

the Worcester County
SAND PAPERS

ISSUE 10

NEWS FROM THE BEACH AND BEYOND IN WORCESTER COUNTY

SPRING 2008

Get artsy.

Find out what's
happening in the
arts on the Shore at
www.visitworcester.org
or call 800.852.0335.



From boat-building to wildlife, these images capture some of the themes to be featured in exhibits at the new Delmarva Discovery Center in Pocomoke City. [PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JERRY GERLITZKI]

AT A GLANCE

Help fight Nature Deficit Disorder (and frogs while you're at it)!

PAGE 2

New nature and heritage course sells out.

PAGE 2

Berlin Performing Arts Center, Committee push forward.

PAGE 3

Delmarva Birding Weekend nears.

PAGE 5

Calendar of events.

PAGE 6

Delmarva Discovery Center to open doors this summer

The Delmarva Discovery Center, on the banks of the Pocomoke River, plans to open its doors to the public this summer. Executive Director Brian Garrett has been working with Explus, Inc., the exhibit fabricator, and Doug Mund, the exhibit designer to bring together the final details of each exhibit.

Building renovations are as complete as possible with phase one of exhibit installation right around the corner. This phase will include installation of background graphics, scenic ground forms and wall mounted cases.

The Discovery Center was recently awarded the designation of a Chesapeake Bay National Gateway site, enabling them to apply for funds tying them into the Captain John Smith Water Trail.

The Discovery Center is currently booking group tours for fall 2008 and has developed a group tour flyer. The museum store is stocking inventory for the opening and has sponsored a competition producing designs for use on signature products that will be featured in the museum store. An event and exhibit of winning designs will be held on May 29.

For more information on the project, special events, volunteering, booking your group and tax-deductible giving, call 410.957.9933. ●

NATURE TOURISM

Help save frogs! Help fight Nature Deficit Disorder!

[STORY BY JIM RAPP, DIRECTOR, DELMARVA LOW IMPACT TOURISM EXPERIENCES, INC. (DLITE)]

Frogs are going extinct but kids can help save them—if you can get them off the computer and out of the house. The World Conservation Union has named 2008 “The Year of the Frog” to generate public awareness of the global amphibian extinction crisis. The Nature Conservancy has just released a report identifying video games and the Internet as the leading culprits for the ultimate demise of the environmental movement.

Want to help save frogs? Want to get your kid off the X-Box and into the great outdoors?

The eighth annual Great Worcester Herp Search will take place Saturday, May 10 when volunteer scientists scour Maryland’s Eastern Shore for reptiles and amphibians. (Herp is a science-geek reference for all things scaly and slimy: frogs, toads, salamanders, turtles, snakes and lizards.) Last year, participants flipped logs, rifled through leaf litter on the forest floor, and slogged through the marsh locating hundreds of slippery salamanders, fascinating frogs, slithering snakes, and more!

Worcester has more herp diversity than any other county in Maryland—nearly 60 species live in the coastal marshes and wet woods. The search will provide data to help scientists better understand population trends in this declining group of vertebrates.

If you are an adult who spent time outdoors as a kid, the Herp Search takes you back to the long summer days when you were catching frogs and turtles in your neighborhood park. Professional naturalists will teach you and your budding herpetologists to safely capture and identify the critters you will catch together. Don’t worry about frogs in the mini-van on the ride home—all herps are released back into their home habitats.

Sponsored by the Maryland Coastal Bays Program, Delmarva Low Impact Tourism Experiences, Salisbury Zoo, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and Salisbury University, the search kicks off at 9 a.m. at the Coastal Ecology Lab next to the Assateague Island Visitors Center on MD 611.

The Herp Search is free to all participants. For more information, call the Maryland Coastal Bays office at 410-213-2297 or visit www.delmarvalite.org.



New nature and heritage course sells out

A new course has been developed for museum and park volunteers, hospitality industry professionals, outfitters, and those interested in interpreting local nature and heritage. The course sold out without formal advertising, and 25 students began their 12 hours of instruction this spring.

To create the new course, “Interpreting Nature & Heritage Sites for Visitors,” Wor-Wic Community College and Delmarva Low-Impact Tourism Experiences (DLITE) teamed up with local museums, parks, heritage sites and tourism partners, including Assateague Island National Seashore, Assateague State Park, Crisfield Heritage Foundation, DLITE, Furnace Town Heritage Museum, Maryland Coastal Bays Program, Pemberton Hall Foundation, Sturgis One-Room School House, Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, West Side Historical Society, and Worcester County Tourism.

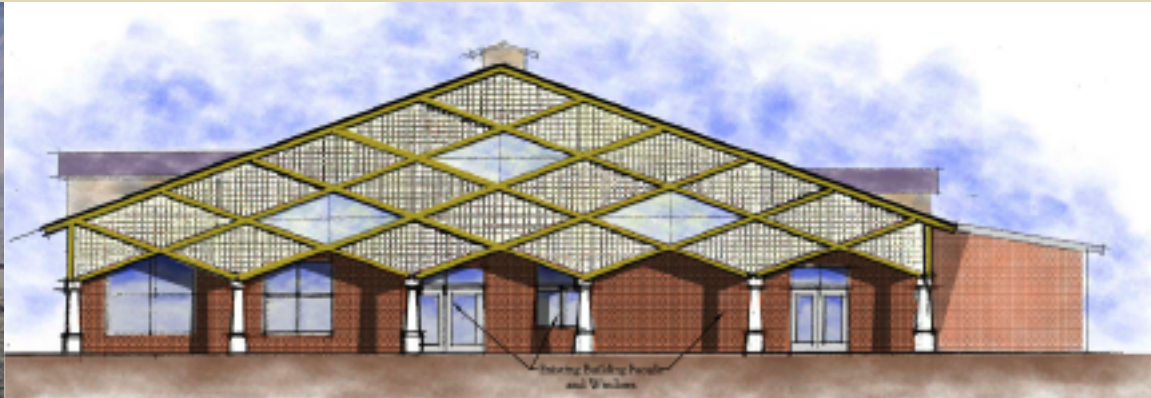
Another class will begin in November. For more information, contact DLITE Director Jim Rapp at 443.944.8097 or at dlitedirector@comcast.net.



Economic impact of county visitors keeps growing

The economic impact of visitors to Worcester County continues to grow, according to the most recent figures released by the Travel Industry Association (TIA) in their Economic Impact of Travel on Maryland Counties 2006 report. In 2006, visitors spent 1.250 billion dollars in Worcester County, an increase of 6.2 % from 2005 or \$73.2 million dollars more.

Global Insight data shows there were 7,141,000 visitors to the county in 2006 up from 6,466,000 in 2005.



Renderings show both inside and outside of the Cannery Performing Arts Center in Berlin, designed by JSD Incorporated. Plans call for a 400- to 450-seat theater.


[RENDERINGS BY JSD INCORPORATED]

Berlin Performing Arts Center and committee keep pushing forward

The Berlin Performing Arts Center (PAC) Committee has been making progress with plans to renovate the old Cannery building just east of route 113 in Berlin. The project would be a part of the Cannery Village, a mixed-use development with residential, commercial and retail use.

Frank Gunion, owner and developer of the Cannery project has been very supportive of the proposed PAC and the adaptive reuse of the Cannery Warehouse. The plans call for a 400-450 seat theater to be used for theater performances, concerts, dance, comedy, meetings, receptions, workshops and more. The PAC would be operated by a non-profit board and is being spearheaded by Peck and Patti Miller.

"It has been our vision for many years to bring a cultural facility such as this to our community and to be able to integrate our school children's educational programs with live performances," said Ms. Miller. Plans are also being developed to push for a 1,500-seat theater in Ocean City.

A study done by BEACON and paid for by the county in 2005 showed overwhelming support for a PAC in Northern Worcester County. Fundraising plans are currently underway. For more information and to learn how to get involved call 443.880.7795. 

MAIN STREET CORNER

A county-wide Main Street for Worcester?

[STORY BY MICHAEL DAY]

Imagine if Worcester County could be on the cutting edge of a new and exciting program that broadens the definition of Main Street Programs. Imagine too, that by establishing this program the bar of performance could be raised county wide. With planning and help from the National Main Street Center we hopefully won't have to imagine much longer.



Downtown Berlin could become part of a Worcester County-wide Main Street program. [PHOTO BY DUSTY PHOTOS]

Last winter an organizational assessment of county Main Street Programs was done in Worcester County. A team of National Main Street, County Main Street, state and local officials toured Worcester's downtowns to investigate the possibility of creating a county-wide Main Street Coordinating Program and discuss how such a program would be implemented.

Oakland County, Michigan,

is the only county-wide Main Street Coordinating Program in the country. Worcester County would be the second one, becoming a national model.

The overall purpose of the National Main Street Coordinating Program Designation is to:

- Provide national recognition and credibility for all Main Street coordinating programs.
- Establish a base level of performance for all coordinating programs.
- Raise the professionalism of coordinating programs.
- Ensure the coordinating programs are building and supporting a growing network of local programs that are successfully and faithfully following the Main Street Approach.
- Create excellence.

The underlying premise of the Main Street approach is to encourage economic development within the context of historic preservation. With funding from the county, Berlin and Pocomoke have already achieved a degree of success with the aid of their part-time Downtown Coordinator. During the past three years it has become obvious that a county-wide Main Street Program, affiliated with the National Main Street Program, could achieve a greater degree of success in a fairly short time frame. The organizational structure is already in place with the Ocean City Development Corporation, Snow Hill Alliance for Responsible Progress, Berlin Marketing Partnership, and the Pocomoke Downtown Association, all desiring to participate in a structured Main Street program. ●



Why you should care about green

A Forrester research study, "Why Green Travel Warrants Recognition" shows that 67 percent of the travelers surveyed online are concerned about the environment, one in four are willing to pay more for 'green' travel and one in five try to use environmentally responsible travel companies. Perhaps most important, the green-oriented are young, affluent, growing in number and frequent travelers.

IN THE NEWS



A black-necked stilt glides across the water at Assateague Island. [PHOTO BY NICO SARBANES]

Delmarva Birding Weekend April 23–27

The Delmarva Birding Weekend taking place April 23-27 is the largest weekend so far with 36 different trips being offered from Queen Anne's County, MD to Sussex County, DE. Fourteen new trips were added to the weekend's popular menu of birding experiences. Some include a Pocomoke River Boat Trip, Paddling Prime Hook, Neotropicals Along the Tuckahoe and Birding on the Broadkill. There will be "tally rallies" in various locations for birders to get together to tally their sightings. Tally rallies will take place in Ocean City at the Angler Restaurant and in Pocomoke City at the Discovery Center on Saturday, April 26, 4–6 p.m. Some trips have already sold out. For reservations and information contact Jim Rapp at 443.944.8097 or go to the website at www.delmarvalite.org.

Berlin Jazz & Blues Bash coming May 3

The 1st Annual Berlin Jazz & Blues Bash will bring lots of live music to town Saturday, May 3. This all-day music festival will feature two outdoor stages on Main Street with local, live jazz and blues from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Local restaurants Solstice Grill and The Globe will also feature jazz and blues bands later in the evening to keep the festivities going. The lineup includes jazz groups from Stephen Decatur High School, UMES Jazz Band, Tom Larsen Blues Band, Lower Case Blues Band, Smooth Play, and Chris English.

This new event kicks off the night before on May 2 from 6–9 p.m. during Berlin's Annual Spring Arts Night. For details, go to www.berlinmcc.org and click on "Annual Events."



The **Marva Theater** was featured in *Maryland Life Magazine* in the March/April 2008 issue.

Berlin was featured in *Chesapeake Life* in the December 2007 issue, "Shopping Berlin." The **Solstice General Store** was also featured in the same issue.

Recreation News featured **Berlin** as a "Romantic Getaway" in their February issue.

Assateague Island was named by "Dr. Beach" as one of the Top 5 "Best Beaches on the East Coast" in *AARP Magazine*.

The Delmarva Birding Weekend was featured in the April 2008 issue of *Birdwatcher's Digest*.

MAY

May 10 White Marlin Festival & Crab Soup Cookoff, Somerset Street Plaza, OC. Live music, children's activities and crab soup competition.

May 15-18 Cruisin' Ocean City. Over 3,000 hot rods, muscle cars, customs and classics.

May 18 International Museum Day. All museums free and open to the public.

JUNE

June 12-14 33rd Annual Cypress Festival, Pocomoke City. Entertainment, rides, fire-works all in a riverside park.

June 14 Berlin Village Fair, Berlin Historic Commercial District. Berlin Idol contest.

June 21-22 Arts Alive, Northside Park, Ocean City. Juried fine art show.

JULY

All month Free Concerts on the Beach, Wednesdays in July.

July 25-27 Greek Festival, Ocean City Convention Center. Authentic Greek food, pastries, music & dance.

AUGUST

All month Free Concerts on the Beach, Wednesdays in August.

Aug. 2 Blessing of the Combines, Snow Hill. Petting barnyard, entertainment, parade and blessing of combines.

Aug. 4-8 White Marlin Open, Ocean City. World's largest billfish tournament.

Mileage ranks high for car buyers

According to a recent survey conducted by AAA, the make and model of a car took the back seat to gas mileage as the single most important factor that will determine what kind of car AAA members will buy.

Gas mileage is ranked as the number one criteria members will use in their decision-making process, followed by make and model, safety features, performance, seating capacity and technology features.

When asked what steps they took to conserve fuel in 2007, 17 percent stated they canceled summer vacation plans and 23 percent said they revised their summer vacation plans.

As a result of the latest survey results, AAA predicts that fuel economy will continue to weigh heavily on the minds of consumers as the spring and summer driving season approach, with the potential to set new gas price records. 🌱



Send us your story ideas!

Have news to share? Want to become a subscriber to the quarterly *SandPapers*? Let us know. Drop us an e-mail at econ@ezy.net or call us at 800.852.0335.

SAND PAPERS

Worcester County Tourism
 104 West Market Street
 Snow Hill, MD 21863
 800.852.0335
www.visitworcester.org

To subscribe to the quarterly *SandPapers* newsletter or to share story ideas, drop us a line at econ@ezy.net or call us at 800.852.0335.

Worcester County Commissioners
 Robert Cowger: District 1 Southern
 James Purnell: District 2 Central
 Bud Church: District 3 Sinepuxent
 Virgil Shockley: District 4 Western
 Judy Boggs: District 5 Ocean Pines
 Linda Busick: District 6 Northern
 Louise Gulyas: District 7 Ocean City

Tourism Advisory Board Members
 Dave Blazer: Ocean Pines
 Annemarie Dickerson: Ocean City, *Chair*
 John Glorioso: Berlin
 Ron Pilling: Bishopville
 Diana Purnell: Berlin
 Barbara Tull: Pocomoke City
 Gary Weber: Snow Hill