

# Old Dover Days 2006

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In this Photoessay the Desk answers the burning question:

## **Why were there defective rubber duckies at Old Dover Days?**

Well, before we get to the lame ducks we need to do a little background painting. See the [photo page](#).

Old Dover Days is a large street fair with an historical theme centered around Colonial themes and times. But besides the Founding Fathers and Friends the period costumes range from the Society for Creative Anachronism in medieval wear including 'battle-cans' to an encampment of soldiers from the War Between the States to a setup of Native Americans in full regalia demonstrating dances in front of a teepee.

Besides the living history you have vendors of various types from hand made crafts to professional products and services, then there are charities and informational booths as well as a selection of politicians. Then you have the parade with nearly a hundred units including several marching bands from the local high school and colleges, a beauty queen or two, some old cars, a few civic groups, and an antique fire truck. Then you need enough food and drink vendors to satisfy every taste from organic whole-earth health food to the best in greasy salty sugar-covered fair food-with fried onions. Then there is live music from the guy from Itumiray playing the Pan flute and recorders and things like that (and maybe selling an album or two as well) to the passing crowd. Scatter in a few groups that make themselves known by wandering around and there is something for just about everybody that shows up to see it all.

Who shows up? Several thousand people from all over the area.

So, into this setting you insert the Delaware Anime Society attending a major public function outing to let people know they're there and maybe recruit new members who are interested in that kind of thing.

The USS RAVEN science fiction oriented service club has done hundreds of these types of functions over the last dozen years or so. The members have it down to a science. They know what they need and what they'll want, and just as importantly,

what to leave home. The working rules are: If you pack for rain it'll be a beautiful day, if you pack for a light crowd you'll run out of stuff in the first hour and if you are absolutely sure you won't need something that you'll be driving home to get it before noon. So not only does the RAVEN crew have an extra canopy and an extra set of chairs, they have extra tape, bungee cords, batteries, donuts and even a spare bottle of water or two.

Two of the members were downtown and set up almost as soon as it was daylight. As is the way of things, they noticed two attractive ladies across the street unfolding a brand new canopy and as one of the members just got done writing a detailed analysis of the chivalry of the Knights of the Round Table he volunteered himself and the RAVEN security chief to help the damsels before they got into distress.

The Pampered Chef ® consultants Dana and Dawn may have been fully able to set up their canopy by themselves, but it's a lot easier with help and in a few minutes it was ready for the day. They were at Old Dover Days to make contact with people who might need a Microplane Adjustable Grater and those that didn't know they needed one but will sign up to host a party where one of the ladies will show them why you really do need one.

On the other hand the pretty girl from Shade2Go.com is there not to recruit new consultants but to sell.... well, it's hard to describe what Melissa is both selling and demonstrating. It's a foldable Thing that fits over a beach chair and bends over to give you shade and is held in place by a couple of loopy strings that adjust. It looks like it'd work better than an umbrella and the way it folds up is really cool.

The anime club's leader, brain trust, driving force, and chief of duck operations Ms Mattie gladly accepted the RAVEN crew's assistance. The club is one of groups behind the Zenkaikon convention in Valley Forge, PA (28, October 2006). The con covers all aspects of animation, comic art and even science fiction. This year's guest list includes a couple of the artists that worked on the legendary *Speed Racer* cartoon.

Another group that was glad to accept the RAVEN's offerings was the local representatives of BROOD (Basset Hound Rescue of Old Dominion) with a large enough group of their charges to make Old Dover Days into an unofficial 'Wattle' get together as there were seven rescue dogs together at one time just behind the RAVEN booth.

After walking through the crowd drawing a lot of 'aawwws' and some random acts of petting the dogs were hot and tired, as were their people, and all were in need of a break. As the RAVEN had a couple of extra bottles of water at hand, they were put to good use and were very welcome.

Another group using the day to show off their work was a group from Greyhound Pets of America/Delaware.

The local chapter of the Greyhound racing dog rescue/retirement group had several former racing dogs in various states of repose in the shade. A racing greyhound usually retires by age five, since these dogs can live well into their teens it leaves several years to lay in the shade and enjoy the attention of adoring children and maybe more than a few doggie treats, if they can find somebody willing to adopt a good-sized dog.

Greyhounds are usually just over two feet tall, and weigh a good sixty pounds or so. They are usually fairly even tempered and make good pets, as long as they have some room to run, and run they can... a healthy greyhound can get up to forty miles an hour in just a few steps. But the breed is also considered the universal blood donor for dogs since they have the equivalent of type 'O' negative blood and they are in demand in many areas where veterinary clinics need a constant stock of blood to treat dogs injured in accidents or requiring other surgery.

Now, back to those ducks....

The idea was to use a small plastic child's pool and have a 'pick the duck' game for a prize. They had the ducks with the numbers carefully written on their bellies. They borrowed the RAVEN's five gallon bucket trash can and poured a couple of inches of water in the pool and it seemed they were ready to go.

Really. It was a good idea. Lots of fun, low investment cost for prizes, high interest in its potential participants (kids can spot one of these things from halfway down the block) and its a good time for everybody.

Except there was a slight malfunction with the club's duck technology. It would seem that the Official Rubber Ducky Supplier to the Delaware Anime Society's had sent the wrong sort of duckies for the game. According to the International Association of Duck Pond Game Operators there is one thing you absolutely need for a sanctioned event: Ducks that Float.

The ducks were squirting ducks, not floating ducks. They worked real well for shooting water at other club members, but the ducks wanted to lay on their side then sink to the bottom of the pool, not bob around duck-like.

With the assistance of some of the RAVEN's duct tape (no, we are not kidding here) they tried taping coins to the bottoms of the ducks to at least make them sink right side up.

Finally Ms Mattie made a decision as the Duck Director and they'd just randomize the duck numbers on their prize hierarchy since there was no way the kids would know what the numbers meant even if they could see them.

With the slight adjustment to the Great Duck Game Plan things went forward. Kids picked a duck and got a candy prize.

The Anime Society's booth was now fully up and running for the rest of the day.

The RAVEN was raising funds for a major project at a homeless shelter. Collecting money toward the eventual replacement of the handicapped ramp at The Shepherd Place shelter for women and families in Dover. The day's total for their effort was around four hundred dollars. But more importantly, they made contact with several individuals associated with other organizations that donate time and material for that kind of need. If even half of the people that committed to the project during the course of the day come through with half of what they said they'll do, the new ramp will be built before winter.

In any case, the day seemed to be a success for all involved.

The weather was beautiful, the crowd was good without being so busy you couldn't walk through and even though it did get windy toward the end of the day, it was nice because it kept it cool under the canopies.

Old Dover Days is the First Saturday of May every year.

See the [photo page](#) for more coverage.

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LINKS to subjects mentioned in the article. All will open in a new window.  
*links in no particular order*

The Desk is NOT affiliated with any of the following:

[www.visitdover.com](http://www.visitdover.com)

NOTE: There is no substantive dedicated website for Old Dover Days information past or present. This is the best they have.

[Delaware Anime Society](http://www.delawareanimesociety.com) [www.delawareanimesociety.com](http://www.delawareanimesociety.com) and their CON  
[www.zenkaikon.com](http://www.zenkaikon.com)

[Greyhound Pets of America/Delaware](http://www.greyhoundpets.org) [www.greyhoundpets.org](http://www.greyhoundpets.org)

Society for Creative Anachronism [www.sca.org](http://www.sca.org)

Shade2Go.com [Based in Newark, DE](#)

[www.itumiray.com](http://www.itumiray.com) The Itumiray traditional music group's site.

[The Pampered Chef ®](http://www.pamperedchef.com), a Berkshire Hathaway Company. [www.pamperedchef.com](http://www.pamperedchef.com)

[www.brood-va.org](http://www.brood-va.org) [Basset Hound Rescue](#)

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[The USS RAVEN](http://www.angelfire.com/de/BrokenTusk/ussraven.html) <http://www.angelfire.com/de/BrokenTusk/ussraven.html>

Link Swap:



[The Delaware Anime Society](http://www.delawareanimesociety.com)

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See the [photo page](#)

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