

the Worcester County  
**SAND PAPERS**

ISSUE 9

NEWS FROM THE BEACH AND BEYOND IN WORCESTER COUNTY

WINTER 2007

*Happy  
Holidays!*

from Worcester  
County Tourism



## AT A GLANCE

How tourism in Worcester makes a difference.

PAGE 2

Wor-Wic to offer new tourism course.

PAGE 3

Worcester welcomes new music venues.

PAGE 4

Delmarva Birding Weekend grows.

PAGE 5

Calendar of events.

PAGE 6



It's easy to get caught up in the magic of Victorian Christmas in Berlin. [PHOTO BY JULIA PURNELL MUSEUM]


## Enjoy the holidays in Worcester

Get back to the simpler joys of the holiday season in Worcester County, with parades, Christmas light displays, visits with Santa, and more. Here are some of the events happening around the county.

**Victorian Christmas in Berlin** features horse and carriage rides, tea with Mrs. Claus, classical Christmas concert and dinner, winter solstice celebration at Solstice Restaurant, model train exhibit at Dennison's, and a Victorian Christmas dinner with caroling.

**Christmas in Snow Hill** will offer a children's Christmas workshop, a train garden at the Pocomoke River Canoe Company, breakfast with Santa, annual festival of trees charity auction, a holiday tasting tour, a 19th-century Christmas Service at Furnace Town, and Victorian Christmas celebration at the Purnell Museum.

**Ocean City's annual Winterfest of Lights**, which began in mid-November and runs through January 1, features more than 750,000 lights and hundreds of displays. The center of the action is at Northside Park, 125th Street and bayside and the Ocean City Inlet.

For more activities and events, call the Berlin Chamber at 410-641-4775; Snow Hill Chamber at 410-632-0809; Ocean City at 800-OC-OCEAN. 

# How tourism in Worcester makes a difference

Perhaps it's no surprise that tourism plays a vital role in Worcester County. Now the report, "The Economic Impact of Travel & Tourism in Maryland," released in October, provides hard and fast numbers on just how important tourism is. A few highlights. . .

## Tourism brings visitors

In 2006, more than **7.14 million visitors** made Worcester County their destination, a close to **10% increase** over 2005, when there were 6.47 million visitors.

## Tourism creates jobs

Worcester had a higher percentage of employees working in tourism than any other Maryland county. In 2006, jobs in tourism accounted for **28.4% of the total employment** in the county.

## Tourism helps the local economy

Visitors spent more than **\$1.23 billion** in Worcester County in 2006. Worcester ranks **third in the state** in total visitor spending. Tourism also brought more than **\$329 million in tax revenue** to the county in 2006.





## Worcester awaits word on two new roadside markers

With the help of architectural historian Paul Touart, Worcester County Tourism is submitting for consideration two new sites for roadside markers. The Maryland Historical Trust administers the roadside marker program to commemorate people, events, and places of special significance to the state. The proposed sites include the town of Snow Hill—one of the three towns in the state established during the 17th century to survive as a viable community—and Ocean City, the state's only seaside resort. If approved, these markers will join the nine existing signs throughout the county. For a complete list of markers go to [visit-worcester.org/index.php/2007site\\_template/heritage](http://visit-worcester.org/index.php/2007site_template/heritage).

## Wor-Wic to offer new tourism course

Looking to learn more about how to share the wonders of the Lower Eastern Shore with visitors? A new course planned at Wor-Wic Community College aims to introduce students to core concepts of nature and heritage interpretation.

The 12-hour continuing education course, "Nature and Heritage Interpretation," offered in cooperation with Delmarva Low Impact Tourism Experiences, Inc. (DLITE), will provide information on volunteer opportunities, programs, and other resources in the Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester County region.

The course is targeted to those volunteering or who are interested in volunteering at museums and parks, along with professional outfitters and guides. Students coming from local nonprofits will have their tuition reimbursed by the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore.

Once the course gains final approval, the hope is that it will be offered starting in March 2008. Topics will include "Why is Nature & Heritage Interpretation Important?" "Creating a Memorable Visitor Experience," and "Being an Advocate for Your Organization."

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- recognize philosophy and principles of nature and heritage interpretation;
- identify models/approaches for promoting quality nature and heritage experiences, especially through volunteer interpreters;
- define techniques for engaging students/visitors and elevating tourist experiences;
- identify volunteer opportunities with area museums, parks and heritage sites providing nature and heritage experiences; and
- identify available resources within the region for nature and heritage volunteer service. 🌿



A new course at Wor-Wic offers guidance on making the most of the Shore's many natural and cultural resources, such as Furnace Town Living Heritage Museum.

[PHOTO BY JERRY GERLITZKI]

For more information on the course, "Nature and Heritage Interpretation," which Wor-Wic Community College hopes to

begin offering in March 2008, contact DLITE Director Jim Rapp at 443.944.8097 or at [dlitedirector@comcast.net](mailto:dlitedirector@comcast.net).

## MAIN STREET CORNER

## Worcester welcomes new music venues

[STORY BY MICHAEL DAY]

While 2008 is fast approaching, the sound of applause is still resonating in both Berlin and Pocomoke City. A variety of great music venues have sprung up in Worcester County with help from the Main Street Program.

Berlin has had a resurgence in professional music acts with the Globe offering performances almost nightly, the Atlantic Hotel's special events, and the Water's Edge Gallery's 2nd Friday Open Mic Nights. The Berlin Marketing Partnership, in tandem with the Main Street Program, and help from the Worcester County Art Council and Department of Tourism, brought music to the streets on those same 2nd Friday nights from April to November and again in December with Holiday Arts Night. It was during several of their 2nd Fridays that this group got permission from the Berlin City Council to close off half a block on Pitts Street, creating a natural amphitheater right in the middle of downtown Berlin. Bluegrass, rock, jazz and country karaoke drew crowds to downtown, while several of the shops stayed open until 8 p.m. It takes about three years of this type of activity for late-night shopping and dining to become successful, say National Main Street organizers.

Last year, Pocomoke City constructed a new bandstand in Cypress Park, and the Downtown Association, along with the Pocomoke City Main Street Program, hosted the first concert at the facility. They deemed the event a success, noting that all who participated enjoyed the great music and the natural beauty of the Pocomoke River and Cypress Park. Seizing upon this success, committee members moved forward by producing four more and varied concerts in the 2007 season. They started the summer off with a bluegrass concert Memorial Day weekend. Scheduled next was the 35-piece Chesapeake Brass Band, and in early September, the air was filled with the Southern rock sounds of regional favorite Spontaneous Combustion. The season ended by partnering with the Mar-Va Theater to bring the "Funsters," a 10-piece show band, to downtown Pocomoke City.

Interestingly, the Sunday afternoon in August when the Chesapeake Brass Band was booked to play Cypress Park's bandstand, the concert was hurriedly moved into the Mar-Va Theater minutes before the concert was to start. Scalding temperatures combined with the threat of a dangerous thunderstorm prompted this decision. The move turned out to be the right one. Not only because of the bad weather, but because the board of directors for the Mar-Va were anxious to hear a large musical group inside the theater. The 35 members of the Brass Band loved the sound as did the audience. Great music and a beautiful vintage theater made for a delightful afternoon in the cool conditioned hall.

Ocean City is lucky to have Worcester County's emerging art and entertainment scene, as more visitors are looking to the "Beach & Beyond!"

## Worcester receives more marketing dollars

The Maryland Tourism Development Board announced the fiscal year 2008 grant awards, and Worcester's grant ranked 10th highest in the state at \$51,570, up \$12,444 from last year. The money will be used to market Worcester County to the mid-Atlantic region in both print and electronic media.

## Biking, birding guides; calendar available

Plan your 2008 getaways with a little help from these publications:

- **The Arts & Times Calendar.** Free. Worcester Tourism office or online at [www.visitworcester.org](http://www.visitworcester.org). (Click on the directory and then on "Arts & Times.")
- **The Great Delmarva Bicycling Trail guide.** \$6. Call Worcester County Tourism at 800-852-0335.
- **The Birdwatcher's Guide to Delmarva.** \$6.95. Call Worcester County Tourism at 800-852-0335.





Around Delmarva, birders can see marvelous sights such as this osprey carrying home a meal. (PHOTO AT LEFT BY VAN VOGEL; PHOTO AT RIGHT BY NICO SARBANES)

## Delmarva Birding Weekend grows

Now in its 13th year, the Delmarva Birding Weekend continues to grow. In the true spirit of Delmarva, the event is expanding into Delaware and the Upper Shore of Maryland. The dates for 2008 are April 24-27. More trips are being offered to encourage participants to extend their stay. Events include a Thursday trip on the Cape May-Lewes Ferry, trips on the Upper Shore for participants coming from the north, and additional trips into Delaware including "Birds of the Delaware Bay Coast." Guided trips are offered in a variety of settings including day and night hikes, canoeing and kayaking on area creeks, rivers and bays and by boat. The weekend event has proven to be so popular that most trips sell out, so register soon (see below). 🌳

For more information about the **Delmarva Birding Weekend**, call 800-852-0335 to receive the

brochure and registration information, or go to the website at [www.delmarvalite.org](http://www.delmarvalite.org).

### TOURISM INDUSTRY TIPS

If you play a role in the tourism industry, from hotel to retail to dining, customer service makes a big difference. Here's a quick refresher course:

1. **Greet customers** when they walk in the door within 30-40 seconds.
2. **Always tell your customers what you CAN do** for them. Don't begin your conversation by telling them what you CAN'T do.
3. **Allow irate customers to vent.** Don't interrupt them until they are finished having their say. Listen!
4. **Diffuse anger** by saying "I'm sorry" or "I apologize."
5. **Give customers** the benefit of the doubt.
6. **Make certain that your solution** to the customer's problem is acceptable to them. Get their approval.
7. **Employees will treat customers** the way they are treated.
8. **Be sure that your body language** conveys sincerity. Your words and actions should be congruent.
9. **Make customers feel important** and appreciated. Use their name when possible.
10. **Get regular feedback;** encourage and welcome suggestions.



Berlin and its **Victorian Christmas** celebration were featured on the cover of *Coastal Style Magazine* in the November/December issue. The magazine called Victorian Christmas "the stuff from which classic Christmas movies are made." Read the full story at [www.coastal-stylemag.com](http://www.coastal-stylemag.com)

**Assateague Island** was featured on *Good Morning America* in August on the weekend spotlight. Stories also appeared in *Camping Life*, the *Daily Record* (CO), *Journal Inquirer* (CT), *Morning Call* (PA), the *Express-Times* (PA) and the *Wilson Daily News* (NC).

An Associated Press article featuring **birding on the Lower Eastern Shore** appeared in many local publications as well as *USA Today*, *Washington Times*, and *Newsday*, to name just a few.

## CALENDAR

## DECEMBER

- Dec. 6 11th Annual Holiday Tasting Tour. Snow Hill. 410-632-0960
- Dec. 8 19th Century Christmas. Furnace Town. Wreath-making 4pm, church service 7pm. 410-632-2032
- Dec. 8-29 Victorian Christmas, Berlin (see page 1). 410-641-4775
- Dec. 9 Festival of Trees. Snow Hill. Reception 2pm; auction 4pm. 410-632-3553
- Dec. 14 Second Friday. Berlin. 443-753-0957

## JANUARY 2008

- Jan. 5 Day Hike & Night Walk. Furnace Town. 2pm & 7pm. 410-632-2032
- Jan. 19-20 Nautical & Wildlife Art Festival. Ocean City Convention Center. Sat 10-5; Sun 10-4. 410-524-9177
- Jan. 19-20 North American Craft Show. Ocean City Convention Center. Sat 10-5; Sun 10-4. 410-524-9177
- Jan. 25-27 East Coast Commercial Fisherman's Expo. Ocean City Convention Center. Fri 11-6; Sat 10-6; Sun 10-4:30. 800-421-9176

## FEBRUARY 2008

- Feb. 9 Day Hike & Night Walk. Furnace Town. 2pm & 7pm. 410-632-2032
- Feb. 10 Mid Atlantic Symphony Concert. Ocean Pines Community Church. 3pm. 888-846-8600
- Feb. 15-17 Seaside Boat Show. Ocean City Convention Center. Fri noon-6; Sat 10-6; Sun 11-5. 410-632-1163

## Berlin A&E District to host development group (TADD)

Berlin's Arts & Entertainment District is hosting the regional tourism and downtown development group (TADD) on December 13. Members from across the Shore will meet in Berlin to see how the town is taking advantage of the Arts & Entertainment District legislation. Participants include county tourism directors, heritage area directors, Main Street coordinators, department of economic development officials, and other Arts & Entertainment District members. Snow Hill played host to TADD members last summer, when they took a walking tour of the downtown, heard plans for redevelopment, created sidewalk art, and took a cruise on the river.

## Heritage Area awards lunch Jan. 23

The Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Council (LESHC) is hosting its annual awards luncheon on January 23 at the Wicomico Youth and Civic Center from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. The keynote speaker will be James Rees, Executive Director of Mount Vernon, who delivers a very engaging and entertaining presentation. Heritage awards will be given in the following categories: Heritage Interpreter of the Year, Heritage Interpretation, Heritage Tourism Program/Event, Best New Heritage Initiative, Heritage Professional Award, Legacy Award, and Heritage Award. To learn more about the event or how to nominate someone, call the LESHC office at 410-677-4706.

## SAND PAPERS

**Worcester County Tourism**

104 West Market Street  
Snow Hill, MD 21863  
800.852.0335  
[www.visitworcester.org](http://www.visitworcester.org)

To subscribe to the quarterly *SandPapers* newsletter or to share story ideas, drop us a line at [econ@ezy.net](mailto:econ@ezy.net) or call us at 800-852-0335.

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Judy Boggs: District 5 Ocean Pines  
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