

the Worcester County
SAND PAPERS

ISSUE 12

NEWS FROM THE BEACH AND BEYOND IN WORCESTER COUNTY

FALL 2008

Go wild.

Check out the new
eco-tourism website at
www.WildsofWorcester.com.



[PHOTO COURTESY OF GOVERNOR'S OFFICE]



Paddling the waters of Worcester County is just one way a new campaign is encouraging residents and visitors to take advantage of the area's ecotourism opportunities. [PHOTO BY DUSTY PHOTOS]

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Going wild for Worcester

New campaign promotes seaside county's wild side

Worcester County is inviting folks to take a walk—or bike, or paddle—on the wild side. The wild side of Worcester County, that is. From wild ponies on the beach to pelicans and crabs, Worcester has a lot to offer.

A new public, private, non-profit partnership, the Wilds of Worcester, recently began promoting the county's ecotourism opportunities. Through webisodes and interactive graphics, the partnership's new website, www.WildsofWorcester.com, offers suggestions and contacts for cultural, historical, and outdoor activities for visitors and residents, as well as information about the plants and wildlife indigenous to Maryland's only seaside county. "With wild ponies on Assateague Island, herons and egrets along the Coastal Bays, and bald cypress swamps along the Pocomoke River, few places offer more ways for people to enjoy nature than Worcester County," said Governor Martin O'Malley.

Sponsors including Worcester County, Delmarva Low Impact Tourism Experiences, the state of Maryland, Ocean City.com, and Maryland.com. The website invites folks share their adventures through photography, videos, itineraries, and writings. Entries will be posted on www.WildsofWorcester.com and visitors may vote online over the next year to help select the winning submissions. Winners will receive a free week-long getaway into the wilds of Worcester. For details, go to the website. 

BioBlitz identifies 900+ species

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

Counting species as fast as one every 43 seconds, the team from the Maryland Coastal Bays Program took the grand prize for inventorying the most total species during the inaugural Delmarva BioBlitz in August. For their efforts in counting 335 species during a four-hour block, the Coastal Bays team won \$500. The award was sponsored by Macky's Bar & Grill.

The other grand prize for most funds raised went to the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, Salisbury University. The \$500 award was sponsored by Taylor

Bank. The Ward Museum team raised \$2,733.70 by soliciting pledges for species inventoried. The team raised \$8.28 for every species inventoried.

Delmarva Low-Impact Tourism Experiences (DLITE) announced the winners of the Delmarva BioBlitz at the BioBlitz Tally Rally on September 25 at the Ward Museum of

Wildfowl Art, Salisbury University.

The Delmarva BioBlitz connected kids and families to nature through fun, semi-competitive nature exploration, while raising funds for nonprofit organizations working on the Delmarva Peninsula. Eleven teams of up to 10 citizen-scientists conducted inventories of plants and animals in their local parks, watersheds, and throughout the region August 9–16, 2008.

Teams included children and adults, as well as all-adult team, with ages ranging from under two years to over 70. Fielding teams were Berlin Parks, Coast Kids, the Delmarva Discovery Center, the Maryland Coastal Bays Program, Pemberton Historic Park, the Ward Museum, the Salisbury Zoo, and the West Side Striders. Local experts from Salisbury University, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, the Delaware Nature Society, the National Park Service, the Tri-County Bird Club, and the Delmarva Ornithological Society assisted with species identification.

Collectively, BioBlitz teams spent 400 hours (or 16.6 days) in the field conducting bio-inventories. Total species identified were 934, and each team contributed species to the overall tally. The teams raised more than \$8,300. All proceeds were shared 50/50 between DLITE and the designated partner charitable organizations.

The Delmarva BioBlitz was sponsored by Jolly Roger Amusement Park, Queen Anne's County Tourism, Worcester County Tourism, and the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore. The Delmarva BioBlitz is supported by the Delmarva Environmental Educators Network (DEEN) and the No Child Left Inside Coalition. The Second Annual Delmarva BioBlitz will be held in August 2009. For more information, contact Jim Rapp at dlitedirector@comcast.net or 443.944.8097. 



From left, Commissioners Louise Gulyas, Virgil Shockley, Business Person of the Year Matt Odachowski, Tourism Person of the Year Jim Rapp, and Commissioners Judy Boggs and Linda Busick.

[PHOTO BY KIM MOSES]

Jim Rapp named Tourism Person of the Year

At Worcester County's annual tourism and economic development luncheon held at the Carousel Hotel in September, Jim Rapp was named the Tourism Person of the Year.

Mr. Rapp was credited with his involvement as the director of Delmarva Low-Impact Tourism Experiences (DLITE) in promoting nature tourism in Worcester County as well as throughout the entire Delmarva Peninsula.

Collectively, BioBlitz teams spent 400 hours (or 16.6 days) in the field conducting bio-inventories.



Volunteer Norma Miles poses with Pocomoke Mayor Michael McDermott and Governor O'Malley. [PHOTO COURTESY OF GOVERNOR'S OFFICE]

Volunteers recognized

Five volunteers who have been working at the Delmarva Discovery Center and three other Pocomoke City tourism sites—the Mar-Va Theater, the Sturgis One-Room School Museum, and the Costen House Museum—received governor's citations during Gov. O'Malley's visit in August. Those recognized included **Barbara Tull** (Discovery Center), **Curt Lippoldt** (Marva Theater), **Sudie and Jim Gatling** (Sturgis One-Room Schoolhouse), and **Norma Miles** (Costen House Museum). Congratulations!



Brian Garrett, director of the Delmarva Discovery Center, and Barbara Tull, board president, give Governor Martin O'Malley a tour of the center in August. [PHOTO COURTESY OF GOVERNOR'S OFFICE]

State awards Discovery Center \$500,000

After declaring Pocomoke City to be Maryland's "Capital for a Day," August 21, Gov. Martin O'Malley presented a \$500,000 check to Worcester County to help construct a building that will house a restaurant at the newly opened Delmarva Discovery Center on the Pocomoke River.

"This investment will not only generate jobs for Pocomoke City, but will also help to revitalize Pocomoke City's business district into a more active tourism and retail center," the governor said.

The 100-seat restaurant will initially create 35 jobs. It will be in a 4,000-square-foot building that includes additional commercial tenants. "The riverfront restaurant package represents the final jewel in the crown of downtown redevelopment for Pocomoke City," said the town's mayor, Michael McDermott.

Delmarva Discovery Center is a living museum where visitors can learn about and become familiar with the river's ecology and history, as well as its associated traditions: shipbuilding, trading, fishing and regional Native-American culture.

It will have a grand opening in the late fall after all of its exhibits are installed and the full range of programming is in effect. Meanwhile, the museum is open to visitors on a limited basis.

The complex includes two buildings. The Discovery Center, a 16,000-square-foot 1920s-era building, houses exhibits, a gift shop, a classroom, and administrative space. The adjacent Exploratory is a converted gas station that is the museum's educational center, where students can conduct environmental research. 🌍

MAIN STREET CORNER



The bus stops here!

[STORY BY MICHAEL DAY]

Last year the Pocomoke Attraction Committee was formed with representatives from seven different organizations: the Mar-Va Theater, Delmarva Discovery Center, Costen House, Sturgis One-Room School, the *Bay Queen*, the Downtown Pocomoke Association, and the Pocomoke Main Street Program. The common goal for this diverse group is to promote Downtown Pocomoke as a tourist destination. While Pocomoke is waiting for the much anticipated Discovery Center to open, the Attraction Committee is moving forward with promotions and has developed a framework for a new heritage tourism destination.

Seeing great potential, Lisa Challenger, Director of Tourism for Worcester County, organized a familiarization tour this summer of Downtown Pocomoke for professional tourism personnel from the Ocean City/Berlin area. And what fun it was, showcasing Pocomoke's heritage sites—and even the exhibits under construction at the Delmarva Discovery Center. After a wonderful lunch prepared by the new Black Water Café, the tour ended with a short ride down the Pocomoke River aboard the *Bay Queen* (the tour boat that was recently captured on the cover of *Maryland Life* magazine).

Now that Ocean City tourism officials have experienced Pocomoke, they can promote, with firsthand knowledge, bus tours originating from their area. Often there is a six-month turnaround for new tour bus operators to book a trip—but not with Pocomoke. Already the Harrison Group from Ocean City has made a visit with a McCarney Tours bus, filled with 38 visitors from Long Island, New York.

The Worcester County Department of Tourism and the Pocomoke City

Main Street Program are creating a one-page profile sheet for the Maryland Department of Tourism. The standard marketing tool used in the bus tour industry, the one-pager will be distributed by the state sales and marketing office at bus conferences and trade shows that the Attractions Committee would otherwise find cost-prohibitive to attend.

The McCarney tour bus had the slogan “Making Memories” painted on its side. Pocomoke City has started doing the same and will be creating memories for many more future visitors.



Visitors from Long Island on a McCarney Tours bus enjoyed time in Pocomoke, including a ride aboard the *Bay Queen*.

[PHOTO BY MICHAEL DAY]



Celebrate maritime traditions during a waterfront festival Oct. 11. [PHOTO COURTESY OF HARBOR DAY AT THE DOCKS]

Harbor Day at the Docks Oct. 11

A new waterfront heritage festival, Harbor Day at the Docks, highlights local maritime culture and traditions to Ocean City. This outdoor, family-friendly event happens 10 a.m.–5 p.m., Saturday, October 11 at the Commercial Fishing Harbor in West Ocean City.

Learn about maritime traditions such as commercial fishing, sport fishing, marine aquaculture, safety at sea, and local seafood processing.

Enjoy seafood cooking demonstrations, fish cleaning techniques, net mending, scallop harvesting, marlin rigging, contests, maritime storytelling, children's games, entertainment, and more. Free and open to the public. For details, go to www.ocharborday.com.

Course helps guides and docents

Are you a visitor guide at a nature or heritage site on Delmarva—or interested in becoming one? Increase your knowledge, confidence, and skills with a special course through Wor-Wic Community College in November. Made possible through a partnership between Delmarva Low-Impact Tourism Experiences (DLITE) and the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA), “Interpreting Nature and Heritage Sites” will help you recognize what visitors are looking for and the importance of interpreters to the visitor experience.

Each session will meet at a different Lower Shore heritage site:

November 3: Crisfield Heritage Foundation/Tawes Museum

November 5: Furnace Town

November 10: Delmarva Discovery Center/Sturgis One-Room School

November 12: Salisbury Zoo

The course is team-taught by experts from local museums, parks, and heritage organizations. Each class runs from 9 a.m. until noon,



A costumed guide leads the way through Furnacetown. [PHOTO BY JERRY GERLITZKI]

with optional site tours available after class. Tuition is \$75, with \$5 course fee. Course scholarships are available from the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore for local nonprofit staff and volunteers, and tuition is waived for Maryland residents over age 60. For details, contact Jim Rapp at dlitedirector@comcast.net or 443.944.8097. 🌍

IN THE NEWS



The **Pocomoke River and Pocomoke City** enjoyed the spotlight on the cover of *Maryland Life Magazine* in the September/October issue. The article highlighted the city's heritage as a shipbuilding center from the late 1800s to the 1920s and went on to detail how their story is being told through interpretive exhibits at the Delmarva Discovery Center.

In its September 21 issue, the *Delaware Coast Press* featured the **Fiddler's Convention**, which drew thousands to Berlin to hear musicians on the fiddle, guitar, mandolin, banjo, and more.

The *Daily Times* ran a story on the **Pocomoke River Canoe Company** in Snow Hill turning 25 years old in its September 7 issue.

Hotels are going green

According to the International Ecotourism Society, more than two thirds of U.S. travelers consider active protection of the environment, including support of local communities, to be part of a hotel's responsibility, while 70 percent said they would pay a premium to stay at a hotel with a responsible environmental attitude. With such consumer passions as their guide, hotels and resorts are going green with programs and amenities that help protect the globe.

CALENDAR

OCTOBER

- Oct. 3 First Friday, Snow Hill. Galleries, shops open 'til 8pm. Bishop's Stock featuring Kathryn Leonard. Free. 410.632.3555. www.snowhillmd.com
- Oct. 4 Mid Atlantic Symphony, Ocean Pines Community Church. Concert begins 7:30pm; pre-concert talk at 6:30pm. 888.846.8600.
- Oct. 4-5 Chesapeake Celtic Festival, Furnace Town, Snow Hill. Bagpipe and drum bands, storytelling, clan tents, border collies sheep herding, Celtic culture, dancers and more. Noon-5pm. 410.632.2032.
- Oct. 10 Second Friday, Berlin. Exhibits, music. 5-8pm. 443.735.0957.
- Oct. 11 Fiberfest, Purnell Museum, Snow Hill. Demonstrations, children's activities, live animals, food, vendors, and more. Free. 10am-4pm. 410.632.0515.
- Oct. 27 Open Mic Night, Globe Theater, Berlin. Hosted by local musician Phil Knight. 6-9pm. 410.641.0784

NOVEMBER

- Nov. 8-9 Fallfest of Fine Art, Convention Center, Ocean City. Juried show features fine art painters, sculptors and mixed media high crafts. Saturday, 10am-5pm; Sunday, 10am-4pm. 410.524.9177.
- Nov. 8-9 Christmas Craft Expo, Convention Center, Ocean City. Juried artists, fine crafters. Saturday, 10am-5pm; Sunday, 10am-4pm. 410.524.9177.

League's Art Summit set for Oct. 29

The Art League of Ocean City will hold an Art Summit at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center Wed., Oct. 29. The Art League has been in Ocean City displaying fine art and giving art classes since the mid 1960s. Because of the incredible growth the organization has experienced over the past few years, the league has outgrown the current space. The board of directors feels that they are at a turning point and are reaching out to the community for advice and assistance. If you are interested in finding out more about the Summit please contact Nancy Howard at neffiehoward@verizon.net or call 410.524.1881. 🌐

Mar-Va Theater sets its fall season

The Mar-Va Theater in Pocomoke has set its fall season:

October 15: The famous Artie Shaw Orchestra featuring big band favorites. 7:30pm.

December 12-13: Pocomoke High School Variety Show

December 17: Pocomoke High School Winter Concert

December 19-21: Musical Comedy: *Christmas at Uncle Phil's Diner*. Fri & Sat, December 19 & 20, 7:30pm; Sunday, December 21, 2pm.

Once used as a vaudeville theater complete with stage facilities, dressing rooms and orchestra pits, the Mar-Va was played by famous performers including old-time cowboys such as Tom Mix, Roy Rogers, and Hop-a-Long Cassidy. Opened in 1927, the Mar-Va is the largest theater that has never been altered south of Wilmington. For more info, go to www.mar-vatheater.org or call 410.957.4230. 🌐

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Worcester County Tourism

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