

# WATERSHED WATCH

ST. MARY'S RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION  
PO Box 94, St. Mary's City, MD 20686

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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of the St. Mary's River,

As Bob Dylan remarked so aptly years ago "You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows..." Well, the winds of change are blowing hard and fast across the St. Mary's River watershed.

It seems that each week brings news of new development proposals in the watershed - Glazed Pines, St. Mary's Crossing, Hunting Creek, and the list goes on and even includes a proposed crossing of the St. Mary's River, necessitated by the planned extension of Pegg Road to Rte. 5 and

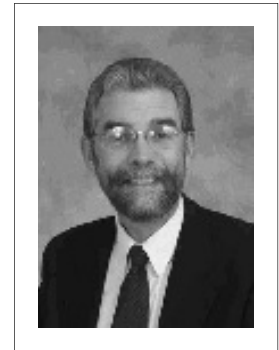
Rte. 249 in Callaway. I guess we should expect this - after all, much of the watershed lies within the Lexington Park Development District, the largest designated growth area in St. Mary's County. We have long said that most of our development should occur in this area where we already have supportive infrastructure, and can help preserve the county's rural character.

All this is fine except for one thing. We have never taken the time to determine just how much development that the St. Mary's River Watershed

can sustain without permanent degradation. We do know, for example, that we have already reached the levels of impervious surface in several areas of the watershed that may be causing serious and permanent damage to this precious resource as we speak.

It has always been the St. Mary's River Watershed Association's policy to seek answers on how to solve this dilemma—how can we continue to grow responsibly in an environmentally sensitive area?

**[Continued on Page Two—see President]**



Joe Anderson

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Rain Barrels - Rain Gardens Workshop is Tuesday September 18 at Chesapeake Bay Filed Lab at 5:30 PM*
- *RiverFest 2007 is Saturday September 29—Noon to 4 PM, at Chesapeake Bay Field Lab*
- *Next Board Meeting is October 6, 10am, at Lexington Park Library.*
- *RiverFest Raffle - see flyer*

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# RiverFest 2007

*A Celebration of the St. Mary's River*

## Talk It Up!

*RiverFest 2007 promises to be the biggest and best ever!*

*Tell your friends and neighbors.*

Saturday, September 29, from Noon to 4 PM  
at the Chesapeake Bay Field Lab on St. George Island



**T**he St. Mary's River Watershed Association is holding its 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual RiverFest on **Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, from noon to 4 pm** at the **Chesapeake Bay Field Lab on St. George Island**. The event will be held rain or shine and admission is FREE. There will be informative exhibits and live music with food and drinks available.

RiverFest is a shore side festival celebrating the natural environment and encouraging sustainable living practices within the St. Mary's River watershed. The 74 square mile St. Mary's River watershed encompasses almost a quarter of St. Mary's County's 296 square miles and hosts nearly half of St. Mary's County's 100,000 residents. RiverFest aims to connect the community to the natural environment through various fun activities and informative exhibits.

# RiverFest 2007

*A Celebration of the St. Mary's River*

Activities include skipjack rides on The Dee of St. Mary's, kayaking, pumpkin painting, bird watching, tonging for oysters, beach seining, rain barrel workshops, and Mr. Bumblebritches the clown. Learn about local organizations, sustainable living activities, and scientific studies that are taking place in the St. Mary's River watershed and in neighboring watersheds. Live music will be provided by Gary Rue, Dan Harbin, and the Rounders featuring Billy Thompson and Brian Deere. Folk duo Michael and Carrie Kline, and Indian Summer will also perform. New this year will be the RiverFest Raffle. Prizes include a North Star Charter fishing excursion or evening

cruise on the Bay, a Liquid Logic Tuxedo kayak, Sunday brunch at Brome Howard Inn, and many other fabulous prizes. Raffle tickets are \$5 each or five for \$20.

The Chesapeake Bay Field Lab is located at 16129 Piney Point Road. Directions: From Route 5 (Point Lookout Road) turn onto Route 249 (Piney Point Road). Continue onto St. George Island and proceed to the complementary parking. A free shuttle service will take you directly to RiverFest!

The St. Mary's River Watershed Association is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit organization. For more information go to [www.smrwa.org](http://www.smrwa.org) or call 240-895-4364.

## [President—Continued from page one]

Recently we have had a number of very productive meetings with folks planning developments in the watershed. Frankly, for the most part we have been impressed by what we've seen. We'll continue to have these meetings, with a goal of being able to provide input on relevant watershed planning and construction best practices, and to be able to ultimately designate some of these new projects as "Watershed Friendly". In addition, over the next two years, under the leadership of St. Mary's College's Dr. Bob Paul and St. Mary's County Environmental Planner Sue Veith, and in partnership with St. Mary's County Government, St. Mary's College, and Eagan McAllister Associates, Inc., the SMRWA will play a major role in the St Mary's River Watershed Restoration Action Strategy. This is a major, whole systems based planning initiative which will help direct growth within the watershed, and

contribute to our understanding of the critical question of just how much development the St. Mary's River can sustain without permanent damage.

It is also time for us to work diligently with county government to determine how to better distribute new growth in a balanced way throughout our other defined designated growth areas—village centers and town centers—to help take the pressure off the Lexington Park development district and the St. Mary's River. In most cases this will mean tackling the tough problem of bringing development critical infrastructure, including water and sewer to these growth areas.

You can help us tackle these tough problems by being informed. An excellent (and fun) way that you can do that is by joining us at our third annual RiverFest. This year RiverFest will be held

from noon until 4:00 pm at the Chesapeake Bay Field Lab on St. George Island. This free, family oriented event will feature food, music, skipjack rides aboard the Dee of St. Mary's, and many watershed related educational displays and activities.

Another excellent way for you to take a proactive role in the future of the St. Mary's River Watershed is to encourage your friends and neighbors to become members of the St Mary's River Watershed Association. If each of you would pledge to bring just one person into the SMRWA we would double our membership overnight to 400. There truly is strength in numbers.

Now we're talkin'.

Sincerely,

Joe Anderson

President, St. Mary's River Watershed

## St. Mary's River Oyster Restoration Feasibility Study Needs Your Help

### Get Your Feet Wet- Scientist for a Day!

The SMRWA has a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to assess the efficiency of selectively-bred native oysters in the St. Mary's River. We are studying both the filtering capability of Circle C Oyster Ranchers oysters contained in floating aquaculture bags as well as the oysters' ability to attract other organisms in building an oyster reef community. This second project uses local citizen's docks as the float sites. We sample the bags on the floats by taking the St. Mary's River Project boat to two docks then examine and count the critters in the bags. This process starts at about 8 am and concludes in the early afternoon (about 2 pm). No skills are necessary, just the willingness to learn something, get dirty, and have a good time.

Join Dr. Bob Paul, and boat captain - St. Mary's River Project Coordinator, Amy Drohan, for a fun day "in the field" as we say in the Biology Department. The available dates are:

*Thursday, August 30<sup>th</sup>*

*Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup>*

*Friday September 28<sup>th</sup>*

Contact:

Bob Paul: Bob\_Paul@emainc.com (301) 863-5895, extension 5226, or cell: (240) 577-0754 or

Amy Drohan: afdrohan@smcm.edu 240 895-4361

Reserve you place. **Hurry!!!**, we can only take one or two "helpers" on each trip.

## Backyard Conservation

**Rain Barrels and Rain Gardens Workshops** will be held Tuesday, September 18 at 5:30 PM and Saturday, September 29 at 2:15 PM, both workshops will be at the Chesapeake Bay Filed Lab on St. George Island.

Rain Barrel setups will be given away to new members who join at the \$50 level. Members can purchase one for \$35. \$75 for non members. Watch our web site for information on other fall workshops and seminars.

Reserve your rain barrel today by calling 301-862-3517 or email: [taylew@erols.com](mailto:taylew@erols.com)



## RiverFest Raffle

*Tickets \$5 Each, 5 for \$20*

### *Grand Prize—Fishing Trip or Evening Cruise*

Winner has the choice of a Chesapeake Bay fishing trip for six people or an evening cruise for up to twenty people aboard the North Star. Must be scheduled Monday through Thursday.

### *Second Place—Liquid Logic Tuxedo Kayak*

Winner receives one brand new kayak from Bike Doctor of Waldorf. Superior initial stability coupled with unmatched handling makes the 10-foot Tuxedo an excellent choice for people just entering the sport.

### *Third Place—Sunday Brunch at Brome Howard Inn*

Winner will receive Sunday Brunch for up to four people at Brome Howard Inn in Historic St. Mary's City.

SEE ENCLOSED FLYER—FOR TICKETS (301) 862-3517



### 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.

This newsletter is funded in part by the Chesapeake Bay Trust.



## IMPORTANT DATES

SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS

- Sept. 3—Work Session to prepare rain barrels - 9:00 AM; Volunteers are needed! Call 240-725-0695
- Sept. 18—Rain Barrel/Rain Garden Workshop - 5:30 PM at the Chesapeake Bay Field Lab—Sign up or show up! Potluck following workshop.
- Sept. 20-23—St. Mary's County Fair - Volunteers needed! Call 301-862-3517 to volunteer at our booth.
- Sept. 21—Get Your Feet Wet - about 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM; Volunteers are needed! Call (240) 577-0754.
- Sept. 28—Get Your Feet Wet - about 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM; Volunteers are needed! Call (240) 577-0754.
- Sept. 29—RiverFest 2007 - Noon to 4 PM at the Chesapeake Bay Field Lab on St. George Island.

