

Oregon Ridge Nature Center Council
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TRAILBLAZER

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2013



Supporting Oregon Ridge Park
and Nature Center for 31 years



THE BUZZ IS . . .

HONEY DAYS ARE BACK, TOO!

Honey Harvest Festival 2013
October 5 and 6 , 11 AM to 4 PM

Our Honeybee returns, sporting a smile this year, thanks to all things temporary becoming permanent. Along with our interim Director becoming our official Director, last year's temporary Honey Harvest date is now back to its traditional first weekend in October.

Join the Central Maryland Beekeepers, the ORNC staff, and the Council volunteers for a good time learning about bees, beekeeping, and honey. Honey Princess 2013, 19-year-old Emily Campbell from Aitkin, MN, will give hive demos and talk about the importance of honeybees, the versatility of honey, and the diverse demographics of beekeeping. Enjoy demonstrations by a wool spinner, blacksmith, and Civil War Re-enactors. There will be music, food and fresh pressed cider, lots of gift items to take home, face painting, puppet shows, crafts, a petting zoo, and wares from interesting vendors.

Attending the Honey Harvest Festival has become a family tradition for many. Why not start a new tradition with your family this year! *MJS*

WINNY TAN CONFIRMED AS DIRECTOR/NATURALIST

Exactly one year ago, the front page of the *Trailblazer* featured our Honeybee, wearing a slightly worried expression and pulling along a sign that said, "The Times They Are A'Changin'!" As it turned out, the sign was a bit more prophetic than expected! This was a year of the good, the bad and the ugly, depending on one's perspective. Interim Director Winny Tan faced unexpected staff changes, some unique public incidents in the park, the loss of some friends and lovable critters, tensions between council and county, even a bout of appendicitis and a series of rabies shots — all of which ended for the best, but required careful steering. By stepping up and navigating through what can be only nicely described as a *very* challenging year, Winny earned a promotion to the position of Director/Naturalist for the Oregon Ridge Nature Center. Following in the path of Bob Stanhope, Kirk Dreier, and Courtney Peed, Winny Tan begins her journey more seasoned and ready to take the helm.

Luckily, *good* prevailed over bad and ugly. Winny has a long list of achievements this year. When asked of what she

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RENEW NOW! OREGON RIDGE NATURE CENTER COUNCIL



LOW, YEARLY DUES:

- Individual \$15
- Family \$20
- Seniors/Students \$12
- Lifetime \$150

MEMBERS RECEIVE:

- Bimonthly newsletter
- Member discounts on all programs
- Priority mailing of seasonal calendar
- First option for camp registration
- 10% off Gift Shop purchases \$30+
- "Members Only" events

Full Name _____

Address _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Checks to ORNC Council, 13555 Beaver Dam Road, Cockeysville, Maryland 21030
410 887-1815 info@oregonridgenaturecenter.org www.oregonridgenaturecenter.org

ORNC COUNCIL SPEAKER SERIES

FREEBIRD

Photographer Middleton Evans
September 16, 7:30 PM

Over the past 15 years, Maryland photographer Middleton Evans has made more than 50 trips to premier wildlife sanctuaries across North America, in search of amazing encounters with a great array of waterbirds in pristine habitats. During this narrated slide show, Middleton will share favorite images from his most compelling trips, detailing the trials and tribulations of wildlife photography. Highlights include nesting Reddish Egrets and Roseate Spoonbills on the Texas Coast, wintering Bald Eagles in Homer, Alaska, a tropical seabird paradise off Mexico's Pacific Coast, and the stunning King Eider duck on the high Canadian Arctic. Maryland images will be included, especially from Patterson Park, Baltimore's waterbird hot spot. Middleton will also have a book signing for *Rhapsody in Blue*, his latest coffee table book of bird photography.

Middleton began his professional career within a week of graduating from Duke University. Returning to Baltimore



with a degree in economics, but no defined career path, he put his imagination to work. A life-long passion for photography, ignited by a semester abroad in London, was parlayed into a two-year photographic odyssey through Maryland, with hopes of being published. In 1988 a family business was launched to realize that dream, and *Maryland in Focus* was released to celebrate the compelling subjects encountered along his travels. Over the years, Middleton has published 6 books, as well as bird brochures and calendars. He still loves to explore and photograph nature in his hometown of Baltimore,

especially his favorite locale — Patterson Park. To read more about Middleton Evans, go to: www.ravenwoodpress.com.

MJS

PRICELESS PONDS FOR THREE SEASONS

Professor H. Eugene Wingert
October 21, 7:30 PM

Vernal ponds are a crucial component of our natural legacy, providing habitat for a distinctive set of species adapted to seasonal wet and dry periods such as wood frogs, spotted and mole salamanders, spring peepers, and the delicate fairy shrimp (photo). Gene Wingert, Environmental Science/Biology Professor at Dickinson College, will give a presentation on the critical need to preserve vernal ponds because of the important role they play in our ecosystem.



known as seasonal or ephemeral pools, are isolated waterbodies that fill in spring from rain and melting snow, and then dry out in summer's heat. Though they may appear to be an eyesore to some, in reality they provide a critical habitat for breeding amphibians, producing the greatest vertebrate biomass in the forest. They are widely recognized by environmentalists and ecologists for their unique role in the landscape, their valued wetland function, and their contribution to the propagation of plants and animals of special concern.

Professor Wingert is a longtime expert in Northeast flora and fauna, as well as science education, and teaches in several Dickinson departments, including biology, environmental studies and education. He is a contributing faculty member to Dickinson's Center for Sustainability Education's Valley and Ridge Study Group, which helps professors from all divisions incorporate sustainability elements into their curricula. The focus of this group is decidedly local. "Biology has to be down home," Wingert says. "You have to learn how to appreciate your own backyard before you can appreciate anyone else's." MJS

Vernal (meaning *of, in or appropriate to spring*) ponds, also

TWO WILD AND CRAZY RIDGIES Bella Possidente and Zoe Applebee

Bella and Zoe aren't really crazy, but they are wild about animals. That's why they are two of our best Ridge Runners. Ridge Runners are a group of teens between the ages of 13 and 18, who volunteer weekly to care for our animals, educate visitors to the Center, and help with special events. This special group of young adults is necessary to the successful operations at Oregon Ridge. Our animals depend on them.



Bella Possidente (left) loves taking care of all of the animals. Her favorite job is feeding the snakes. She especially likes the young corn snake and enjoys playing with it when she is on duty. Bella is home-schooled, is becoming accomplished at the piano, draws, and enjoys her cats Smoochie, Noel, and Tiger. She also has a fish named Erika. Bella says the best thing about being a Ridge Runner is that "you get to pretty much play with certain animals for the whole time, IF you finish your jobs." If others want to become a Ridge Runner, she would say that it's really fun since you get to talk to people and learn about animals.

Zoe Applebee (right) wanted to become a Ridge Runner to help pursue her dream of becoming a zoologist. Her favorite job is feeding the animals because she likes to see how they react to food. This way she learns what they like and how to feed them better in the future. She remembers a moment when she was thawing out mice and one of the frozen mouse's head fell off. She knows that is all part of working at the nature center. The corn snake is her favorite animal because it is beautiful and very sweet. Zoe is also home-schooled, likes to sing and play guitar, watch Animal Planet and Anime, play video games, and hang out with friends. She wants to encourage others to become Ridge Runners and pursue their dreams.

You can be a Ridge Runner, too. Call Winny at the Nature Center if you want to join these *wild and crazy* nature lovers.

CHORUS LESSONS

If waking up to the sound of the dawn chorus,
I leap from my bed and rush downstairs to the deck

And watching hushed and exuberant listen
To the Carolina Wren teaching her newest batch
The rudiments of singing the song they will be repeating
For the rest of their lives, *teakettle, teakettle, teakettle*
They refuse; they like better *tea, tea, tea*

And if the Towhee is off in the woods teaching her latest
Batch their song, *drink your tea*
They refuse; they like better *your tea*

And the Robins are skating like Russian dancers
On the sidewalk this sunny spring morning

And if I happen upon a gaggle of pink plastic Flamingos
Dancing in a circle, dipping and bowing to each other

I am reminded of Henry David Thoreau remarking
That he never knew how much was going on
In Heywood's meadow.

Edith Maynard
(Past ORNCC President)



MUSIC IN THE WOODS 2013

MAY SHOWERS COULD NOT DAMPEN LYRICAL SPIRITS

Music in the Woods moved indoors last May due to forecasted thunderstorms. The music was still amazing with performances by 15 musical groups/solos ranging from folk and classic rock to Native American flute music. Merry-Go-Round rented out a variety of instruments to the Nature Center, so visitors were able to try them out at the musical petting zoo. Green and Sticky brought a range of native plants for sale, and Master Gardener/Naturalist Leigh Cochrane answered any questions that came her way. The scattered rain showers throughout the day didn't stop groups of musicians

from having impromptu jam sessions outside the nature center. Music lovers of all ages enjoyed a good day before the big rainstorm chased everyone home at the end of the festival! Good timing! *MJS*



(l to r) Pat Krasowski, Ann Kerns, Joe Salvaggio, Jack Kerns, John Bainbridge and Carol Mantegna mug for the camera at Music in the Woods

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Gary Anderson | Derrick Tan |
| John Bainbridge | Rachel Tuchman |
| Edward Bull | Pam Ward |
| Ann & Noot Canoles | Joe Warfield |
| Leigh Cochrane | Bob Willasch |
| Jim Curtis | |
| Marcia Dysart | <i>Vendors - Please read article</i> |
| Lynn Faulkner | <i>Performers and Bands:</i> |
| Gerogette Frederick | Wayne Bien |
| Pat Hundley | The Vagabond Rambler - Ken Seager |
| Ann & Jack Kerns | Jan Seiden |
| Pat Krasowski | Spice Kleinman |
| Shivani Madhu | Pat Hundley |
| Grace Meredith | Dave Thomas |
| Carol Mantegna | Giuliano Folk Duo - Mark and Jonah |
| Erin McCleary | Ken and Brad Kolodner with |
| Christina Panousos | Alex Lacquement, Claude Martin |
| Joe Salvaggio | Marlin and Leah |
| Cole Synder | The Mirandas - Rommel, Luna, Lance |

- Painted Trillium - Kristin, Rob and Susan Myer
- Will Play for Fish - Amy Hopkins, Lisa Roberts
- Tom Reedy, Randy Johnson, Dave Dilworth
- Oregon Ridge Nature Center Dulcimer Gathering - Griff and Cindy Atkinson, Shawn Dipple, Ellise Brahm, Bob Willasch, Merlin Williams, Carol and David Erhardt, Marlin Ballard, Sylvia Sackleh, and Winny Tan
- Back Porch Players - Dave and Carol Erhardt and Kim Shapiro
- New Southern Cowtippers - Sandy and Howard Hofferth, Heidi, Howard, Al and Fred



The Giuliano Folk Duo were a hit!



Ed Bull and Gabe Al-Najjar on dueling guitars.



Leah sang just the right notes.

UPCOMING SPEAKERS 2013-14

November 18, 2013
Cuba
Hugh Simmons
Nature Photographer
Active with National and Local Audubon

January 20, 2014
New Zealand in Two Weeks
Sue Leslie
Retired Teacher for BCPS

March 17, 2014
Save The Bees
Steve McDaniel
Photographer, Master Beekeeper

April 21, 2014
Native Plants
Stan Kollar
Professor Biology/Earth Science
Harford Community College

May 19, 2014
*Photographing Birds:
Blinds, Backgrounds, Flight & Migration*
Christine Shanks
Photographer
Assistant Professor Graphic Arts
Art Institute of Philadelphia

ALL PRESENTATIONS BEGIN AT 7:30 PM

Please contact Program Chair Sue Leslie if you wish to give a talk or have suggestions for an interesting speaker: 410 887-1815 or email info@oregonridgenaturecenter.org.

TRAIL GUIDES LEAD THE WAY

Trail Guide Training September 3 - 6, 10 AM - 1 PM

Hiking! Sharing! Exploring Nature! Trail Guides at ORNC enjoy these activities while leading children on hikes through fields, streams and the forest in search of birds, insects, snakes, frogs, flowers, trees, and all that inhabit the area. If you like volunteering outdoors, join our ranks. No prior experience is needed. Each day of training covers a different topic, including Habitats, Native Americans, and the Chesapeake Bay. Advance registration is requested, but isn't mandatory. The \$20 fee is fully refunded after you lead your first hike. *MJS*

WELCOME, BETSY KADOW!

ORNC'S NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

We are excited to have Elizabeth (Betsy) Kadow on staff as our new AA since late June. The AA role is important as the point of contact for most park visitors at the front desk or on the phone. Betsy has already organized many files and office supplies as well as updated our computers to efficiency in her short time here. She is working to improve our flyers, calendars and day-to-day structure. Working at a nature center is quick paced since we see and talk to hundreds of people each day and must handle multiple questions and phone calls. Betsy has kept up with the demands of staff, volunteers, and visitors with her friendly and patient demeanor and still looks for more work!



Betsy is a Baltimore County resident and graduate of Shephard University with a major in Environmental Science and a minor in Education. She had worked at Cromwell Valley Park for four years as a summer camp counselor and director, as well as a part-time naturalist during the year, where she most enjoyed introducing visitors to what the park has to offer and showing them what's in their own backyard. She recently worked at Kennedy Krieger educating kids with special needs from ages 14-21. In her spare time, she loves to hike, mountain bike, kayak, and ski. She loves educating and would like to pursue a Master's degree in Education and continue as an environmental educator in the future. *WT*

ORNCC ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

Jim Curtis, Council President

Another year has passed, and the Council is well and thriving. Membership numbers and donations are on an upward trend, and we successfully managed and operated our annual events and programs while completing several improvements at the Nature Center and Park. However, our progress did not come without several obstacles in our path.

In 2012 two vital staff members left Oregon Ridge: Director Courtney Peed and the Administrative Assistant (AA), Todd Thropp. Since the County did not fill these positions for nearly a year, the Council and interim Director Winny Tan put in extra time and effort to keep the Nature Center running. This summer the County finally named Winny Tan as the new Director and Betsy Kadow as the new AA.

The Council also said goodbye to our two BCPS Outdoor Science Education Teachers, Andi Musser and Pat Ghingher, both of whom retired in June. Andi has been teaching school children here for over twenty years and Pat for seven years. We hope they have happy and successful retirements and that Baltimore County promptly fills these open positions.

Another problem area has been our Web site. The site has been down a number of times and has become rather unreliable. To remedy the situation we created a new domain name and Web site at oregonridgenaturecenter.org. The old site, oregonridge.org, will remain open while the new site is under construction. Please visit the new site.

Lastly, a serious issue concerning the Park has recently arisen. A major pipeline construction project through the Park, proposed by Columbia Gas Transmission, LLC, is planned to begin in 2014. As currently planned, this project will destroy at least 11 acres of forest by widening the existing pipeline right-of-way another 75 feet. In response to this project, the Council listed several concerns in a letter sent to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and to the County. Our concerns include the loss of mature forestland, damage to our brook trout and yellow spotted salamander populations, pollution of the Lake, and loss of our hiking trails. Columbia Gas dismissed our letter by indicating the Council should have raised their concerns at the public meetings, and that Columbia has been consulting with the managing agency, Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks. However, since the Department of Recreation and Parks has



not advised the Council of their negotiations with Columbia Gas, we can only hope that the County is doing their best to reduce the impact of this project on the Park.

Despite the difficulties and concerns, we continue to move forward with our projects, programs and events. Below is a summary of last year's major activities and a glimpse into some of our future plans.

This year we sponsored a major, well-known speaker, Dr. Douglas Tallamy. We scheduled the event at the Lodge to accommodate the expected crowd. The event was quite a success with nearly 200 people attending.

We are particularly proud of our Scholarship Program. We awarded three scholarships totaling \$15,000 to high school seniors pursuing environmental studies. We should all applaud the scholarship committee and the generous donors to our scholarship fund.

We commissioned chain saw sculptor, Pat Hundley to create rustic log benches to be placed around the Park, some as replacements for older, damaged benches. Eight benches were constructed this summer. The community garden fence was also a new project. The Council provided funds for a professionally built deer fence that hopefully will keep the critters out of the garden.

Inside the Nature Center, we installed a new tree exhibit, and a bird exhibit should be finished by year's end. For the coming year, our Exhibit committee is busy planning to produce new trail maps, install outdoor map displays, and apply a mural in the animal room.

Our established major events were all successful: Honey Harvest Festival, Maple Sugar Weekends, Pancake Breakfast, Primitive Technology Weekend, Music in the Woods, Holiday Party, the Speakers Series, Summer Picnic, and Summer Day Camps. The Board voted to fund an additional County staff member to assist with summer camps. Also, last fall we purchased a new video projector for the auditorium. This high definition projector has been used in lectures and talks to display some terrific photos. As usual, much work was done to maintain our newsletters, the Web site, the Facebook page, the library and the gift shop. I want to thank the Executive Board members who made all of these events and projects successful.

Finally, I want to thank the Council members, volunteers and donors who make our activities at Oregon Ridge possible. We had many new groups and individuals volunteering at Oregon Ridge this past year, and I hope this trend will continue and expand into 2014.

LUCAS BROTHERS DONATE BIRTHDAY MONEY

Nine-year-old Graham Lucas and Liam, his seven-year-old brother, have come to Oregon Ridge's nature summer camps and programs for "many" years. They celebrated their birthdays in March and suggested to their parents that they wanted donations for the Nature Center instead of gifts for themselves this year. They requested their birthday guests to bring in birds seeds, substrate, aquatic filters, light bulbs and/or gift cards, all for the care of the animals at the center. Thank you, Graham and Liam, for your kind-hearted generosity! *WT*



MEMBERS!

Tippy Terrapin says,

Thanks for being a member!



Your support helped purchase the great new wooden benches at Oregon Ridge, which are featured in this issue of the *Trailblazer*. (P.S. Remember to check your label to make sure that your membership is current.)

CELEBRATE! CELEBRATE!

GUNPOWDER VALLEY CONSERVANCY'S 23rd ANNIVERSARY

Saturday, September 21, 5 - 8:30 PM
Oregon Ridge Nature Center

Help celebrate GVC's 23rd anniversary at Oregon Ridge Nature Center. Upon arriving, GVC volunteers will direct you to the appetizers and the beverage center where wine, beer and soft drinks will be available. Enjoy the sweet tunes of Tom Beers and his band while strolling around the Nature Center, and enjoy the amazing educational exhibits, including the tenant houses from the iron ore and marble mining era. Caterer David Babcock will serve delicious and flavorful offerings, followed by a scrumptious dessert provided by Prigel's Creamery from Glen Arm, Maryland.

GVC's annual "Heroes on the Green" follows to honor this year's unsung nature heroes. Throughout the evening, peruse the offerings of the silent auction and bid on what you want to take home. Choices will range from gift packages to artworks and gift cards.

GVC members should have already received their invitations in the mail. Discounted tickets can be purchased through a GVC Board member for \$50 until September 1, 2013, or on online at www.gunpowderfalls.org. Non-members may purchase a ticket for \$65 until September 1, 2013. After September 1, a \$75 ticket can be purchased online or at the door. Order tickets by mail from: Gunpowder Valley Conservancy, PO Box 9733, Towson, MD 21284

The GVC is especially grateful to the Oregon Ridge Nature Center Council and Director/Naturalist Winny Tan for serving as our hosts. *MJS*

TRAILBLAZER STAFF

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CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

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Photographers: Jim Curtis and ORNC Staff

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Articles for the Nov/Dec/Jan issue are due Sept. 21.

SUMMER CAMPS WERE A BLAST!

Oregon Ridge Nature Center held seven camps this year and half of them filled with Oregon Ridge Council members on the first day of registration. Membership provides the advantage of advance registration before open registration begins for non-members.

Camp counselors Melissa Sobolewski and Rachel Tuchman made sure the kids explored all of the Park's natural environs. Melissa and Rachel's enthusiasm and hard-working attitudes helped make camp fun and meaningful for our campers.

One of our new camps this summer was *Wild Things*. This camp was designed to show how people lived and survived in years long past. Our campers did some role playing as pioneers and Native Americans, learning how to make fire, shoot arrows, and make knots and shelters as part of their wilderness survival skills. The campers' spirits of adventure were unmistakable, and they had fun despite a rainy week.

Our *Spring Break Camp* filled so quickly, we decided to add a similar course to our summer camp schedule. This four-day course was called *Music, Art and Nature* and was led by staff Marya Asad and Lauren Leffer, along with music volunteers Griff Atkinson and Dave Erhardt. The kids learned how to play the dulcimers, explore the park, and create art projects. At the end of the week, the campers showed off their new musical talent and artworks to family and friends.

The Nature Center also booked other summer groups totaling around 600 people who were able to learn more about Maryland's animals and habitats. This summer was truly an outdoor blast! We hope to see everyone outside throughout the coming year! **WT**

THANK YOU CAMP COUNSELORS!

Our winter interns, Melissa Sobolewski and Rachel Tuchman (pictured below), readily took on the challenges of summer counselors for our nature camps. Melissa was thrilled to witness the campers' excitement and thrived off their energy. Rachel loved sharing the outdoor fun with the kids when they took them out to swim or on scavenger hunts. Rachel Tuchman graduated from Towson University with a major in Earth and Space Science. Melissa Sobolewski is studying Interpretive Biology and Natural History at Frostburg State University. They both wish to continue in the environmental education field and will be wonderful naturalists, here or wherever their journeys lead. **WT**



Winnie Tan Confirmed As Director
(Continued from front page)



Winnie explains that she is especially proud of "...the dedication and hard work of all the staff and volunteers whom I get to work with, especially during a tough year of being short staffed, while still maintaining the same number of programs and events. The passion for the park and the programs makes me strive to continue and further ORNC's legacy of education and recreation."

Please join us in welcoming Winnie Tan as ORNC's new Director. The Council looks forward to working with her in the years ahead to reach common goals for the continued success of the Oregon Ridge Nature Center and Park. **MJS**

INTERN COLE SNYDER INSPIRED BY ORNC

Cole Snyder began interning at ORNC in May to complete his senior work project for Friends School. He worked Monday to Friday learning how to lead school field trips and take care of animals. He loves animals and has a pet fish, hermit crabs, and a frog. He enjoyed feeding our young starlings because they would hop onto his hand and flutter around him during feedings. Though terrified of snakes, he holds the ones here and even feeds them! Cole enjoyed his ORNC experience so much that when his work project officially ended upon graduation, he continued to volunteer through the summer, demonstrating his hard-work ethic by lugging heavy logs up trails for log benches and working outside in hot, humid conditions. Cole is a genuinely nice young man and the staff at Oregon Ridge is happy he stayed.

Cole will be studying at the University of Vermont this fall and planning to major in animal science. His internship at Oregon Ridge has inspired him to be a vet! **WT**



is most proud, she mentioned the work with the community garden, organizing the Nature Center for efficiency and better structure, and starting some innovative new programs such as *Wild Things*, the *Music, Art and Nature* course, and the newly revamped geology program called *Rocks Rock*. She was a presenter for the Frederick County Department of Recreation and Parks' Master Naturalist training and for the first annual Maryland Master Naturalist conference. Winnie worked closely with the Council and sculptor Pat Hundley to create 8 new benches for the park, and she partnered with the other County nature centers and parks to create and launch Nature Quest. She worked with master gardeners, master naturalists, staff, interns, and volunteers to address invasive plants, rebuild stream bridges, install railings, and maintain and plant gardens. She did all of this while juggling family life with her husband Derrick and her two girls.

Winnie Tan first arrived at Oregon Ridge as Winnie Wong, a motivated, determined environmental science student at the University of Maryland. Her creativity and superior organizational skills made her an effective and respected summer camp counselor, weekend naturalist, and part-time and full-time naturalist at ORNC. Over the last 15 years she has been a Naturalist for Anita C. Leight, Irvine Natural Science Center, and the Marshy Point Nature Center. Now she has come full circle, back to where it all started at Oregon Ridge Nature Center.

OREGON RIDGE NATURE CENTER COUNCIL NEEDS YOUR VOTES!



OREGON RIDGE NATURE CENTER COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING

SEPTEMBER 16, 2013, 7:00 PM

All Council members in good standing are urged to attend this meeting to vote on our 2013-14 Slate of Officers. The meeting will take place at 7:00 PM, followed by our September speaker at 7:30 PM. Refreshments will be available.

ANNOUNCING THE 2013 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

By Polly Roberts, M.D., Scholarship Chair

The Oregon Ridge Nature Center Council has awarded scholarships to three graduating seniors who have demonstrated excellent academic achievement and a commitment to the environment. Two of the winners are from Baltimore County and one from Baltimore City, and each has been awarded \$5000.00. This is the 19th consecutive year that the Council



Abigail Katilas, a graduate of Eastern Technical High School, plans to major in biology at the University of Maryland, College Park. She envisions a career devoted to marine conservation, possibly as a research scientist. For the past several years, she has served as a volunteer at the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore (where she educated visitors

as a WILD Encounter Presenter at the penguin exhibit), an Exhibit Guide/Climate Change Interpreter at the National Aquarium, and as a Marsh Ranger at the Marshy Point Nature Center. Abigail also participated as a member of her school's Envirothon team, specializing in aquatics.



Thomas Lehner graduated from Sparrows Point High School and will major in environmental science at Albright College. His career aspirations include field work in natural resource conservation (with a special interest in the Chesapeake Bay) and environmental policy. The first scouting merit badge he received was in environmental science,

and he has successfully completed an Eagle Scout project. Thomas has been a member of his school's Envirothon team for four years and has volunteered at special events at the Marshy Point Nature Center.

has made scholarships available to deserving seniors from Baltimore City and County. Congratulations to our deserving 2013 scholarship recipients! The Council sincerely appreciates everyone who donates to our scholarship fund and enables us to help these young people realize their dreams.



William Cameron is a graduate from the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute. As a member of their Ingenuity Project, he completed a research practicum on sustainable design. He will attend the Johns Hopkins University and major in Global Environmental Change and Sustainability. With an interest in policy, he

envisions a career working on international environmental issues, particularly in developing countries. William has been a member of his school's Environmental Club and has worked the past four years during the summer in the "nature lodge" of a local boy scout camp, where he shared his enthusiasm for nature with young scouts.

CONGRATULATIONS!
IT APPLAUSE FAB
YOU DID IT HOORAY!
WONDERFUL NEWS
CLAP GREAT SUPERB
EXCELLENT
WELL DONE

Abigail Katilas
Thomas Lehner
William Cameron

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

From Andi Musser

Thank you to my friends at Oregon Ridge for a wonderful retirement celebration. I could not have imagined a more treasured gift than a bench in my honor on a trail at Oregon Ridge Nature Center, especially as it is decorated with a carved turtle! I've often passed dedicated park benches while hiking and thought how nice it would have been to know that person. Now I know one.



My years at Oregon Ridge are filled with memories. Many wonderful staff and volunteers and even some animal friends (Pouchy, Persimmon Jim, Jack) have come and gone. I count them all as a valuable part of my life. Actually, Tippy the terrapin and I started together twenty years ago. In those first years she would come home with me for the summer. I have pictures of her in a kiddie pool nose to nose with my nephews and nieces. They are now married with families of their own! As I page through pictures of trail guide outings from years past, I can observe my hair graying, along with some of yours, I might add. You've shared bits and pieces of your lives with me as we've become parents-in-law and grandparents; and mostly as we have become friends.

We tend to remember where we were when important events took place in our lives. Where were you on 9/11 when the planes struck the trade center towers? I was here at the nature center, where I frantically tried to reassemble a group of second graders from Sparks Elementary who had dispersed on our trails with their trail guides and had been ordered back to their school immediately! I was sitting at my desk at Oregon Ridge when I got the call that my first grandchild was on the way, and it was from there that I rushed to the hospital to witness his birth.

Now it's my turn to move on. Not leave, mind you, just take a promotion to volunteer trail guide. To the council, board, staff, and especially to the trail guides — thanks for the memories!

AAI AND BROOKS-HUFF DONATE

Employees of AAI Corporation, an engineering company in Hunt Valley, volunteered on a hot summer day in June to pick up trash, remove invasive plants, and build railings on the steep and curvy portion of our Red Loggers Trail. Their hard work to make the trail safe and the park clean is greatly appreciated.

Brooks-Huff Tire and Auto Center in Hunt Valley gave us discounted truck tubes to replace our old tubes that we use for our tubing trips. We have run four trips each summer for many years, and the old tubes were worn and undependable. These new tubes will help us lead more cool trips in the future!

"Thank you" to our local companies who took the time to support the Oregon Ridge Nature Center and Park. **WT**

NATURE QUEST! AN ADVENTURE IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

Nature Quest is a great opportunity to experience the outdoors and be active with friends and family while discovering some of the best parks and trails in Baltimore County. Travel the trails — some on foot and some in a canoe or kayak — to find trail markers at Oregon Ridge Park, Benjamin Banneker Park, Cromwell Valley Park, Marshy Point Park, and Robert E. Lee Park. There are special rewards for those completing five or more trails! To get started, you need a Nature Quest Passport, which can be obtained at one of the participating parks, at Wegmans, or online: www.oregonridgenaturecenter.org.

Those who complete at least five trails are eligible to attend Baltimore County's celebratory *Nature Quest FEST*, which takes place on Saturday November 2, beginning at 10 AM, at Robert E. Lee Park. One must register to attend the Fest, so once you have completed five trails, call 410-887-4156 to register or do so at one of the participating parks. Hang on to your Passport! It is your ticket for free admission to the Fest.

Nature Quest ends on October 31, so get your Nature Quest Passport now to learn all about this unique outdoor adventure! **MJS**

