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WEST COUNTY

Around West County: Community groups help make Odenton Day a success

By DONNA M. FELLOWS For The Capital

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Odenton Day, jointly sponsored by the Greater Odenton Improvement Association, The Odenton Volunteer Fire Company, The Odenton Heritage Society and the West Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce, was held under sunny skies Saturday at the Odenton Fire Hall and surrounding historical sites.

The county Department of Aging provided free shuttle transportation between all venues.

Past met present as David Tibbets, head of the Greater Odenton Improvement Association, once again dressed as former Governor Oden Bowie. While dressed in black with a matching black top hat, he was visited by U.S. Rep. John P. Sarbanes.

The West Arundel Lions Club provided free vision screenings, and members collected used eyeglasses, hearing aids and cell



Donna M. Fellows - For The Capital

At left, Jaxson Jett, 4 and his brother, Phoenix, 6, from Severn, visited the Civil War encampment and dressed as Union Soldiers.

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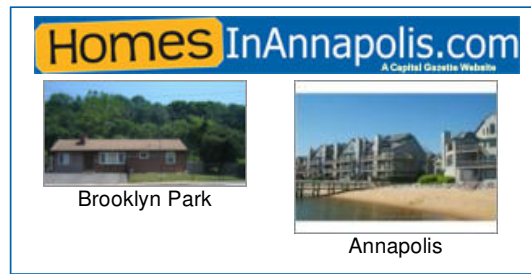
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Many churches were on site as well, including Ark and Dove Presbyterian Church, First Evangelical Lutheran Church and Nichols-Bethel United Methodist Church.



Odenton Baptist Church showed the progress of its new education wing - with 14 new rooms for Odenton Christian School - slated to be ready after the Christmas break.

The new auditorium, which will seat 380 people, should be ready by summer 2009.

Inside the hall, Girl Scout Troop 714 sold cookies, and Cub Scout Pack 209 and Boy Scout Troop 769 were well-represented.

From Rotary Club to Toastmasters and Jazzercise, it all could be found inside the hall.

There also were demonstrations of the fire safety drill stop, drop and roll, as well as what to do when responding to a smoke alarm while sleeping in bed.

Two beds were set up, and children took turns pretending to sleep while the lights were slowly dimmed. The next thing they heard was the smoke alarm.

Quickly, they arose from the bed, dropped to the floor on their hands and feet and crawled through a tunnel to safety. Children also received free firefighter hats and played in the moon bounce.

Providing noontime entertainment on stage inside the fire hall were Melissa Hathaway's company dancers from Arts 'n Motion, performing tap dances to "Footloose." Older girls tapped to "Shop Around."

A song and dance performance to "It's a Hard Knock Life" was held, featuring singing dancers as orphans dressed in rags.

After the dancers, Macon's Karate provided the audience with an exhibition of martial arts skills.

Free hot dogs, chips and drinks were provided to all the visitors.

Outside was a fire demonstration in a closed environment where children were able to see just how fast a fire can spread through a home.

A metal trashcan filled with newspaper, with curtains behind it, was ignited. Sprinkler systems detected the smoke and extinguished the fire in less than 45 seconds.

A collection of historic fire trucks previously used by the station, now owned by private citizens, were displayed outside. Many of the children liked climbing on the back of the fire trucks and pretending they were firefighters.

Mike Boris of Odenton Moose Lodge No. 2601 brought along his racing lawnmowers. Mike participated last month in the eighth annual Lawnmower Races held in Laurel.

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A shuttle ride away from the fire hall, Carol Boyette demonstrated the art of stained glass at the Old Bethel Church, located next to the Odenton Heritage Society on Waco Avenue.

Next to the Old Bethel Church, in the Old Masonic Building, now the Odenton Heritage Building, members of the Greater Quilters Guild of Odenton worked on quilts to be donated to wounded veterans.

Train enthusiasts gathered upstairs to view the displays of the WB&A Electric Railroad Centennial and the National Railway Historical Society.

One-hundred years ago, Telegraph Road and Piney Orchard Parkway, Route 170, was the WB&A Electric Railroad, which transported riders from Baltimore through Odenton and Bowie to Washington, D.C., and Annapolis. With the rise of automobile use and the Great Depression, passenger service ceased in 1935.

A short walk from the firehouse, members of The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Gen. George Meade Camp No. 5, were dressed as Union soldiers. They displayed a Civil War encampment next to the MARC station and the historic Odenton Bank and answered questions. Members Bill Fields, Carl Gardner, Eddie Roberts, Jeff French, Billy Knight and David Williams participated. They displayed a Civil War encampment next to the MARC station and the historic Odenton Bank, and answered questions.

Visitors were shown how Civil War soldiers lived, the equipment they carried and the weapons they used.

Children were able to dress up as Union soldiers and pose for photographs. A tabletop display showed Union forces fighting Confederate forces. Members of the group travel throughout Maryland and Pennsylvania promoting Civil War history and reenactments.

Phoenix Jett, 6, and his brother, Jaxson, 4, from Severn, visited the reenactors.

"I had no idea that this event was going on today," said Curt Jett, the boys' father. "We just came by the train station to pick up some schedules."

Boys as young as 10 had participated in the war as drummer boys. Phoenix and Jaxson may be a bit young, but they surely enjoyed meeting the reenactors and trying on the uniforms.

Donna M. Fellows covers Gambrills, Odenton, Piney Orchard and Seven Oaks Communities. Contact her with your news at 410-279-1308 or WestCountyNews@yahoo.com.

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