

ST. MARY'S RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4 OCTOBER 2006

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of the St. Mary's River,

I saw many of you at RiverFest 2006 a couple of weeks ago, and I think that you'll agree that it truly was a "Celebration of the St. Mary's River". Over 400 friends and neighbors came out for a day of food, fun, music, and learning at the Chesapeake Bay Field Lab on St. George Island. Many thanks to our hosts, Captain Jack Russell and Vikki Volk, as well as the CBFL's board of directors for helping to make this day such a success. Captain Jack was kind enough to take out a third skipjack sail that day, and I'm sure that if we had not run out of time, there were plenty of people on hand for a fourth trip.

So much planning and effort goes into pulling off an event like this it's hard to remember every one that contributed to the effort, but special thanks are due to Abby Meatyard, our RiverFest 2006 Director for keeping everyone focused and moving forward, and to the

RiverFest committee, Bob Paul, Elaine Szymkowiak, Ray de Leon, and Scott Ricard for all of their dedication and hard work.

Special thanks are also owed to this year's RiverFest sponsors – the Chesapeake Bay Trust, Bailey's Party Rentals, Chaney Enterprises, the Chesapeake Bay Field Lab, Goddard's Marine Construction, Holy Grounds of St. Mary's Parish, Tall Timbers Marina, Eagan, McAllister Associates, Inc, United Site Services, Silver Hill Farms, Hewitt's Service Center, The Greenery, and Cooks Liquors and Grocery. We couldn't have done it without the generous contributions of these local businesses and good neighbors.

We were fortunate also to have many high quality educational displays and exhibits that kept our visitors busy, engaged, and interested. One of the day's highlights was Frank and Christina Allen's Backyard Conservation Workshop on rain barrels. Twenty new members joined the St. Mary's River Watershed Association at this year's RiverFest, and each was given a

free rain barrel as a bonus for joining. We still have several rain barrels on hand if you know of anyone who might be interested – just let me know.

Finally, I'd like to remind everyone that we're currently in a membership drive for the SMRWA. We now have 115 members, which is great, but we have set a goal for a total of two hundred members by December 1st, so we have a ways to go yet. But with your help, I'm confident that we'll get there. Don't forget – while supplies last, each new membership or renewal comes with your very own rain barrel. And with the holidays rapidly approaching a SMRWA membership would make a thoughtful gift.

Thanks again for your support. Together we'll make sure that the health of the St. Mary's River is something that we'll continue to celebrate.

Sincerely,
Joe Anderson
President, SMRWA



Joe Anderson

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Backyard Seminar** — *Alternative building designs, film and discussion will be 7:00 PM Thursday, November 2, 2006 at the Lexington Park Library.*
- *Next Board Meeting is December 2nd, 2006, 10am, at Lexington Park Library.*
- *We are now located on the web! Check us out at www.smrwa.org*

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We're on the web!
www.smrwa.org

OTHER NEWS

NANCY MCALLISTER RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

On Wednesday, October 4th, former SMWRA President Nancy McAllister was awarded the Southern Maryland Conservationist of the Year award by the Southern Maryland Audubon Society. This award is given each year to the individual who has contributed the most to the preservation of our region's natural resources. Nancy was honored for her leadership as the first and founding President of the St. Mary's River Watershed Association, and for her continued hard work as a leader, educator, and community activist.

Congratulations, Nancy, we're very proud of you!

GRANTS UPDATE

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant to Sustainable Development Institute is underway as Roger Stone (Project Director) makes the final budget and contract negotiations. This grant provides \$35,000 for an oyster recovery assessment project at Chesapeake Bay Field Lab and in the St. Mary's River. An Abell Foundation grant of \$5000 to "seed" the project (no pun intended) was used to purchase tanks and floats with oysters. These will be deployed to measure oyster filtering ability and to assess the development of biodiversity in aquaculture oyster communities. Gary Williams is helping us recruit dock owners from Tippity-Witchity Island south to St. Inigoes Creek as "hosts" for the aquaculture floats.

Another grant to St. Mary's College of Maryland from the Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT) will augment the \$5000 provided by the SMRWA to monitor water quality at 15 non-tidal, stream stations in the St. Mary's River Watershed. SMRWA funds will cover July and October stream sampling, and CBT monies will cover January – October 2007 sampling. With this grant we will purchase a Yellow Spring Instrument water quality device that measures temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and other water quality parameters. It will be available to watershed Association members who would like to use it. We also encourage and welcome watershed members to help us sample. January is the most pleasant month of the year to be out sampling, so we are sure many people will want to sign up!





RIVERFEST 2006 — A HUGE SUCCESS AND A WHOLE LOTTA FUN!

This year's Second Annual RiverFest was quite a success, building on last year's momentum. Visitor participation increased over last year to more than four hundred, and we attracted a number of new sponsors. While enjoying the day's events, we managed to increase our membership roles by twenty new members, and received over \$800 in donations. Not bad for a day's work! The lovely fall weather combined with the beautiful setting at Captain Jack Russell's place on Island Creek, St. George Island, provided the perfect backdrop for the day's events.

A ride on the skipjack *The Dee of St. Mary's* with Captain Jack was the highlight of the day for the saltier visitors, while live music and a number of fun, educational activities and exhibits provided others with many ways to celebrate and appreciate the Southern Maryland tidewater. The Rain Barrel Workshop given by Christina and Frank Allen were a very big hit. Those who joined SMRWA at RiverFest were able to make a rain barrel to take home as a thank you for their membership, though fitting the rain barrels into the family car did provoke some head scratching at the end of the day. Kids enjoyed painting pumpkins, beach seining on St. George Creek with Ange Funyas, oyster tonging at the dock with St. Mary's College students, going on a bird walk with Tyler Bell, or making a balloon animal with Mr. Bumblebritches (Bryan Clapp). Paddlers Bill Gallagher, Carol Paris, and Lynn Erwin shared their love of kayaking with anyone who didn't mind getting a little wet. Captain Will Gates, Master of the *Maryland Dove*, had the ship's jolly boat on view from Historic St. Mary's City. The live music provided by Indian Summer, Michael and Carrie Kline, and Gary Rue added a pleasant mood to the festivities.

There were a number of interesting and informative exhibits on display, representing the following organizations: Baltimore Harbor Watershed Association, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay Bayscapes Certification Program, Calvert Marine Museum Canoe and Kayak Club, Chesapeake Bay Field Lab (CBFL), Chesapeake Bay Trust, Circle C Oyster Ranch, Contech Stormwater Solutions, Historic St. Mary's City (HSMC) Maryland Department of Natural Resources - Piney Point Aquaculture Facility, Maryland Natural Resources Police, Maryland Native Plant Society, Patuxent River Naval Air Station - Cultural and Environmental Resources Department, Southern Maryland Audubon Society, St. Mary's County Health Department, St. Mary's County Soil Conservation, St. Mary's River Project (SMRP) St. Mary's College of Maryland, Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC) of St. Mary's College of Maryland.

We would like to thank all of the exhibitors and volunteers for making the day such a huge success. We especially thank

RIVERFEST — CONTINUED

Captain Jack Russell, Viki Volk Russell, and the Board of Directors for welcoming the SMRWA and the public to the Chesapeake Bay Field lab. The delicious homemade chili, hotdogs, and sweets were donated by Holy Grounds of St. Mary's Parish. We thank Becky and Fred Benton, Suzanne and Jim Hardin, and Linda Williams for cheerfully feeding the hundreds of RiverFest visitors. Jim Smith was a huge help in providing tables and chairs, and Jim, along with SMRWA board member Gary Williams and Scott Rickard were there to lend a hand throughout the day. Todd Rudolph kept the drinks cold and our whistles wet throughout the afternoon. We are especially grateful to the many students from St. Mary's College of Maryland (SMCM), especially members of the St. Mary's River Project Education Team led by Liane McGillen and the Student Environmental Action Coalition for helping in so many ways, especially with the children's activities. Students Kevin Boyle, Dustin Reichard and Laurie Hofmann kept the shuttle service running smoothly, with the help of four volunteers from the Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship. We greatly appreciate Evan's Seafood and St. George Island United Methodist Church for allowing us to set up a shuttle service on their properties at the eleventh hour. The RiverFest Planning Committee, led by Coordinator Abby Meatyard and members Bob Paul, Ray de Leon, and Elaine Szymkowiak are to be congratulated for planning the event. We appreciate SMRWA President Joe Anderson for his guidance and support throughout the planning process. Our PR efforts were assisted by Kathy Fulchiron who helped spread the word by posting River Fest flyers from St. Mary's City to Leonardtown. Although we are unable to list everyone who helped by name, we are very appreciative of the time and energy each and every volunteer invested in support of the SMRWA.

We are indebted to our many sponsors who helped make River Fest an overwhelming success: Chesapeake Bay Trust, Bailey's Party Services, Chaney Enterprises, Chesapeake Bay Field Lab, Cook's Liquors and Groceries, Eagan McAllister Associates, Goddard Marine Construction, Hewitt's Service Center, Holy Grounds of St. Mary's Parish, Silver Hill Farms, Tall Timbers Marina, The Greenery, and United Site Services. We couldn't have done it without you!

We hope the enthusiasm and energy generated by all who came out to support RiverFest 2006 will spread throughout the region in the coming year, as we work toward protecting, improving, and promoting the well being of our watershed and the southern Maryland community. River Fest 2007 – Here we come!

— Submitted by Elaine Szymkowiak, on behalf of the RiverFest Planning Committee



ST. MARY'S RIVER
WATERSHED
ASSOCIATION

PO Box 94
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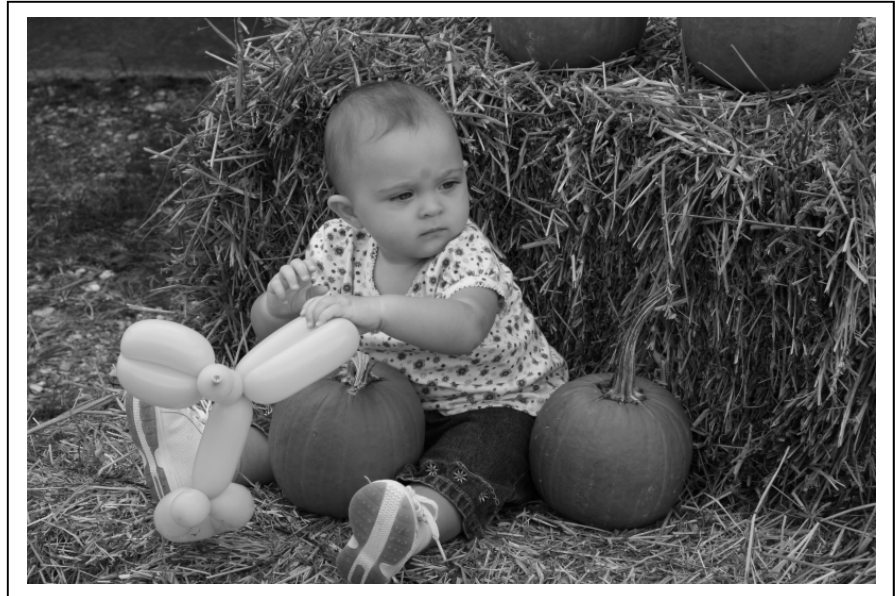
E-mail: smwatershed@yahoo.com

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.SMRWA.ORG

OUR MISSION

To protect, improve, and promote the well-being of the St. Mary's River Watershed through the collaborative efforts of economic, agricultural, environmental, social, cultural, and political stakeholders in the community.



RiverFest photos courtesy of Richard Holden.



BACKYARD WORKSHOPS

**BUILDING WITH AWARENESS:
THE CONSTRUCTION OF A HYBRID HOME**

Come to a free viewing and discussion of *Building With Awareness: The Construction of a Hybrid Home*. This award-winning DVD video on how to build beautiful and energy-efficient solar-powered homes with straw bales, adobe, mud, cob, and other natural materials. Follow the construction of one home, step-by-step, from start to finish. Learn how to construct straw bale and adobe walls, mix and apply earth plasters, install rainwater cisterns, incorporate passive solar heating and cooling, and many other green building techniques. Discover how to achieve both energy efficiency and superb aesthetics from the same materials.

This is a great film for anyone who likes to build, is having a home built, or just likes thinking about living in a well-designed and more sustainable house. Bring your popcorn and enjoy.

7 p.m. Thursday, November 2 at the Lexington Park Library

Permission granted by Ted Owens of Synchronos Design Inc. to have a free public viewing of this video. Photos courtesy of Synchronos Design Incorporated. Learn more at: www.buildingwithawareness.com

YES!

**I'D LIKE
TO HELP THE
ST. MARY'S RIVER!**

I support the St. Mary's River Watershed Association and its mission to help protect the St. Mary's River Watershed and engage the community in such efforts!



**ST. MARY'S RIVER
Watershed Association**

I would like to become a member of the SMRWA

Annual Membership Options	Price
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Limited Income	\$10.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	_____

Total: _____

Yes, I would like to become an active member/volunteer

Please make checks payable to:
St. Mary's River Watershed
Association and mail this form
along with your check to the
address below:

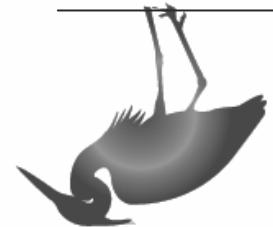
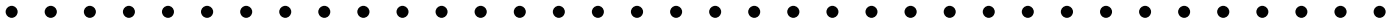
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