

New Year, New Events

To kick off the brand-new year, MOC organizers came up with some brand-new events.

Touch Football Game

Organizer: Joanne Milne

Joanne had everything well-planned, as she noted in her write up, entitled "Steps for a successful football game: Select a suitable location. Bring everyone to the field on a Sunday morning in January when it is crisp, clear, and cool. Upon arrival at the field mark the boundaries and select the two teams. Have players put on appropriate shirts for their team. Place players on the field two-feet apart. Mix vigorously for 1.5 to 2 hours. (You know it is done if players begin to leave to watch professional football games.) Top off the game with a visit to a nearby restaurant that serves warm food and cold brew." Editor's note: the "visit" to the restaurant lasted as long as 5 hours for some participants. Truly a successful event.

Canaan Valley Ski/Snowshoe Trip

Organizer: Jesse Allen

On the other hand, sometimes having everything planned to a "t" isn't necessary, as Jesse writes, "In the beginning, all was null and void and without

form." The MLK Holiday weekend trip turned out just fine, however, thanks in no small part to fine cooking by several of the crew. The first day was cross country skiing, with some of the group taking lessons, and the rest setting off on their own, "rather than demonstrate that we should have been in the class, too." After a cozy evening playing games in the cabin, the next day's rain threatened to put a damper on the day, but MOCers don't often quit, though some opted for an afternoon in. Another internationally-themed dinner preceded a stroll around the area for some. Monday was snowshoeing for those still inclined (or willing to brave even more sore muscles) before the trip home. Already, two more weekends of this popular outing are in the works!

Trip to New Air and Space Museum

Organizers: Colin Babb, Brian Loughery

This Smithsonian extension opened in December near Dulles Airport and was a natural interest of a historian and aerospace engineer. Brian turned out to be a popular tour guide, in fact, attracting visitors that weren't part of the MOC group with his knowledge. The Concorde and Space Shuttle Enterprise were big draws for the group; the flight simulator could have been skipped, however.

News You Can Use

A Huge "Thank You" to Organizers

In 2002 and 2003, the MOC had an amazing number of organizers, whom we'd like to take this opportunity to thank. Without volunteer organizers, the events the MOC hosts would never happen! Please remember to take a few minutes at the end of your event to thank your organizer for his or her time and effort.

The MOC thanks the following 29 organizers from 2002 and 2003, who together led nearly 70 events:

Amy Pickwick (who by far led the most events at over 35!), Scott Clark, Mark Zawodny, Skip Daly, Bill Evans, Young Kim, Sarah Davis, Michael Eppert, KC Yi, Robert Odessey, Joanne Milne, Chanath Ather, J.R. Withers, Wendy Wickham, Jesse Allen, Chris Whalen, Donna McLaren, Kat McColl, Walter Preissler, Brian Loughery, Ryan Meadows, Aaron Firoved, Keira Wickliffe, Rebecca Schubert, Colin Babb, Katie Stofer, Jeff Schneider, Kim Emmick, Michele Jones

New Organizer Area and Clinics

For all of you interested in becoming organizers, but not sure where to start, the MOC has some expanded resources for you. First of all, a more detailed Organizer Area of the website debuted last month. You can find it in the sidebar of the Member Area, and it lists the step-by-step process for organizing, plus some ideas for events and other organizer resources. Secondly, the club held its first Organizer's Clinic, a chance for people to get together and ask questions of veteran organizers and suggest new events. The evening was very successful and we'll hold more soon.

Your Name in Print . . .

One of the easiest ways to get involved with the club is to submit some of your photos or a writeup from an event. Many times, the organizer couldn't get to all that was happening, so important (or humorous) parts of an event may not be included in the organizer write up. Please feel free to submit your version of the event via the online Member Area so that we can thoroughly cover all that went on.

Another way you can see your name in print is to submit content for this newsletter. **We are actively seeking one-time or regular guest columnists** for contributions, or simply great ideas of what you'd like to see here. E-mail explorer@marylandoutdoorclub.org



MOC members literally make a new friend on the Canaan Valley Ski/Snowshoe Trip (left). "Professor Brian" shares his knowledge with MOC members and other visitors to the new Air and Space Museum (right.)

February Events

Sun., Feb. 15 @ 11 AM
Difficult Hike
Harper's Ferry, WV

Sun., Feb. 15 @ 7:30 PM
Dinner and a Movie - "Rear Window"
Chevy Chase/Washington, DC

Sat., Feb. 21 @ 10 AM
Moderate AT Hike, Annapolis Rock
Myersville, MD

Sat., Feb. 21 @ 11 AM
Downhill Skiing Day and Party
Liberty Ski Resort, PA

Sun., Feb. 22 @ 11:45 AM
Pet Rescue/Cinema Draffhouse Day
Sterling, VA

Wed., Feb. 25 @ 7:30 PM
Dinner and a Movie - "The Birds"
Chevy Chase/Washington, DC

Fri., Feb. 27 @ 7 PM
Free Happy Hour
Baltimore, MD

Fri., Feb. 27 @ 8 PM
Food, Fun, and Games
Westminster, MD

Fri. - Sun., Feb. 27 - 29
Ski/Snowshoe Weekend Trip II
Canaan Valley, WV

Sat., Feb. 28 @ 11 AM
Day Trip to Luray Caverns
Luray, VA

Sun., Feb. 29 @ 9 AM
Difficult AT Hike - Weverton Cliffs
Burkittsville, MD

For more info on upcoming events,
visit the "Events" tab on our web site.

Organize an Event

It's simple, fun to do, and gives you great leadership experience that you can use on your resume. If it sounds like something for you, please let us know.

events@marylandoutdoorclub.org

MOC Monthly Explorer + 2

Tip of the Month

Stick or Be Stuck? Pros and Cons of Hiking Sticks

adapted from www.goodadventure.com

Yes, sometimes when you are walking along on flat ground, they seem useless. But with today's collapsible poles, you can simply stick them in your pack. Not that you need to buy anything special - an old ski pole works just fine. And airlines let you carry them on. You could just pick up something on the trail, but these are usually heavier and less than optimal.

The primary reason to carry a hiking stick is because using one will reduce the stress on your knees by 25% when you're going downhill. Using two reduces stress by 40%. Even women who never have knee problems sometimes start feeling twinges when they go downhill with a pack on their back. The bigger the step down, the more you'll appreciate how much a hiking stick helps.

Of course, using a hiking stick when you're stepping up or going up hill is helpful too. Sometimes it gives you that little boost you need, especially at the end of a long day or when your pack is heavy. But the real revelation is how many other uses there are than simply using them for hiking.

- Improves your balance when crossing a stream.

-Allows you to wet your bandanna without taking your pack off or bending too far over.

-Great as a hat rack. Or a good place to dry your clothes after you've washed them.

-Gives you a third leg for crossing slippery snowfields.

-Supports your pack when you're taking a break, so everything stays upright. If you do it right, you can then use your pack as a backrest.

-Assists you in picking up trash and helping keep the wilderness litter-free.

-Assists you with setting up a tight tarp.

Last, but not least, they're great fun for playing with, especially on chilly mornings when you want to warm up before putting your pack on.

MOC Member Spotlight



Jesse Allen
Event Organizer

Member Since:
June 9, 2003

Primary Involvement with MOC:

I tried to call Jesse a "Veteran Organizer and Participant," but he said, "Veteran?!?!? I've only done three events, and only one of any complexity!" Ever humble, Jesse nonetheless gets fabulous reviews from his event participants.

Favorite MOC Activities: Backpacking and Day Hikes, Cross Country Skiing

Currently Resides in: Odenton, MD

Originally From: Melbourne, Australia

Favorite TV show/book/movie/music:

Xena: Warrior Princess, about which he writes, "I'm an adult now: I don't have to justify my taste to anyone"; Bill Bryson's travel books, Gore Vidal's historical fiction, Sky & Telescope, National Geographic, etc.

Favorite local "getaways":

Sailing on the Chesapeake Bay, Shenandoah National Park, Canaan Valley, the Lebanese Taverna in Adams Morgan, The Helmand in Baltimore, the Madrid Cafe in Fells Point.

Best part about organizing for MOC:

"Getting to do the things I love in the outdoors with good company, instead of just heading out and doing them on my own."

Next Month's Spotlight

Who would you like to see highlighted next month? Perhaps an organizer who did a fantastic event, or someone who always makes new members feel welcome? Submit your suggestions to explorer@marylandoutdoorclub.org

February 2004

This Month in History

February is Black History Month.
February 8, 1910 Boy Scouts founded.
February 9, 1870 Congress creates the United States Weather Service.
February 18, 1885 Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huck Finn* is published.
February 29, 1872 Yellowstone becomes the first National Park.

Sweets for the Sweet

Hallmark Holiday or not, many people still buy something for friends, family, or that "special someone" on February 14. But how many of us actually want any more chocolate or candy to spoil those New Year's Resolutions? This year, why not consider giving a gift that will not only avoid the chocolate dilemma but will also benefit your favorite local outdoor club (yes, that would be the MOC)? Check out our web site for raffle tickets or MOC logo wear that not only looks cool and gives us free advertising, but delivers a small bit of money in our pockets so we can continue to provide cheap equipment rental for members, discount coupons, a fabulous web site, and all-around high-quality, free membership!

Monthly Statistics

As of February 1st

1305- Total Members To Date
92 - January New Members
60% - Female Members
40% - Male Members
32 - Average Member Age

Member Bulletin Board

The MOC does not maintain a bulletin board on its website because it's frankly too hard to monitor. So this month, we're introducing a new free feature of the newsletter, Member Classifieds. Use this area to hook up a team for a marathon or other race, get a group together for another special event that wouldn't necessarily be an MOC outing.

Group Forming for 2004 Marathon Training

Interested in running the New York City or Baltimore Marathons this year? Get started training early! We know several of you mentioned you were interested in running the full Baltimore Marathon after watching some of our members complete the Team Relay this past October. Contact member Lizette Ayala, in Montgomery County, for more information on this training group.

Backpackers Wanted

Got backpack? Emilio Ungerfeld, Prince George's County resident, is looking for backpackers for small group trips on (relatively) short notice during any season. Contact him for details.

Log on to the Member Network on the Member Area of the web site to contact these members.

Got a "Member Classified"? Email explorer@marylandoutdoorclub.org

Ads & Classifieds

Advertise in the Monthly Explorer
Does your business want to advertise in the Monthly Explorer? Reach hundreds of potential customers each month with a free ad - in exchange for bartered items/goods. Contact us for details.

explorer@marylandoutdoorclub.org

Place a Monthly Explorer Classified
Classifieds can only be placed by MOC members. With classified space you can sell single item goods (depreciated merchandise) or place notices. Classifieds are \$5.00 per 25 words or less. The MOC has the right to refuse or edit any classified. Send your classified, and amount due to Maryland Outdoor Club, ATTN: Monthly Explorer Publication, P.O. Box 854, College Park, MD 20741.

Deadline: the 15th of each month for the following month's issue.

Check it Out!

Our first member coupon is available online in the Member Area. Community Relations Coordinator Joanne Milne is looking for ideas for businesses and restaurants to provide coupons and discounts to members. If you've got a suggestion of a place MOC members frequent on events, please email Joanne: coupons@marylandoutdoorclub.org

Get the Monthly Explorer Delivered

The MOC hands out a limited number of Monthly Explorer publications at our monthly Social Hour events, as well as posts an electronic copy to our web site. However, if you prefer to receive our publication by mail, please fill out the following form, cut it out, and return it to Maryland Outdoor Club, ATTN: Monthly Explorer Publication, P.O. Box 854, College Park, MD 20741 with \$6.00 (Payable to "Maryland Outdoor Club") to cover S&H for a year.

Name: _____
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P.O. Box 854, College Park, MD 20741

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Join the MOC

The Maryland Outdoor Club conducts all administrative tasks through our web site to cut down on processing time & costs. If you are interested in signing up for membership, you need to go to marylandoutdoorclub.org and click on any of the "Join Now" buttons you'll find throughout the site. Signing up is a relatively short process and will save you time later on when you sign up for events and don't need to re-enter all of your information.

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

MEMBERSHIP IS FREE!!!

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.

Contact Newsletter Editor

Watch this space... for upcoming information about changes to the newsletter. What do you want to see here? Have an idea or an article for the Monthly Explorer? Send it my way. Got a gripe? a gaffe? Those are fair game, too.

Don't forget to keep checking the web site. New events can be posted any day, as well as other area happenings and important club news. Look for surveys there, too.

-Katie Stofer
explorer@marylandoutdoorclub.org