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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FREE FIRST FRIDAY ART OPENING SPOTLIGHTS
WHAT MAKES PEOPLE SMILE ABOUT OCEAN CITY**

OCEAN CITY, MD —*Feb. 26, 2023* — A group art show opening on First Friday at the Ocean City Center for the Arts explores the theme of “What makes people smile about Ocean City” in a variety of art forms and media. The public is welcome to the free First Friday open house on March 3, 5-7 p.m. at 502 94th St. bayside.

PKS Investments is sponsoring refreshments, and Coins Pub and Papi’s Tacos are sponsoring complimentary hors d’oeuvres.

The Sisson Galleria hosts the group show, presenting images of the people, scenery, and iconic places that inspire locals and visitors about Ocean City.

The Thaler Gallery features an all-photography group show by the Tidewater Camera Club. Founded in 1963 and headquartered in Easton, Md., the nonprofit organization is dedicated to exploring all aspects of photography and photographic technique. Members share their knowledge through fellowship and friendly competition and strive to promote interest and participation in the field of photography. More information about the club is available at www.tidewatercameraclub.org.

Studio E artist Ralph Baden is a graduate of the Corcoran School of Art and a resident of East New Market, Md. He will be exhibiting a group of paintings based on a book he wrote and illustrated, “*The Revolution in*

Evolution from Garrett County, Maryland,” about the effects of climate change on self-aware animals and the repercussions.

Mel Royster of Millville, De. is the Spotlight Gallery artist for March. A self-taught artist and retired Army veteran who has been drawing since childhood, he made lunch money by drawing pictures of his classmates in grade school in North Carolina. Royster will be showing portraits of celebrities and other famous faces, including sports stars.

Jeweler Carol Lehmann of Felton, De. is the artisan for March. Her copper enameled jewelry primarily uses reclaimed copper, such as pre-1980 pennies and found pieces, in combination with contemporary sgraffito and traditional cloisonné techniques. Bold colors create surface design and texture and make wearable art.

Artwork by Worcester County middle and high school students will also be on display at the Arts Center through the weekend as part of the annual Shirley Hall Youth Art Show. Betsy Hall Harrison, Shirley Hall’s daughter, will judge the show and award \$250 in prize money on behalf of her family members.

The First Friday event welcomes filmmakers and moviegoers of the 7th Annual Ocean City Film Festival happening that weekend. A “Filmmaker Fair” at the Arts Center will display a wall of movie posters from the Festival, and filmmakers will be present to discuss their films. Film Festival passes will be on sale during First Friday.

The art of Emil Markulis of Lanham, Md. continues to hang in the Art Center’s Staircase Gallery. The Art League’s satellite galleries are also continuing their exhibitions. Fiber artist Dale Ashera-Davis of Berlin, Md. shows her work at the Coffee Beanery on 94th St. and Coastal Hwy. Don Hartman of Ocean Pines, Md. continues his show entitled "On Vacation with the Boys and Girls” in the Princess Royale lobby, 9100 Coastal Hwy.

The Ocean City Center for the Arts at 502 94th St. is open daily until 4 p.m., and admission is always free. More information is available at OCart.org or by calling 410-524-9433.

The Art League of Ocean City is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing the visual arts to the community through education, exhibits, scholarship, programs and community art projects. Funding for this event is in part provided by the Worcester County Arts Council, Maryland State Arts Council and the National Endowment of the Arts, organizations dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive.

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