the recipient of a fire prevention grant from the Maryland State Firemen's Association for the purchase of carbon monoxide alarms.

The grant, in the amount of \$500, will help fund the purchase of approximately 36 carbon monoxide alarms. These carbon monoxide alarms will be provided to those in need, in addition to the limited

supply of smoke alarms and 9-volt batteries already provided by the fire department.

The Ocean City Fire Department is pleased to partner with the Maryland State Firemen's Association in its fire prevention efforts. Those residents that may be in need of a smoke alarm, carbon monoxide alarm, or battery replacement for either, should contact any fire station, or contact Fire Department Headquarters at 410-289-4346.

Citizens sought for OC 'talent bank'

The Ocean City Mayor and City Council continue to develop a "talent bank" of volunteer citizens that are available to serve on various boards, commissions and projects for the town.

Citizens interested in being a part of the talent bank can obtain an application from the Mayor's Office at City Hall, or visit the town's web site at www.oceancitymd.gov, go to the "download a form" section and click on the Mayor and City Council bar to obtain a talent bank application.

The application seeks name, address, phone number and field of experience. Citizens can then indicate the boards and commissions they might be interested

in serving on. The talent bank assists the Mayor and Council when vacancies do occur on the various boards.

Boards and commissions include: Board of Port Wardens, Personnel Grievance Commission, Fire Safety Task Force, Beautification Committee, Pension Committee, Recreation Advisory Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, Ethics Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Beach Mediation Board, Board of Adjustments & Appeals, Board of Election Supervisors and Noise Control Board.

For more information about the talent bank, call the Mayor's Office at 410-289-8931.

2011 Dew Tour deemed a success

Ocean City was the first stop in the 2011 Dew Tour this past summer. Approximately 73,000 fans experienced the Dew Tour Pantech Open over the course of four days in July on the beach north of the pier. According to Dew Tour officials, this was the highest attendance in the history of the Dew Tour. The event, featuring professional athletes competing in skateboarding and BMX events, was broadcast around the world.



Flood hazard protection in Ocean City

All property in Ocean City is in a flood hazard area and subject to flooding from the ocean, coastal bays and heavy rainfall. Minor flooding is not uncommon, and major flooding happens occasionally.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency places properties in flood zones based on their chance of flooding. Property owners can find their property's flood hazard designation by contacting the Department of Planning and Community Development, 410-289-8855 (kbrown@oceancitymd.gov), or City Engineer, 410-289-8845 (tmcgean@oceancitymd.gov).

Natural and beneficial functions of floodplains

Floodplains in their natural state provide many beneficial functions. Primary undeveloped flood plain areas in Ocean City are beaches and dunes, the first line of defense against flood damage from the ocean. Taking care of dunes by not walking in them and maintaining vegetation is essential to retaining their flood protection function.

Bayside, wetlands and other open spaces act as sponges, storing floodwaters before they reach upland areas. These natural areas are protected by federal, state and local regulations.

Flood warning system

Ocean City has developed a flood warning system as part of our Emergency Operations Plan. Since flooding here is caused by storms and hurricanes, the warning system is based on storm severity and location. (See article on hurricane precautions for more information.)

Flood insurance

Standard homeowners insurance policies do not cover losses due to flooding. Ocean City participates in the National Flood Insurance Program, which makes federally backed flood insurance available to property owners. This insurance is required in many cases, such as when property is purchased with a federally backed mortgage. Property owners can insure buildings and contents against flood damage, and renters can insure possessions. Condominiums should carry a flood insurance policy on the structure itself.



Floodplain development permit requirements

Ocean City Code requires a building permit be obtained for nearly all construction and structural repair work. The city reviews plans to be sure buildings are constructed to withstand flooding. Permits are also required before any land development (grading, filling, etc.) in the floodplain to ensure activities do not increase flooding potential on or around property.

Part of the permit process involves preparation of elevation certificates, which provide a record of the structure's lowest floor elevation to predicted flood levels. Elevation certificates are maintained for review by insurance agents, property owners and other interested persons. Obtain information and permits from the Department of Planning and Community Development at City Hall (410-289-8855, kbrown@oceancitymd.gov). Illegal floodplain activity can also be reported here.

Drainage system maintenance

It is important our drainage system be kept clear of obstructions and debris. The town's littering ordinance prohibits throwing trash onto

any public property, including storm drains and sewers.

To report violations and clogged drainage ways, call 410-524-7716.

Flood protection assistance

The Department of Planning and Community Development and City Engineer can assist with questions about flood protection and flood insurance, including historical flooding information, so you can relate flood potential to your property; site visits to advise appropriate flood protection techniques; review retrofitting plans; locate property on flood insurance rate maps to determine flood zones and research elevation certificates for existing buildings to determine height above floodwaters. Call 410-289-8855 (kbrown@oceancitymd.gov) for more information.

This article is published in each edition of the newsletter as required by the Town's participation in FEMA's Community Rating System. Property owners in Ocean City receive a 15 percent discount on flood insurance premiums through this program. For an expanded version of this article, please see the town's web site: www.oceancitymd.gov/Emergency_Management/flood.html.

Property protection measures

There are many ways to protect property from flood damage. Make sure your new building is constructed to meet or exceed code requirements. These include requirements for elevation of building, foundations, venting, etc.

There are also ways to retrofit existing buildings to increase protection:

Elevation: Raising structure to bring it above floodwater level.

Levees: In areas of shallow flooding with low velocity, a levee can be built around the structure.

Flood walls: Similar to levees, but built of materials such as masonry block or reinforced concrete to keep floodwater away.

Closures involve techniques for protecting gaps left open for daily convenience, such as walks, doors, driveways.

Sealants can be applied to walls and floors to keep water from penetrating.

Utility protection: Flooding sometimes causes costly damage to utility systems. By elevating utilities or shielding them, flooding can be avoided. Moving utilities to less flood-prone locations can also minimize damage.



Public art abounds in downtown Ocean City



**By Glenn Irwin, Executive Director,
Ocean City Development Corporation**

Since its first public art project, the Ocean City Development Corporation (OCDC) has been promoting the need to create interesting spaces and eye-catching pieces.

In many of these cases, public art has been placed to break up a long expanse of blank wall on a side street building, to change a standard looking utility box into an attractive artwork or to locate a significant artwork at a very visible location within the city limits. But the overall intent is to enhance the visitor experience and enhance the quality of life for residents and tourists.

OCDC's first public artwork was the white marlin sculpture and water feature. This artwork, installed in 2002, is located at the Entry Park at the east end base of the Route 50 bridge. Completed by noted Eastern Shore sculptor, Paul Lockhart, this artwork has become a landmark feature in Ocean City. Not only was it placed as an attractive entranceway feature to Ocean City, but also to highlight Ocean City as the "White Marlin Capital of the World."

This public artwork was soon followed by the historic wall murals completed on Dorchester Street near the Boardwalk. This five-panel artwork highlights items such as the old train bridge that brought visitors into Ocean City before the 1933 storm and the "rollies" that were a popular manual transportation means found on the Boardwalk that operated into the 1940s. This artwork was completed with the assistance of the

property owner, Jerry Greenspan, who allowed his long building wall to contain this appealing new piece of art.

Quickly following this artwork were the enlarged postcards found on the north wall of the Fun City arcades on Caroline Street at the Boardwalk. These six enlarged postcards reflect an era when mailing of these items was very common. The large Ocean City postcard found nearest the Boardwalk has become a great photo opportunity for visitors.

In 2004 and 2005, OCDC teamed up with the Art League of Ocean City to paint 10 utility boxes owned by Delmarva Power. These boxes are located between Baltimore Avenue and the Boardwalk and represent various Eastern Shore themes. Each box was designed and painted by volunteers of ALOC.

Interest in painting additional downtown utility boxes expanded to include several local schools and other boxes by the Art League. In 2011, two additional utility boxes were painted near 17th Street by volunteers from the Ocean City Beach Patrol and students from Most Blessed Sacrament Catholic School. To date, a total of 19 utility boxes have been painted. OCDC prepares each box for painting and provides paint supplies to each volunteer group. The volunteer group provides artistic ability and labor. Each year OCDC cleans and clear-coats each painted box.

Other popular artworks commissioned by OCDC include the Seahawk sculpture (Philadelphia Avenue and Fourth Street), the eagle sculpture "Spillin' the Wind" (Coastal Highway and 144th Street), the themed brick paver art on the west side of Philadelphia Avenue (south of Caroline Street), two large brick paver artworks (South First Street), and "The

Educator" sculpture at the Ocean City Library. This last artwork was made possible by a generous donation by the late Eunice Sorin. OCDC established the Herman H. and Eunice Q. Sorin Endowment Fund at the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore to fund future public art in Ocean City.

The most recent public artwork is the "OC Cruisin' Showcase" wall mural that recognizes this popular car show that occurs each October. This wall mural is located along Talbot Street just east of Baltimore Avenue. This artwork was completed in August 2011.

The OCDC Public Art Committee is the primary advocacy group in recommending new public art projects and raising funds for such artwork. This committee's members are Louise Gulyas (chairperson), Donna Greenwood, Lauren Taylor, Jody Vaeder, Vicki Barrett and Marion Chambers.

OCDC looks at public art as a very important strategy for attracting people to the downtown area. Fund-raising efforts and private contributions are the means that pay for these pieces of art.

So next time you are downtown or passing by one of these artworks, please recognize the importance of such artwork, the story that it is telling, as well as the many individuals and organizations that made it happen. We hope that you enjoy each one.

Information and pictures of downtown public art program are available at OCDC's web site, www.ocdc.org. You can contact OCDC at 410-289-7739 or e-mail glenn@ocdc.org. OCDC is a nonprofit organization charged with revitalizing downtown Ocean City.