

## Snow or No?

February weather turned things around on the MOC, with a lack of snow in the early days changing the plans of the skiing/snowshoeing weekend, warm temperatures making ice skating seem a little out of season, and an abundance of snow (well, for Maryland) postponing at least one hike at the end of it. Go figure, but MOCers still managed to have fun. The month was capped off by a Thank You party for all our past organizers who make things happen.



Winter hiking is *almost* as good as snowshoeing...



No one told us ice skating was so much work!



When Organizers Attack!

## News You Can Use

### Inside this Issue:

Member Spotlight p. 2; Hike Across Maryland, p. 3; Member Bulletin Board and Ten Things Overheard at Social Hour, p. 4

### New Web Site Features

Our Web Developer Jeff Schneider has been hard at work on new features for event registration in the Member Area. You may have noticed a listing of events you're wait listed for. Now there's also an "Update Registration" section where you can add and remove guests, change your carpool plans, and add notes for events you've registered for. Hopefully this will make things run more smoothly for both our members and our Event Coordinators. Check it out! In the Member Area.

We've also added a "Special Offers" area in the Member Area. Two offers there now: The Trail House in Frederick is offering MOC members 10 % off purchases in 2005. Also, get \$5 off a Baltimore or DC edition of the Entertainment 2005 coupon book.

### Help out the MOC!

We're always looking for event organizers, social greeters, and extra hands who have special talents to share. Want to help in another way? We love that, too! Send us an email with your interests, and we'll see how they fit the club's needs.

### 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](mailto:historian@marylandoutdoorclub.org)

### Dude, where's my writeup?

If your organizer is not as speedy as you'd like in getting a writeup posted for an event you took part in, why not write your own version of the trip? You can also send in a writeup in the cases where organizers have posted one. Submit your ideas to Colin Babb at: [historian@marylandoutdoorclub.org](mailto:historian@marylandoutdoorclub.org)

### Coming soon ...

From Idea to Archive - How to Host a Successful MOC Event Part II: The Day of the Event. Also watch for upcoming info from our K9 Coordinator, Carrie Graff.

## Upcoming Events

For more info, visit the "Events" section of our web site.

**Fri - Sun, March 11 - 13 @ 11 PM**  
**Skiing/Snowshoeing Weekend**  
**Harman, WV**

**Sat, March 12 @ 9:15 AM**  
**Moderate AT Hike: Weverton Cliffs**  
**Burkittsville, MD**

**Sun, March 13 @ 9:30 AM**  
**Difficult Hike - Tibbet Knob**  
**Big Schloss, VA**

**Thu, March 17 @ 9 PM**  
**Howl Gone Wild Thursday**  
**Baltimore, MD**

**Sun, March 20 @ 8 AM**  
**HAM Training Hike: Compton Pk**  
**Front Royal, VA**

**Sun, March 20 @ 10 AM**  
**Easy Day Hike - Quiet Waters**  
**Annapolis, MD**

**Sat, Mar 26 @ 8:15 AM**  
**HAM Training Hike: Ashby Gap**  
**Paris, VA**

**Sat, Mar 26 @ 10 AM**  
**Bike Trip to Inner Harbor**  
**Baltimore, MD**

**Sun, Mar 27 @ 9 AM**  
**Difficult Hike: White Rocks**  
**Columbia Furnace, VA**

**Tue, Apr 12 @ 7 PM**  
**Social Hour at Red Robin**  
**Columbia, MD**



**Sun, Apr 17 @ 7:15 AM**  
**Paintball**  
**Bowie, MD**

**Fri - Sun, April 22-24 @ 5 PM**  
**Western Maryland Waterfalls**  
**Weekend**  
**Deep Creek Lake, MD**

*Don't see anything interesting?  
Why not organize something? See  
the Organizer Area in the Member  
Area of the web site, or speak with  
an officer.*

MOC Monthly Explorer + 2

## Preservation Press

If you looked at the distribution of boreal forests in North America, you would find most of these Arctic region trees in Northern Canada. There would also be a peculiar long "finger" extending southward along the United States East Coast down the Appalachians. The distribution of these northern trees is a result of an unusual arrangement of mountains on the East Coast, where the long ridge of the Appalachian Mountains reaches roughly north-south down the coastline. During the last ice age, species from the north retreated southward as the ice came south. In many parts of the world, such as Europe, retreating species hit an east-west mountain range which formed a barrier to further retreat, and the species were wiped out. But in North America, the Appalachians instead formed a chain along which these species were able to continue to travel south, and in the upper reaches of hills, to find a climate more akin to the one formerly in Canada. When the ice retreated, many species found ecosystems to the north into which to move, but did not necessarily die out in their new southerly homes. As climate warmed again, many retreated upslope and can be found in higher altitude locations, such as Clingman's Dome in the Great Smokies National Park or in the region around Big Meadows in Shenandoah National Park. Among the most remarkable of these Canadian species living far from their usual home is the stately Eastern Hemlock tree.

The presence of Eastern Hemlock is by no means unique to Shenandoah National Park. Maryland Outdoor Club hikers who have traveled on the northern sections of the Appalachian Trail in Maryland may recall crossing streambeds north of Wolfsville on the way to Pen Mar High Rock where the valleys will filled with the trees. Stands can be found dotted around the high country in Maryland, particular in either high peak islands above 3500 feet, or less commonly in valleys where cold air sinks down and provides the cooler climate these trees need to survive. Sadly, many of these stands of trees have been dying back dramatically in the past ten years and beautiful scenic locations like the Camp Rappidian (also known as

Hoover Camp) in Shenandoah National Park have been changing from lush greenery to stands of dead and dying trees.

The cause of the die out, which many fear may be the death knell of Eastern Hemlocks in the United States, is a pest called woolly adelgid. It is a non-native aphid which feeds on the base of the needles in hemlock trees. This eventually kills the needle, which then falls off. The tree will gradually become defoliated, losing its source of food, and usually dies. It may take as long as two years for a tree to completely die, leaving barren leafless stands of dead trees. These trees are particularly prone to falling in high winds: Camp Rappidian was already closed to campers and hikers last September because of the danger of falling trees even before Hurricane Isabel swept through and forced many of the trees over. The dead tree stands also provide a greatly elevated risk for forest fires as they provide a great deal of fresh fuel, as does the heavy cover of dead needles on the ground. Park rangers have been attempting to keep fire access roads clear of fallen trees and perform controlled low intensity burns in areas to reduce the danger.

If you do hike and camp in these areas (Camp Rappidian is again open to the public), be aware of the hazards of fire and do not set campfires save in well established camp fire locations with a fire grid, and use caution when operating fuel stoves. A major fire in the southern part of Shenandoah National Park was started some years ago by a hiker struggling with a stove in high winds who used toilet paper to light the stove. More than the stove caught alight and the high winds quickly fanned the fire into a major forest fire. You can now legally be held accountable for the cost of putting such fires, and the cost of controlling such a fire runs into the tens of thousands of dollars.

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## Mountain Club of Maryland's Hike Across Maryland

Wondering what all the fuss with the "Expert Only" and "training hikes" is all about? Read on for details from Jesse Allen.

The Appalachian Trail cuts across Maryland from Harper's Ferry in West Virginia to Pen Mar on the Pennsylvania/Maryland border. Every year, backpackers consider the 40+ mile hike from one side of the state to the other and try to hike the entire distance in a single day. This rather epic feat is known on the trail as the Maryland Challenge. Just think about: it's almost 50% longer than a marathon, already a rather epic event, over rocky ground. With a backpack.

But why should backpackers get to have all the fun? To keep us all involved, the Mountain Club of Maryland sponsors the Hike Across Maryland (HAM) every other year. This event allows hikers to go from Pen Mar to Harper's Ferry on the first Saturday in May, with support services along the way for hikers who decide to quit partway and provisions of water, encouragement and medical assistance where needed.

A number of members of MOC have expressed interest in participating this year, and you may have noticed a series of Expert Only hikes appearing on the MOC site in recent weeks. Many of these are training hikes for those of us intending to do the HAM, or at least train along with us as we ratchet up the miles. We intend to offer a long (and in coming months, very long) hike almost every weekend for training. These hikes are open to all members, but we do encourage only members who are prepared to hike the full distance, and who understand that many of us need to pick up our hiking pace. This means we will be spread out on the trail rather than staying tightly grouped at all times as MOC hikes more often do. We'll make sure everyone makes it: you won't be left in the woods! But you should not be intimidated if part of the group gets far ahead.

Does HAM sound like your idea of fun? If so, we strongly encourage you to not only sign up for our training hikes on the MOC website, but also plan additional hikes to prepare on your own time. Also let me

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(Jesse) know of your interest so you can be included in our group mailings on forthcoming hikes and related news. The forms to join the HAM are available from MCM or me if you send me e-mail.

The first ten MOC members to sign up will also have the option of staying in a cabin in Pen Mar on Friday and Saturday night (i.e. just before and just after HAM). This will be posted on the MOC site in the future. The cabin will give you a good place to sleep before the hike (which starts at 5 AM at Pen Mar), rather than the local firehouse which will have 100+ overexcited hikers stumbling around and keeping you from sleeping all night long. If you're in the cabin, you'll also get a basic quick breakfast before the hike (a more substantial breakfast will be served by MCM on the trail), and a pleasant place to sleep after the hike, plus the best breakfast this chef can make Sunday morning (*ed. note: Jesse recently won an award for serving the best food on events at our Organizer Appreciation Party*). Our accommodations are also open (on a first come first serve basis) to any MOC members who volunteer to help support us (pick up bedraggled hikers at Harpers Ferry and take them back to Pen Mar, join us for a nice big steak dinner after the hike, etc.).

We look forward to seeing you on the trails with us!

*Jesse Allen is serving as club contact for the MOC's HAM efforts. You can find Jesse's contact info in the Member Area of the web site, or elsewhere in this newsletter.*

Some of the upcoming training hikes:

15 Miles; Compton Peak; Sun, Mar 20

19.6 miles; Ashby Gap; Sat, Mar 26

20-21 miles; Snickers Gap, VA to Harper's Ferry; Sat, Apr 2

24 miles; Pen Mar to Washington Monument; Sat, Apr 9

Also in April: 28- and 34-milers.

## Member Spotlight

### Joanne Milne Community Relations Coordinator



MOC Member since: August 2003

Primary Involvement with MOC: As an active member, organizer, cheerleader, social butterfly, and Officer.

Favorite Adventure Sport, Social, or Travel Activities or MOC Events: I love Hiking & Hottubs, river tubing, downhill skiing, and moderate hikes.

Currently resides in: A beautiful home near Arundel Mills Mall in Severn, MD.

Originally from: Here! I'm a local gal, from Bethesda, born at Georgetown U. Hospital.

Favorite pop culture: I love TV, like Sex in the City, Lost, Law & Order: SVU, ER, House . . .

Favorite sports team: I would rather be out playing them myself than watching some overpaid athletes.

Favorite local "getaway": Cunningham Falls, Tubing on the Shenandoah.

Job: Health contractor working on a contract for the National Cancer Institute.

Other fun info about you: I fear hard-core events like rock climbing, white-water rafting, ski-diving, as I'm really a great big wimp!

Best part about organizing: The reduced costs for events are great, and being able to decide what activities you want to do, where, and when. Also being the center of attention is fun!

Anything else: MOC has changed my life. It gave me an instant network of dozens of great friends to spend time with.

MOC Monthly Explorer + 3

## Officers



**Amy Pickwick**  
Founder & President  
apickwick@marylandoutdoorclub.org

**Brian Loughery**  
Event Coordinator  
bloughery@marylandoutdoorclub.org

**Colin Babb**  
Historian  
cbabb@marylandoutdoorclub.org

**Katie Stofer**  
Newsletter Editor  
kstofer@marylandoutdoorclub.org

**Joanne Milne**  
Community Relations Coordinator  
jmilne@marylandoutdoorclub.org

**Jesse Allen**  
Preservation Coordinator  
jallen@marylandoutdoorclub.org

**Jeff Schneider**  
Web Developer  
jschneider@marylandoutdoorclub.org

**Rebecca Frankenberger**  
Social Coordinator  
rfrankenberger@marylandoutdoorclub.org

**Carrie Graff**  
K-9 Coordinator  
cgraff@marylandoutdoorclub.org

## Ten Things Overheard at Social Hour

Submitted by ???

1. How long have you been a member?
2. Is this your first event?
3. Where's the waiter?
4. Well, *somebody* ordered this mushroom burger!
5. So how'd you hear about MOC?
6. You drove all the way from Bel Air for this?
7. Yeah I like sticky-buns... Why?
8. Is Young buying shots yet?
9. Yep, she's the President **and** the Founder.
10. Thanks for the shots, Young.

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## Member Bulletin Board

The Biennial Appalachian Trail Conference is July 1st - 8th in Johnson City, Tennessee. This is a week long conference offering hikes, excursions, workshops, nightly entertainment, inexpensive lodging and meals. The following website has all the information on hikes, excursions, etc. and the registration form:

<http://www.southernhighlands2005.org>  
I have attended this conference for the past 20 years and it is a lot of fun and you get to hike in a new area with some great people. I would like to organize a carpool and/or a caravan to Tennessee.

*Please contact Linda Gohlinghorst through the Member Area of the web site.*

## Monthly Statistics

### As of March 1st

2281 - Total Members To Date  
99 - February New Members  
59% - Female Members  
41% - Male Members  
32.8 - Average Member Age

## Preservation Press

*(continued from page 3)*

The other danger, of course, is falling trees. If you have a choice, try to find an area with live trees within the stand, and look for sturdy trees. The trees are much more prone to come down in heavy thunderstorms, so if you expect thunderstorms, it may be worthwhile to move on and find a campground a little further afield just to be safe.

At the moment, there is little that can be done about the pest itself. Since it is not a native pest, no native species that preys on the adelgid and there are few ways of controlling its spread. Not since the loss of the American Chestnut in the 1920s have we seen an entire tree species wiped out. Sadly, this may well be the fate of the Eastern Hemlock.

--Jesse Allen, Preservation Coordinator

## 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](http://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

So I hear through the grapevine that the newsletter is getting more popular, especially at Social Hour. This is music to my ears! However, I'd still like to hear more directly from you what you like (or don't ...) and what you'd like to see. Thanks to everyone who has contributed in the past and to anyone who's thought about contributing, I like nothing better than cutting and pasting the entire newsletter from your submissions. You don't even have to write - send me interesting articles you see elsewhere that I should share with the group through excerpts.

-Katie