SHORT TAKES

For a complete list of events happening in Maryland State Parks, visit
dnr.maryland.gov/calendar

Young Cancer Survivor Named Honorary Officer

In November, NRP made a dream come true for Church Hill native Darren Leonard. Diagnosed with cancer as an infant, this courageous 5-year-old has battled the disease and responded well to treatment. Given his developing interest in law enforcement, officers and staff reached out to Darren's family to surprise him with a day he'll never forget.

After checking out the *Chesapeake* — an NRP patrol vessel — Darren, his parents and little sister suited up for his first-ever boat ride. Back on land, senior officers also declared him an Honorary Sergeant for raising awareness of pediatric cancer and making comfort bags for other children facing chemotherapy. Follow his Facebook page — Darren's Pack — to keep up with his progress.

dnr.maryland.gov/nrp

Picking out a life jacket

Candy Thomson

Col. Johnson saluting Darren

At the helm of the *Chesapeake*

Barbecuing at Elk Neck

Hiking at New Germany

Polling for Parks

For the second consecutive year, political science students at Goucher College have conducted a poll reflecting Marylanders' interest in and satisfaction with State Parks. Last fall, more than 700 citizens were selected at random to answer questions regarding visitation, activities, park priorities and goals, and effective communication.

The poll found that a majority of residents have visited a State Park within the past year and more than 72 percent of them had a positive experience. Relaxation, historic site visits, hiking or walking, and picnicking ranked as the most popular pastimes, with swimming, biking and camping not far behind.

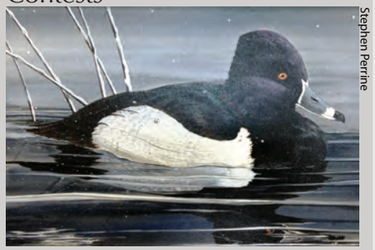
Park goers categorized connecting children with nature and preserving historical sites as top priorities. For effective communications, email, newsletters and social media were rated as the best ways to receive and provide feedback.

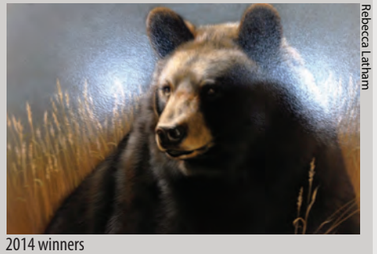
blogs.goucher.edu

Stephen Badger

Kids exploring a Nature Play Space at Patapsco Valley

Artists Sought for Wildlife Contests


Stephen Perrine


Rebecca Latham

2014 winners

The Black Bear Conservation Stamp contest — now in its 19th year — *is open to Maryland residents and non-residents alike*. Artists may submit one entry with a non-refundable $10 fee. Proceeds from the sale of these stamps and other related products aid farmers who experience agricultural damage caused by black bears.

The 41st annual Migratory Game Bird Stamp contest is also underway. *Only Maryland residents are eligible to enter up to three pieces of artwork* — the entry fee is $15 for one submission, $20 for two, and $30 for three. Proceeds help fund waterfowl and migratory game bird research.

All designs must be original and received via mail by April 14 with all forms and fees addressed to Patricia Handy, Maryland DNR Wildlife & Heritage Service E1, 580 Taylor Ave., Annapolis, MD 21401.

Winners will be selected on April 26 at the Ward Championship Wildfowl Carving Competition and Art Festival in Ocean City. Entries will be returned within two weeks after the event.

dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife

Oyster Stew with Cornbread Topped with Celery Leaf Salad

(4 servings) — From Chef James Barrett

Ingredients

Oyster Stew

1 slice of bacon, minced
2 celery ribs, thinly sliced
1 small yellow onion, minced
1 thyme sprig
1 tsp paprika
3/4 tsp Old Bay® seasoning
1 quart freshly shucked oysters, drained, and 1 1/2 cups of liquor reserved
1 cup fish stock or clam broth
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
Salt
1 quart heavy cream
1 1/2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
Freshly ground black pepper

Celery Leaf Salad

2 cups celery leaves
2 tsp rice wine vinegar
1 tsp honey
2 tsp olive oil, extra virgin
1 tsp lemon zest
1 tsp shaved parmesan
1 tsp chopped parsley
Salt and pepper to taste

Cornbread

1/2 cup butter
2/3 cup white sugar
2 eggs
1 cup whole fresh corn kernels
1 cup buttermilk
1/2 tsp baking soda
1 cup cornmeal
1 cup flour, all-purpose
1/2 tsp sea salt

Preparation

Oyster Stew

In a large pot, cook the bacon over medium heat for 1 minute or until softened. Add celery, onion, thyme, paprika, Old Bay® and cook, stirring continuously for 2 minutes or until the onion is clear. Add oyster liquor and fish stock and bring to a boil. Simmer over medium to low heat for about 10 minutes, until reduced by one-fourth. Stir the heavy cream into the pot and simmer for 3 minutes or until slightly thickened. Add the oysters and bring to a simmer. Remove from the heat, stir in the Worcestershire sauce and season with salt and pepper. Discard the thyme sprig.

Cornbread

Preheat oven to 375°F. Generously oil 3" bundt cake mold. Melt butter in large skillet. Remove from heat and stir in sugar. Add eggs and beat until well blended. Combine buttermilk with baking soda and stir into mixture in pan. Stir in cornmeal, flour, kernels and salt until well blended and few lumps remain. Pour batter into the prepared pans. Bake for 30-40 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Celery Leaf Salad

Gently mix all ingredients.

Assembly

Spoon oyster stew into a large bowl with Corn Bread in the middle and top with leaf salad.

seafood.maryland.gov