

Monthly Explorer

www.marylandoutdoorclub.org

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Adventure Sports • Travel • Social

MARYLAND Outdoor Club

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Interested in being a contributor? Send articles, story ideas and general comments to explorer@marylandoutdoorclub.org

In Case of Emergency...

It's every MOC organizer's worst nightmare – someone on your event gets seriously injured. Over the course of almost four years and 500 events, accidents have been relatively rare. Usually it's nothing more than a small cut or strained knee, as we strive above all else to keep participants safe.

I know of only one event where an accident was severe enough to warrant a call to 911- It happened to be on a hike I was leading recently on the Appalachian Trail. A hiker misjudged a jump among some rocks and fell backwards, getting knocked unconscious in the process.

Fortunately, after a brief hospital visit, our injured hiker was released with only minor cuts and some large bruises. However, in the moments after the accident, we were unsure of the extent of the injuries suffered and had to respond quickly.

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Bi-Polar Shenandoah Adventure



MOCers take up sentry posts during the hike portion of the Bi-Polar Shenandoah Adventure. Want to cross the bridge? Tell the MOC member your quest, your favorite color... and the air-speed velocity of an unladen swallow.

Tents and Penguins?

Most excursions to the Galapagos Islands take place by boat, allowing visitors to visit the islands by day and then sleep aboard ship at night. However, some excursions now combine camping with kayaking. ROW International, a n Idaho-based rafting tour company, secured camping permits from the Ecuadorian military on one of the islands (Battra) and found a few recreational beaches that allow camping. ROW is a member of the International Galapagos Tour Operator's Association, an association of tour companies that work to protect and preserve the islands.

Have you been to the Galapagos? Excited about the possibility of camping on the islands? Or think that it might not be the best idea? Send in your thoughts to explorer@marylandoutdoorclub.org and we'll reprint them.

In Case of Emergency...

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While I hope no other organizers have deal with a similar situation on an event, here are a few lessons I learned to keep in mind in the case of an emergency.

1. **Stay Calm.** Losing your head if there's an accident won't help anyone. Stay calm and stay focused on getting help for the injured participant. Keeping your cool will also help keep the other participants calm.

2. **Be Prepared.** While help may only be minutes away if you are leading an urban event, being out on the trail is a different story. You may be miles from the nearest trailhead or road, so be prepared. Hiking with a first aid kit is always a good idea and the MOC has some available for organizers to use on events. Having a cell phone with you is also a great idea. And while it's not good hiking etiquette to be taking calls during an event, toss it in your pack on silent, just in case.

3. **Delegate.** If an emergency does occur, don't try to handle it yourself. Other participants will be just as concerned as you are, so let them help. However, you don't need 6 people whipping out cell phones to call 911. You can delegate tasks to people to keep things under control. Have a couple of people administer first aid and have one person be the point of contact with emergency services. If necessary, organize small groups of hikers to return to the trailhead to lead paramedics to your group. Never send anyone out alone.

4. **Communicate.** Good communication is essential in an emergency. Not only with emergency services (What aid should we administer? How long will it take paramedics to arrive? Should we stay put or do we need to guide them to us?), but also with the rest of your group. Keep everyone informed as much as possible of the current situation.

Monthly Statistics

3,511 – Total Members to Date
85 – New Members in March
60% – Female Members
40% – Male Members
33.7 – Average Member Age

Take Great Pictures:



Photography Tips

- ✓ Always convert the size and format of digital image files before you e-mail them to your friends. In almost every case, your as-captured image files will be too big to send via e-mail.
- ✓ Always create a new file for e-mailing and hold onto the original, full-resolution file for other uses, such as making prints. Using your image editing program, first decrease the resolution of the e-mail file to 72 dpi. Next, to make sure that your image fits on a standard monitor screen, change the size of your image so that its largest dimension (length or width) is 600 or 700 pixels. Finally, save your file in jpeg (.jpg) format with a file size of approximately 100 kB.
- ✓ You can alter the size of the jpeg file by changing the 'quality' or amount of compression. Some software programs may allow you to select from various file size options (such as 'small' or 'medium') and perform the conversion steps for you. However you do it, the bottom line is to make sure that the files that you want to e-mail are jpeg files of approximately 100 kB. You should have no problem sending five (and possibly up to 10) 100 kB jpeg files in one e-mail. In general, try to keep the total size of all the attachments at 1 MB or less.

Christine Kent Bowles is a professional photographer in the Washington, D.C. / Baltimore area and a MOC member. To see samples of her work and learn more about her workshops, exhibits and other events, please visit her Web site at www.ckbphotography.com.

5. **Remember Everyone Else.** After emergency services arrive on scene, they may evacuate the injured participant by ambulance, ATV, or even helicopter. But don't forget about the rest of your group. You still need to get them back safely to the trailhead or carpool location.

The MOC is committed to making our events as safe as possible and increasing safety awareness among our members. In the past, we have offered such safety-related events as a Wilderness First Aid & Care Awareness Seminar and a Wilderness Survival Course Weekend. If you are interested in attending a safety-related seminar or certification course or would like more information about safety events outside the club, let us know (events@marylandoutdoorclub.org).

— Brian Loughery

Inside the Beltway:

National Park Real Estate?

Ask anyone about top environmental legislation, and generally drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve springs to mind. However, with a decline in funding for the National Park Service, environmentalists are becoming increasingly concerned about development closing in on the national parks.

Part of the challenge has been funding for the National Park Service. Over the past five years, funding for the National Park Service to purchase and preserve land has decreased from \$130 million in 2002 to \$23 million in the President's proposed budget for 2007. Last year, the House of Representatives even passed a provision in the final budget proposal to sell millions of acres of public lands to real estate developers, mining companies and other development interests. It was dropped from the final bill thanks to strong opposition from both Democratic and Republican Senators, as well as a coalition of conservationists, hunters, businesses and governors. President Bush resurrected the proposal in his 2007 budget proposal; Once again, environmental groups and key officials (both Republicans and Democrats) are strongly opposing the plan.

A *USA Today* article outlined several proposals for development near national parks. In Florida, there is a proposal to fill in the wetlands at the edge of the Everglades National Park to make way for 6,000 homes, schools and retail. In California, development proposals have up to 20,000 homes (golf courses and a landfill) just outside the border of Joshua Tree National Park.

Developers are quoted as saying that it makes "economic sense" to place houses where people want to live. One economist compared living next to a National Park as "beach-front property." The economic boon to the state is one of the top arguments for such development. A proposal to build more than 2,000 homes near the New River Gorge National River in West Virginia is estimated to bring \$1.8 million in annual tax revenue to the state.

Development near national parks can bring a variety of challenges to the nearby land. "Edge effects" include household pets that can prey on park wildlife, storm runoff, increased noise and nighttime light. In Cuyahoga Valley National Park, runoff from nearby development rushed into the park and created \$3 million in damage.

Want to get involved or learn more? The Sierra Club (www.sierraclub.org) posts action alerts on their Web site to keep individuals informed about key legislation and votes, as well as how and when to contact your members of Congress.

Get Your Gear Ready for Spring

Spring fever is starting to hit the Washington, D.C. and Baltimore areas. If you're just starting to drag your bike and other outdoor equipment from dusty storage, make sure that you give them a quick look-over before hitting the road. Discovering that you have a leaky tire while on a bike ride (and no repair kit to be found) can lead to a long walk home – not that we're speaking from experience.

Have a bike?

- ✓ Inflate your tires to the air pressure level etched on their sides. If they won't inflate, patch or replace the tube.
- ✓ Pick up the end of each bike and spin the wheel; if it wobbles or scrapes against the brake pads, tighten the spokes with a wrench. If that doesn't work, have the rims replaced.
- ✓ Clean the chain with a rag, and then oil it.
- ✓ Go for a short ride. Replace brake pads if you can't stop immediately or if they are more than two years old. If any gears slip, replace the affected chain sprocket.

Have a canoe or a kayak?

- ✓ Look for cracks, dings or holes on both the outside and inside. Fill the compartment with water to check for leaks.
- ✓ Check extras like the rudder, bungee cords, rivets and splash skirt for fraying, rips or rust. Replace anything showing excessive wear and tear.
- ✓ Check paddles for cracks or loose joints. Both should be repaired professionally.
- ✓ If you paddle in salt water, remember to rinse the boat with mild soap after use to avoid corrosion.

Have roller blades?

- ✓ Rotate wheels every one to two months to prevent uneven wear. Tighten them so they are snug, but still spin freely.
- ✓ Listen for grinding or squeaking when the wheels are spinning. Both noises are signs that the bearings need to be replaced.
- ✓ Replace brake pads worn to a half-inch or less.
- ✓ Check laces for fraying, and make sure the buckles are tight.

– Excerpted from *Health* magazine

Third Annual Hiking & Hottubs



MOC members gather for a group photo at the Annual Hiking and Hottubs event held in Deep Creek, Maryland. Organizers Kate Buck and Carrie Graff kept more than 30 MOCers fed and entertained for the weekend.

Upcoming Events

To see our full list of events, visit the MOC Web site: www.marylandoutdoorclub.org. Interested in something that's not on the list? Why not organize an event? See the organizer section on the MOC Web site, or speak with an officer. Want to share organizer duties? You can use the new Member Forums to find a co-organizer.

Difficult Hike on AT (Roller Coaster) Sunday, 4/9



Social Hour

Tuesday, 4/11

Moderate Spring Holiday Hike at Gambrill SP Sunday, 4/16

Dolly Sods Backpacking Trip Friday, 4/21 – Sunday, 4/23

C&O Canal Bike Camping Weekend Saturday, 4/22 – Sunday, 4/23

Difficult Hike in GWNF (West Massanutten Mtn) Sunday, 4/23

Difficult Shenandoah Backpacking Trip Saturday, 4/29 – Sunday, 4/30

Difficult Hike in GWNF (East Massanutten Mtn) Saturday, 4/29

Day Trip to the National Arboretum Sunday, 4/30

Difficult AT Hike in S. Pennsylvania Sunday, 4/30

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Join MOC: Visit www.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. MOC does not sell or share your personal information with any third parties. The Maryland Outdoor Club conducts all administrative tasks through our Web site to cut down on processing time and costs. Want to be more involved? Officer and volunteer positions are still available.