

Tour Tear

November is the month for ... touring?? It sure seemed to be, with haunted barracks, battlefields, and ballyards on the bill. The chill in the air didn't prevent the hardier members from camping, either.

Haunted Prison Tour Weekend

Organizers: Shelley Sanner, KC Yi

"It started in the basement ..." and thrills and chills galore ensued during this weekend of spooky buses, unexplained noises, and generally creepy prison buildings. Oh yeah, and some hiking, too. Little sleep was had at the time, and perhaps less sleep is being had now in hindsight as all the pieces are added up. And the frights were not all the doings of intrepid MOC pranksters, either, though they certainly scared the wits out of some of their comrades. With a few wrong turns (maybe mapquest itself is haunted?), and some interesting temperature extremes, this tour weekend was truly an adventure.



Clockwise from top left: Aren't we having too much fun for what's supposed to be a *haunted* weekend?; Colin talks about the battle that took place here - no bull; the MOC baseball team makes it to the major leagues.

***Please note: Content for this section is generally taken from the organizer's write up, as the editor does not attend all of these events.

Hiking and History (Manassas)

Organizer: Colin Babb

Civil War buff and hiking leader Colin took the group on a trip around the grounds of one of the more important battles of the "War of [someone's] Aggression." A few remnants of the era remained, including cannons, a house, and deer? (those deer never leave). On the banks of Bull Run, history was made again as MOC'ers battled the elements to reap the rewards of nature.

Oriole Park at Camden Yards Tour

Organizer: Brian Endres

From dugout to turf, nosebleed seats to pressbox, Babe Ruth to Brady Anderson, MOC got a behind-the-scenes look at a beloved Baltimore (new) icon. The tour guide was full of trivia tidbits that the group shared with those who didn't get to go, making us ready to be a hit at any holiday requiring small talk not about the Ravens. What the editor wants to know is, where are the pictures with the mascot?

News You Can Use

Inside this Issue:

End of Year Wrap Up and Cleaning Your Hydration System, p. 2 ; Holiday Hints, p. 3; Bulletin Board and Editor's Corner, p. 4

Want a way to give back this holiday season?

We're always looking for event organizers, social greeters, and extra hands who have special talents to share.

The MOC is also looking for people interested in a little more:

Controller - Need someone that is good with QuickBooks, accounting, taxes, etc. Record intake and outtake of club funds as a whole.

Event Accountant - Experience with Excel, accounting. Track intake and outtake of events.

Web Assistant - Proficient at Photoshop, and light HTML. Responsible for updating the slideshow(s) of images on the home page of the site and Non-MOC Event listings. Other duties will be defined over time.

Safety & Equipment Rental Coordinator - Manage club equipment. DC/Baltimore corridor location preferred.

Legal Coordinator - Must be a member of the Maryland Bar. Help with legal documentation, etc.

Wondering where the pictures from your event are?

If you're browsing the archives and don't see pictures from your event, consider sending photos that you took to our historian for our pages. Email photos with captions to: historian@marylandoutdoorclub.org

Got the worn-out athletic shoe blues?

Don't ditch them - recycle them! Yes, even athletic shoes can be remade into playground surfaces and "new" shoes. Consider sending your raggedy old pairs (any brand, but without any metal) back to Nike, who recycles them into new shoes and playground surfaces through their Reuse-a-Shoe program. Visit their web site for local donation sites or an address to send the shoes directly to Nike: <http://www.nike.com/nikebiz/nikebiz.jhtml?page=27>

Wanted: MOC Member of the Month and "Best of 2004" suggestions for our January issue.

December Events

Fri, Dec 3 @ 6:00 PM
Drinks and Pool at Jillian's
Hanover, MD

Sat, Dec 4 @ 8:30 AM
Baltimore City Hike - West Side
Baltimore, MD

Sat, Dec 4 @ 3:00 PM
Visit to Art-o-matic
Washington, DC

Sat, Dec 11 @ 2:45PM
Bowling
Columbia, MD

Sun, Dec 12 @ 8:30 AM
Difficult AT Hike - Gathland
Burkittsville, MD

Sun, Dec 12 @ 12:00 Noon
National Mall/Monuments Geology Bike Tour
Washington, DC

Tue, Dec 14 @ 7:00 PM
Third Annual MOC Holiday Party -
Registration Required
Red Robin; Columbia, MD



Thurs, Dec 16 @ 5:45 PM
Annapolis Midnight Madness
Annapolis, MD

Sat, Dec 18 @ 8:30 AM
Difficult AT Hike - Weverton Cliffs
Burkittsville, MD

Sun, Dec 19 @ 1:00 PM
Easy Hike - Patuxent Research
Refuge
Laurel, MD

Tue, Jan 11, 2005 @ 7:00 PM
Social Hour at Red Robin
Columbia, MD



For more information on upcoming events, please visit the "Events" section of our web site.

That Was The Year That Was ...

(with apologies to NPR)

MOC Web guru Jeff Schneider suggested a bit of the old database querying to sum up 2004 in numbers. With a few estimates to round out the year, given our publication deadline, here is the year in numbers:

Where were you?

Total number of event attendees: 2,021
 Unique persons who attended at least one event in 2004: 543
 Average of 12.75 people per event
 1075 new members in 2004
 3.1 average new members per day

What were you doing?

Total number of events: 130, making for an average of more than 10 events per month, mostly on the weekends
 Hikes: 58, nearly 5 per month
 Overnight/camping trips: 19, about 1.5 per month

"Easy" Events: 34
 "Easy to Moderate" Events: 31
 "Moderate" Events: 30
 "Moderate to Difficult" Events: 9
 "Difficult" Events": 26

Persons attending the most events (not including social hours):

Joanne Milne: 33
 Jeff Schneider: 33
 Colin Babb: 32
 Brian Loughery: 28
 Amy Pickwick: 28
 Jesse Allen: 27
 Adam Miller: 24

Whose hands were you in?

Persons leading the most events (not including co-organizing):

Jeff Schneider - 21
 Joanne Milne - 15
 Amy Pickwick - 12
 Brian Loughery - 10

Congratulations, MOC on a great 2004, a great 2nd birthday, and a great set of new events. Looking forward to even more participation and organizers in 2005!

Out with the Mold ...

Whether you have a Camelbak, or one of the other differently-named hydration systems that you call a Camelbak a la Kleenex and Xerox, it's probably high time you cleaned that sucker out. What better time than a chilly evening when you're not outdoors, anyway, so that you can be all set for a fresh clean spring or even a crisp day in the snow?

Some tips from the Laurel Highlands Off-Road Bicycle Association Forum:

1. Try denture cleaner. Dissolve a tablet or two or three in warm water in your bladder, and put the angle part and mouthpiece in a cup with just enough water to cover and another tablet. Or try water, baking soda and rice with a lot of shaking if you prefer a manual or more active cleaning process.

2. Alcohol on q-tips (another brand name corrupted into a generic) can get the gunk out of the elbow and mouthpiece.

3. What about the hose? Sometimes, the cleaning kit that is sold specifically does the best job - in this case, use the little brush from the kit or from anywhere else you can find it. Perhaps a chemistry lab supply company?

4. Rinse the whole thing with mouthwash for a minty fresh feeling.



Cartoon courtesy Frikoutdoors.com

Simplify the Holidays

Excerpted from the Center for a New American Dream: <http://newdream.org/holiday/tips.php>

- 5 million extra tons of trash are produced between Thanksgiving and New Years Day in the United States each year.

-Americans plan to spend \$1,564 per household during these holidays, of which \$1,042 goes for gifts.

-It takes an average of 4 months for a credit card user to pay off holiday bills.

Do you want your holidays wrapped more in meaning and less in stuff? If so, you're not alone. A national survey showed 70% of Americans would welcome less emphasis on gift giving and spending.

Tips for a hassle-free and Earth-friendly holiday, or, how to get through "the most wonderful time of the year" with our values and our wallets intact.

Starting slow and making gradual changes to entertaining and gift-giving rituals is the best rule of thumb. It may be too late to significantly re-think your family's routine this year, but you can still set realistic goals (like knitting just two or three gifts!) and make other seasonal tasks more fun.

Host a cookie swap. Bake a single kind of cookie in bulk and swap with friends. Avoid the muss and fuss of making multiple kinds.

Have a card party. Skip the poker and invite friends over to fill out your holiday cards instead. It won't save you time, but it will turn an often tedious activity into a social gathering at a time when you might otherwise be too busy to see your friends!

Have a re-gift swap. Grab gift-quality things in our closets that we don't actually use. Gather a few like-minded friends and trade around.

Share a love of reading. Give away the last great book you bought and enjoyed to someone who shares your taste.

You'll get to talk about the story the next time you see each other, and

you can always reread a copy at the library.

Get crafty. Stop throwing out - with creative flair, items that reflect your interests can also give a unique twist to holiday fare. String corks and beads for a novelty garland for a wine-lover, for instance.

What about gifts, you may ask? Try out some of these ideas from the staff:

Gifts for Children, or the young at heart:
#1: Simple book about the recipient, written and illustrated by you!
#2: The makings for hand puppets -- brown lunch bags, googly eyes, scissors, markers etc.

Homemade Gifts:

#3: Record interviews of parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles on audio or video tape; you can ask them to discuss their memories of the person you plan to give the tape to, or your family's history, especially funny or meaningful anecdotes.

#4: Make your own cards and send them to relatives and good friends.

#5: Frame one of your best photographs. Buy a frame from a local business or artisan. Or make one yourself out of stiff paper or cardboard, decorated with colored paper, old wrapping paper, beads and/or natural products (like leaves, small pinecones, or seeds).

#6: Make your own calendar using cut-out pictures, photos, and/or drawings.

#7: Assemble a collection of favorite recipes.

Gifts of Time:

#8: Special activities with a significant other--a candlelit dinner, massage, or outdoor activity.

#9: A monthly lunch date with an elderly relative or friend.

#10: A handwritten letter or card sent to a long-distance friend or relative once a month for a year.

Family Gifts:

#11: A jigsaw puzzle for the whole family.
#12: Tickets to a favorite cultural or sporting event

Gifts for the Environment:

#13: Assemble a Turn the Tide gift basket with compact fluorescent lightbulbs, forms for getting rid of junk mail, delicious recipes and a note about how the recipients can log on to www.turnthetide.org and see exactly how much of a positive impact they're having on the environment.

#14: Buy a potted Christmas tree and replant after the holidays. (You can also have a tree planted elsewhere in someone's honor through American Forests.)

#15: Instead of new wrapping paper, reuse old paper the Sunday comics section, old maps, decorated brown grocery bags, or a colorful piece of material.

#16: Give a donation to a local cause such as a soup kitchen, a shelter for battered women, a local environment group, etc. Call local churches, synagogues, and charitable organizations for ideas.

#17: Give a friend a membership to a non-profit organization. JustGive.org allows you to donate online to thousands of charities. Want to give a gift membership to the Center of a New American Dream?

#18: If you'd like to donate to charity in the name of a friend or family member, the nonprofit Charity Checks (800-854-5601, www.charitychecks.us) allows recipients to choose which organization(s) receive the funds.

#19: How about a membership to a favorite museum, symphony, or other arts organization?

#20: For your peace of mind and theirs, why not put together an emergency roadside kit for someone who does a lot of driving, or for anyone who drives at all. For that friend who walks home late, a gift basket could include pepper spray and a whistle, or a gift certificate for self-defense training or a bus/metro pass.

For those gifts that you will buy, there's always a choice in where you shop. Check out the Conscious Consumers site, <http://newdream.org/consumer/>, for information on companies and what choices make a difference.

Monthly Statistics

As of December 1st

2227 - Total Members To Date
92 - November New Members
60% - Female Members
40% - Male Members
32.7 - Average Member Age

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December 2004

Member Bulletin Board

The MOC does not maintain a bulletin board on its web site because it's too hard to monitor, so we've made it a feature of the newsletter. Use this area to hook up a team for a race, get a group together for a special non-MOC event, or to do other networking.

This month:



ROOMMATE WANTED: In Severn, 3 story townhouse; \$600 for the second floor apartment with private bath. Convenient to NSA, Arundel Mills Mall, 95/295. Female preferred; share with 1 non-smoking female. Available mid-December. Contact Joanne Milne.

Joanne's email is at left.

MOC Member John Putman is a football fan - "Looking for other MOC NFL football fans to get together to watch the games at various local Baltimore establishments." John mentions that he chooses places that offer all the games in case by some chance you're not a Raven's fan.

Please use the Member Area of the web site to contact John.

Your not-so-humble newsletter editor, Katie Stofer, is recruiting participants for Baltimore co-ed sports leagues. Right now, I'm trying to gauge interest in forming MOC teams for any sport, so drop me a line with your interests.

Katie's email is in the newsletter.

MOC Founder and President Amy Pickwick, is currently seeking a walking activity partner for morning walks around Lake Elkhorn in Columbia, MD.

Hint: See the column at left.

Got a post for the board? Email
explorer@marylandoutdoorclub.org

Join the MOC - It's Free!

The Maryland Outdoor Club conducts all administrative tasks through our web site to cut down on processing time & costs. If you want to sign up, go to marylandoutdoorclub.org and click on any of the "Join Now" buttons you'll find throughout the site. Signing up is a short process and will save you time when you sign up for events.

The MOC does not sell or share your personal information with any third-party.

Ads & Classifieds

Your business can reach hundreds of potential customers each month with an ad in exchange for bartered items/goods. Contact the editor for details. MOC members can sell single used items or place notices. Classifieds are \$5.00 per 25 words or less.

Save a Tree

If you are done with this issue, please consider throwing it in your paper recycle bin instead of into a trash can.

Calling all Creative Types

Remember, if you're a budding artist, photographer, writer, cartoonist, etc. we'll be glad to use your submissions! Those of you planning to submit for Art-o-matic 2006 can use this as a test bed for your ideas

Editor's Corner

Yes, it's that time of year again where we stuff ourselves with food and then reflect on what we've accomplished for the year. What have you done that's been a goal for a while? Did you finally get out to your first event? Do your first solo backpacking? Decide to learn to drive a car? I'm looking for stories to wrap up the old and usher in the New Year. Send me your favorites, too - it's also the time of year for the requisite "top X" lists.

-Katie