

Oregon Ridge Nature Center Council
13555 Beaver Dam Road
Cockeysville, MD 21030



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TRAILBLAZER

May/June 2009



Supporting Oregon Ridge Park
and Nature Center for 27 years

Is Your Membership
Current?



**DRIVE CAREFULLY:
USE YOUR SEAT BELTS**

MUSIC IN THE WOODS

May 16, 2009, 10 AM – 4 PM

IT'S FREE

Soon dulcimers, mandolins, auto-harps, fiddles, banjos and guitars will converge in the woods of Oregon Ridge for our 3rd annual traditional music festival, and the new spring leaves are quivering with anticipation. The woods and meadow will come alive with musical renditions performed by plain folk who want to share their talents and love of music.

There will be new and familiar faces performing, including The Dulcimer Band and the Oregon Ridge Nature Center Band. It's not too late for groups and individuals to call the Nature Center to sign-up for a spot. You need not be a professional; beginner, intermediate, or advanced musicians are welcome. If you enjoy folk, ballad, and other traditional music and want to shine your light, this is a free venue unlike any other.

While you are at it, kick up your heels with some traditional dancing, too. We hope to have traditional dance performances and workshops for those who want to learn a short routine.

The ORNC staff has crafted some colorful didgeridoos, so come early if you want one; they sell out quickly. Bryan Burns will have some of his handcrafted flutes for sale and has offered one for our big raffle.

Other vendors include Kollar Nursery of North Harford with native plants and instruments from Music Go Round. Vendor/Instructor Scott Morrison will provide demos of Bodhran percussion and have percussion instruments for sale.

There's no better way to spend a spring day with friends and family than at this melodious gathering. Just lay back and relax to the music, sing along, twirl to a dance or two, try out a didgeridoo, meet some good folks, have your cheek painted, and lunch on hotdogs and soda.

If you have your own instrument, bring it along and join a jam session.

Or join a "Meet the Instrument" session. And if the spirit takes hold, ask to perform on stage if there's an opening. Anything is possible at....



FACES OF MAPLE SUGAR DAYS

2009



Brina Doyle makes syrup in a pot.



Chris O'Brien boils sap in a hollow log.



Kahla Elson and Jackie Devine (left), Matthew Bell (ctr.), and Martha Harris (right) use modern evaporators to boil sap.



MUSIC IN THE WOODS!

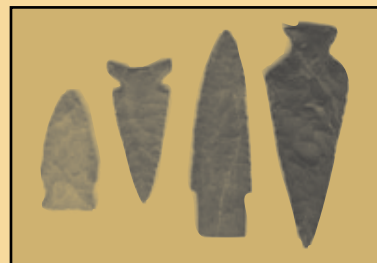
PRIMITIVE TECHNOLOGY WEEKEND

MAY 2 and 3, 2009
10 AM - 4 PM
IT'S FREE



WHAT'S HAPPENING

- Knappers chipping points
- Hands-on activities for all ages: Shooting bows and arrows, blowguns, tossing aflatsl
- Primitive Arrow Making Demos
- Native Pottery Making and Displays
- Soap Stone Bowls, Demos and Hands-on Activities
- Traps and Triggers for hunting and fishing
- FOG Presentation, the Flake Over Grind technique of paleo Eskimos
- Saturday Guest Speaker: Dan Coates and Jack Davis of Archeological Society of Northern Chesapeake. Talk: *Working with Soft Stone*
- Sunday morning Traditional Bow Shoot.



FOR AN AGENDA,
CALL 410-887-1815

ORNC COUNCIL SPEAKER SERIES

ANTARCTICA: THE WHITE CONTINENT
By Mike Burns

Monday, May 18, 2009, at 7:30 PM

Antarctica is often imagined as a barely explored wilderness of ice and mountains, surrounded by a frozen sea, buffeted by powerful winds and snowstorms, inhabited only by hardy penguins. Gigantic icebergs and underwater rocks can, and still do, sink large ships. But within this remote ethereal realm, far away from crowded tourist routes, await unparalleled memories of a lifetime in wondrous topography, exciting wildlife, dramatic weather, and the awesome power of nature. Learn about the wonders and secrets of this little-known Seventh Continent from a recent traveler aboard a National Geographic expedition icebreaker.

Mike Burns was the first environmental beat reporter for the Baltimore Sun and spent 35 years with the newspaper as a reporter, editor, columnist, and foreign correspondent. He has done environmental fieldwork



on fellowships from the Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, and the Institute of Arctic Biology. He has traveled and worked inside the Arctic Circle in various countries but this was his first trip to the Antarctic. He has done graduate studies at Stanford University and the University of the Republic (Uruguay).



Lou Witt loves cookin' sausages



(Back right, clockwise) Keith Porter sits next to big brother Ben and Ridge Runners Abby Cahalan, Kayla Elson, Jon Christiana, and Jackie Devine.



Walter Massey has competition!

OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE THE BEST!

- | | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Dean Adle | Millie Dreier | Bobbie Kottler | Dean Merritt | Joe Salvaggio |
| Matt Bell | Kayla Elson | Pat Krasowski | Bradley Moore | Eric Schachtner |
| Kim Borofka | Hannah Fowler | Bill LaBarre | Ruth Moore | Mary Scott |
| Christian Bruchman | Mary Genovese | Holly LaBarre | Mary Morris | Martin Schugam |
| Emily Buonsignore | Susan Genovese | Melissa Lamborn | GINNA Naylor | Paula Schugam |
| Becky Burger | Theresa Genovese | Sue Leslie | Cindy Necaise | Mary Jane Shanks |
| Mike Burns | Mark Gingrich | Austin Luera | Ellen Obenshain | Becky Stein |
| Abby Cahalan | Diane Gleason | Beth Patterson | Christopher O'Brien | Scout Stein |
| Ann Canoles | Martha Harris | Bobby Martin | Kevin O'Neill | John Stetka |
| John Canoles | Christine Hart | Walter Massey | Katharine Patterson | Carolyn Thim |
| Noot Canoles | Donald Hart | Sandra McCann | Ben Poscover | Dick Thim |
| Jon Christiana | Lisa Hopkins | Brody McAllister | Ruth Poscover | Gina Thropp |
| Jim Clyburn | Kathy Hubberman | Kathy McAllister | Jim Potter | Paul Waldman |
| Nancy Clyburn | Kim Jones | Ryan McAllister | David Power | Vlad Ward |
| Debbie Cole | Nancy Jones | Erin McCleary | Kathy Power | Cas Warfield |
| Jeanne Cole | Tommy Jones | Angie McDaniel | Sue Reif | Joe Warfield |
| Jim Curtis | Jeff Kaplan | Katie McDaniel | Katrina Restivo | Maxwell Weber |
| Jocelyn Curtis | JoAnn Kent | Sammie McDaniel | John Rigley | Lou Witt |
| Jackie Devine | Ann Kerns | Steve McDaniel | Polly Roberts | June Woodward |
| Frank Dickison | Jack Kerns | Bob Meier | Scott Roberts | ORNC Staff |
| Bill Diegel | Jerry Kirkwood | Gayl Meier | Pam Rogers | Lodge Staff |



(l to r), Paul Waldman and Joe Salvaggio mix it up



Mary Jane Shanks signs up new members



Millie Dreier is as pretty as a pansy

PANCAKE BREAKFAST 2009 SIZZLED



IT WAS A HOT TIME!

Unseasonably summer-like temperatures enticed 1500 breakfasters to our Annual Pancake Breakfast to feast on pancakes, drizzled with real maple syrup, and sausage, sizzling and juicy. David Power's publicity blitz helped, too. That you, Dave, and thank you, Mother Nature. We made a nice profit of almost \$7500!

The weekend was perfect except for a small problem on Saturday. People were so anxious to throw off their winter coats and enjoy a warm, sunny morning that we were swamped during the opening hours. A little sleuthing also uncovered a small glitch that held up the breakfast line, and once corrected, the line moved quickly. So, if you were one of the folks who had to wait, or arrived and were deterred by the long row stretching out the door to the parking lot, we apologize. We will do better next year.

Those who left before eating missed a lot of fun. The Lodge teamed with activity. Thanks to Jeanne Cole, over 110 volunteers proficiently went about their assigned tasks, from washing dishes and cleaning tables to cooking the sausage that Ginna Naylor obtained from Cambridge Yacht Club. The balmy morning made life easier for this year's sausage cookers — Bill Diegel (Top left), Bob Meier, Kevin O'Neill, Dick Thim, Joe Warfield, and Lou Witt — and for Noot Canoles, who made numerous grocery runs to Sam's Club when we ran out of items from Cas Warfield's comprehensive shopping list.

Bill LaBarre's cooking crew, donned in stylish hairnets and aprons, busily flipped an estimated 6000 scrumptious pancakes, while Walter Massey, our quick-witted Master of Ceremonies, enlivened the festivities with a myriad of announcements and \$.25 raffles. Big raffles included an egg tempura painting of



wolves titled "Companions" by artist Tim Donovan and a Walter Massey photograph of Oregon Ridge's Archaeology buildings titled "The Old Homestead." John Canoles' Box Raffles netted \$1835, thanks to generous donations from Butler Store and Liquors, Cranbrook Liquors, Valley Motors, Brooks Huff Tire and Auto Center, Boordy Vineyards, REI in Timonium, Earth Treks, Ladew Topiary Gardens, Wild Bird Center, Outback Steakhouse, Oregon Ridge Gift Shop, Oregon Ridge Beach, Greetings and Readings, and Eco-Science Professional, Inc. Also included in the 14 assorted box raffles was a matching necklace and earrings handmade by artisan Courtney Peed, a flint dagger and Obsidian knife with sheaths handcrafted by knapper Kirk Dreier, an Apple Ipad donated by Polly and Scott Roberts, and a generous wine basket assembled and contributed to by Ginna Naylor.

After consuming their fill of pancakes, diners moseyed around visiting friends, enjoying the sounds of Bryan Burn's flute, The Dulcimer Band featuring Ben Poscover, Courtney Peed, and Griff Atkinson, and the Oregon Ridge Band with Kirk and Winnie Dreier, Christopher James and Courtney. There were plenty of shopping opportunities — maple syrup and candy, primroses and pansies from Radebaughs, and items from our own gift shop that is managed by Anne and Noot Canoles. Eagle Scout hopeful, Keith Porter, also sold tickets to a Spaghetti Dinner, a fundraiser for materials to build a large enclosure to improve the lives of Oregon Ridge Nature Center's turkeys and chickens.

Everyone had a hot time at this year's Pancake Breakfast, a wonderful way to end a successful Maple Syrup Season.

Thank you, one and all!

JUST BECAUSE IT'S JUNE, IT'S OUR ANNUAL PICNIC!

On June 15th, at 6 PM, members and friends will gather at Oregon Ridge Lake for our annual picnic. They'll take an early evening swim or a woodland stroll, welcome twilight while paddling a canoe, zone out on the beach, and when it is good and dark they'll sing campfire songs and roast marshmallows over hot coals for tasty s'mores.

If you want to join in, just pack your picnic basket with hamburgers or chicken or whatever you want to grill, some salad, a bottle of your favorite beverage, and meet us at the Lake. The grills will be all set with hot coals. It is FREE, so bring your family and friends.

We will see you there.



OREGON GRILLE STATUS: Cause for Concern Continues

The "We Won!" article featured in our Nov/Dec 2008 *Trailblazer* exuberantly announced that with your help the campaign to protect Oregon Ridge Nature Center and Park from commercial encroachment by the Oregon Grille Restaurant ended with the defeat of the Grille's attempt to change its zoning from watershed protection and resource preservation to business local/small scale commercial. However, a notice appearing in the November 2008 issue of the *Jeffersonian* may indicate that we should not yet drop our guard.

The notice concerned aspects of a new lease between the County and the Grille tenant and stated that the County was leasing approximately ten acres to the Grille tenant, an increase of seven acres over the original lease. The notice also stated that the tenant plans to continue to operate the restaurant and "complete improvements to an on-site private sewage drainage system."

Considering the notice a possible red flag, the Oregon Ridge Nature Center Council enacted a fact-finding initiative to obtain the proposed new lease and gather any other information that

would help in our goal to safeguard the Oregon Ridge Nature Center and Park from increased commercial infringement. We contacted the Valleys Planning Council, Baltimore County Recreation and Parks, the County Executive's Office, the County Law Department, the Falls Road Community Association, and the attorney who is suing the Grille and County government on behalf of the Falls Road Community Association and two specific community members. The purpose of the suit is to "compel Oregon and the County to comply with their plain and unambiguous obligations under the law and under their contract."

Fortunately, for reasons unknown, the Grille did not sign the new lease. No further action is being taken on the lease, pending the outcome of the suit against the Grille and County. The results of the suit would be considered in any revision of the lease. However, at this writing no court hearing has been scheduled for the suit.

Based on our research and a comparison of the proposed new lease with the original lease, the Council has the following concerns:

1. In a section entitled "Recitals", the proposed new lease specifies that the lease will supersede all previous agreements and understandings whether written or oral. Will the new lease incorporate the specifics that exist in the original lease, restricting the Grille from certain activities that would adversely affect the Oregon Ridge Nature Center and its activities within the park? These restrictions include many activities that could increase noise pollution, traffic and parking congestion, disruptive lighting, increased water pollution, increased thermal pollution of trout streams, reduction of wildlife habitat, and any structural additions or activities that would set a precedent increasing the likelihood of zoning changes in the future.
2. Will the seven additional acres for the accommodation of the expanded sewage system compromise the safety of the stream and the swimming lake?
3. Will the Grille be restricted from using the additional acreage for weddings and other activities that were prevented by the recent zoning decision and that violate the restrictions set forth in the original lease?
4. Will the County be inclusive of input from ORNCC before a new lease is offered and put into effect?

Given the Grille's past efforts to expand its activities, we will be diligent in monitoring this situation to protect the interests of the Oregon Ridge Nature Center and Park, keeping our members informed of any further developments.

Background information concerning this rezoning issue is available in the April/May/June and November/December 2008 issues of the *Trailblazer* and can be found under "Newsletters" on our web site, www.oregonridge.org.

VISIT THE ORNCC WEB SITE

The Oregon Ridge Nature Center Council operates and maintains an elaborate web site at www.oregonridge.org. You will find a large collection of information about the Park and the Nature Center at this site. We have everything from our calendar of events to colorful photographs of the Park.

You can download and print our current newsletter as well as past issues, membership applications, trail maps, scholarship applications and our calendar. We have descriptions of all of our annual events, information about volunteering and



employment, listings of our school programs, details of our speaker series, and information about the Council.

We also have a link to our Naturalist's blog as well as links to other nature centers and environmental groups. The web site is updated frequently, so check it often!

Jim Curtis, Web Site Coordinator

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Articles for the Sept/Oct/Nov issue are due July 14.

THE GYPSY MOTH THREAT REMAINS

By ORNCC President Jack Kerns

It has been said that history repeats itself when people neglect to learn from it. In 2006, a gypsy moth infestation at Oregon Ridge was followed by a drought. A complete failure to respond with appropriate action resulted in a loss of 17 to 18 acres of prime forest, predominantly ninety-year old oaks. This was a tragedy. After the clear-cut removal of the dead oaks, the affected land appeared devastated. Recent plantings of oak saplings and future plantings of chestnut will help reforest the area – in seventy-five to eighty years!

Early this year we learned that the gypsy moth has returned. Today gypsy moth egg masses have heavily infested 300 acres of our forest, and the State is now suffering a six-month drought. If we lose this area of prime oak forest, it will not be a tragedy; it will be a disaster.

In March we mailed our members an announcement about the persistent gypsy moth threat and urged them to write letters to the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Agriculture, asking for his assurance that Block BA003 in Oregon Ridge Park would be sprayed this spring. It is important that the application to control these pests be done by early spring when the egg masses are hatching. Trees defoliated by these pests can experience stunted growth, especially when stressed by other factors such as drought. Stunted growth weakens the tree, making them more susceptible to disease organisms, fungus, and other insects.

In upcoming issues, we hope to report that our voices were heard, that the spraying was carried out, and that the gypsy moth infestation has been successfully stopped for now.



Close-up View

Masses on tree trunk

Gypsy Moth laying a mass

LIGHTS OUT BALTIMORE!

By Joan Cwi and Wendy Olsson

An American Woodcock sat quiet and still in the middle of the sidewalk next to the Mechanic Theatre as Wendy arrived at work. At lunchtime, the bird was still there. This was Wendy's first experience with a bird colliding into a man-made structure in downtown Baltimore, but not the last. She took the bird to a wildlife rehabilitator. After medication and convalescing, the bird was feisty and ready for release. Sadly, this is not the case for most migrating birds that encounter man-made structures. Most die and get swept up and thrown in the trash, eaten by predators, or go unnoticed—unless they are in Chicago, Toronto, New York—and now Baltimore—where programs have been established to reduce bird collision hazards, rescue injured migratory birds, and collect data on bird collisions.

Modern glass architecture and lighting, while appealing to humans, is deadly to birds. By night, urban lights pull migrating birds off track, causing them to flutter about the light until they drop from exhaustion or strike the structure. By night or day, birds don't see transparent and reflective glass as a barrier to be avoided. When it reflects their natural habitat or appears as an unobstructed flyway, birds will fly toward it, often with fatal consequences. The problem seems to be worse in cities located near major waterways.

After years of observing this phenomenon, Wendy had enough. Last fall she persuaded the Baltimore Bird Club (BBC) to join several other cities in initiating a *Lights Out!* program. This program is designed to understand the magnitude of the problem in Baltimore, then to engage the City of Baltimore and Baltimore building managers to take action to improve the situation. We also plan on engaging architects and other conservation and environmental organizations to help our effort.

The first step is to have buildings reduce the amount of nighttime light they use. Then we plan to educate them about measures that can be taken to reduce strikes in the worst strike zones. More long-term, we will work with architects and environmentalists to have new buildings built with sensitivity to this issue. A building can't be green if it kills birds!

This fall, our dedicated BBC volunteers spent their early mornings (5:30 to 7:00 AM) from mid August through October surveying buildings in a two-mile loop near the Inner Harbor. During these ten weeks, we found 89 dead and 20 injured birds. Birds with mild injuries were released later in the morning at Patterson Park after a bit of quiet time to recover

from their concussions. Birds in need of additional medical care were taken to a wildlife rehabilitator for additional care. The rehabilitator also trained our team on how to handle injured birds.

Injured and dead species included:

- 1 Clapper Rail (only the 6th on record in Baltimore)
- 27 warblers including Ovenbirds, Black-and-white, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, and Chestnut-sided
- 28 sparrows including Song, Lincoln's, Swamp, and White-throated
- 6 thrushes including Wood, Hermit and Swainson's
- 47 other birds including Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Northern Flicker, Gray Catbird, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Woodcock, Red-headed Woodpecker, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, and Cooper's Hawk



Clapper Rail, collision damage

This fall our volunteers also developed a *Lights Out Baltimore!* logo, a brochure describing the issue, an accompanying Bird Guide illustrating the found birds, and a draft web site. We are now beginning our outreach to relevant parties to make them aware of the problem and hopefully encourage them to take action. And beginning mid-March, we will start our early morning watch again for ten weeks during spring migration!

If you care to join us or want more information, contact Wendy Olsson: rwolsson@verizon.net

Web sites of interest:

<http://www.flap.org/>,

<http://blog.audubon.org/cs/blogs/birdscabirdsafe-building-design.aspx/archive/20>

