

WATERSHED WATCH

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

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1
MAY 2011

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT—

Dear Friends of the St. Mary's River,

I hope that you all are getting outside to take advantage of the beautiful spring weather we've been having. Plant a tree, vegetable patch, and flower garden. Take the time to smell the locusts, lilacs, roses and peonies. Trust me - cutting the grass can wait....

On the water, the early rockfish season continues to be quite productive and the first crabs of the season are already working their way north into our waters. Perch and hardhead can be found on the oyster bars just north of Horseshoe Point. While the oyster season is officially over, float-grown oysters are fat and quite tasty right now.

Yes, St Mary's County in the springtime is the place to be. And speaking of great places to be, I hope that you'll be with us on the banks of the St. Mary's River at Brome-Howard Inn in St. Mary's City, from 1 – 4 PM on Sunday, May 15 for our first annual "A River Affair."

Please join us for an afternoon of excellent food and drink—including some of our finest oysters and other local delicacies—fine music by the Gretchen Ritchie Jazz Cabaret, and an outstanding assembly of silent auction items as we celebrate the St. Mary's River and our newly established Oyster Sanctuary. Help us to raise money to continue our work to restore the St. Mary's River and to have it removed from the nation's list of impaired waterways. With your help, I know that together we can make this happen.

Tickets are only \$50 each, and while we'll have tickets available for pick-up at the event, we ask that you call us at 301-862-3517 to confirm your attendance.

Thanks for your support, and I hope to see you all on the river on May 15 at "A River Affair."

Sincerely,
Joe Anderson



Joe Anderson

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *First Annual River Gala & Sanctuary Birthday Party!*
1 to 4 PM, May 15, 2011 at Brome-Howard Inn
- *Annual Meeting—1-4 PM, May 15, 2011 at Brome-Howard Inn*
- *RiverFest—SAVE THE DATE!*
10 AM to 5 PM, Sept. 3, 2011 at Historic St. Mary's City

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SMRWA Launches Oyster Aquaculture Float Tax Rebate Partnership



As many of you already know, Maryland provides an income tax credit of \$500 to every taxpayer (\$1,000 for joint filers) to offset the cost of equipment to grow oysters in floats. The only part of the investment that is not covered is the sales tax. In order for land-locked homeowners to take advantage of this tax credit, we are launching a partnership program where folks can use the tax credit program to benefit from the oyster's wonderful filtering abilities. Floats are kept at partner host docks for 2 years and then the oysters are given to charity.

Join the partnership and put your tax credits into action cleaning our waterways.

3rd Annual River Cleanup Nets Canoe Loads of Trash

Seventeen volunteers paddled the St. Mary's River Water Trail on a cloudy morning last month pulling 12 tires, 20 bags of trash and recyclables, and 500 lbs of loose trash from a chilly St. Mary's River between Great Mills Canoe & Kayak Launch and the end of Atkins Road.

In addition to the tires, volunteers found dozens of beverage containers, approximately 50 plastic bags, children's toys, several metal barrels, a suitcase, a realtor's open house banner, a propane canister, two car steering wheels, and three trash cans. People are always surprised at the things we find in the river. (Mark your calendar—2nd Saturday in April)



TOP: Seventeen volunteers pulled 12 tires, 20 bags of trash and recyclables, and 500 lbs. of loose trash from the St. Mary's River on April 9, 2011. From left standing: Andy Shaw, James Waltz, Paula Riner, Matt Silliman, Maddie Alpert, Patrick Murphy, Mike Vargesco, Robb Kirchner; From left in front: Hailey Findley, Kevin Findley, Bob Lewis, John Giusti, John Hanson, Lindsay Tempinson. Also, volunteering were Jean Murphy, Merideth Taylor and Elaine Szymkowiak. LEFT: Eight-year-old Hailey Findley and her father Kevin paddle to the landing to offload trash. Photos by Jean Murphy.

Marylanders Grow Oysters Cage Collection and Spat Planting



The deck of volunteer Philip Barber's boat is piled high with cages filled with ten-month-old oysters and headed to the planting area. Photo by Bob Lewis.

In the St. Mary's River system, Creek Captains will be contacting you later this month to arrange for collection of your cages. Please take a few extra minutes to clean them up with a vigorous dunking or a hose if you have one on your dock. If the oysters are sticking to the sides or bottom of the cage, please knock them loose by rubbing the sole of your boot on the cage. Dropping the cages on the dock might work well too.

If you are remote from the St. Mary's (i.e. Clement's Bay, Breton Bay, Smith Creek, etc.), please contact Bob Lewis at 301-862-3517 or BobLewis@StMarysRiver.org and make arrangements to drop off your cages at the college pier.

If you have a boat or pickup truck, we are still looking for volunteers to assist with this project.

A River Affair

New Student Interns—

We welcome SMCM's Allison Rugila and Ryken's Kalin Hanson as our summer student interns. Allison will be working closely with the oyster projects and with community outreach efforts. Kalin will be leading a team of fellow students in the scientific discovery of issues relating to the health of our river.



Allison



Kalin



and beers, and a silent auction.

Please join us on Sunday afternoon, May 15, for the birthday of the St. Mary's River Oyster Sanctuary and a celebration of the rebirth of the St. Mary's River. This ticketed event will feature jazz cabaret with Gretchen and Randy Richie, delightful fare from the river prepared by Chef Michael Kelley, local wines

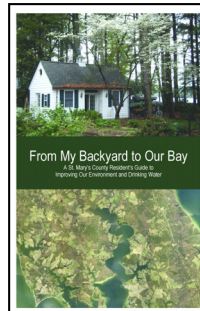
The event will be held at Brome-Howard Inn on the banks of the St. Mary's River. There will be a brief volunteer recognition ceremony and annual elections of Board of Directors. Don't miss out on this first annual gala. Meet folks (like you!) who care about our river and are doing something to restore its health.

Reserve your tickets today by emailing info@stmarysriver.org or 301-862-3517. Online users can purchase tickets through PayPal from our website www.SMRWA.org. Tickets are \$50 per person.

New Homeowner's Guide to Conservation Available Free

Forty pages of conservation techniques that will save money and reduce your impact on our rivers and streams. Published by your St. Mary's River Watershed Association and generously funded by the Cove Point Natural Heritage Trust, The Printing Press Inc., Chesapeake Bay Trust, St. Mary's Soil Conservation District, David A. Reumont CPA PC, and John & Julie McAllister.

FREE



Pick up your copy today at The Greenery, Hilltop Graphics & Gifts, St. Mary's Health Dept., or Good Earth Natural Foods.

Free download at our Web site: www.SMRWA.org



Donate Online!
www.SMRWA.org

I would like to become a member of the SMRWA

Annual Membership Options	Price
<input type="checkbox"/> Guardian	\$1,003.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Steward	\$303.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Friend	\$103.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Limited Income	\$10.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate <i>suggested</i>	\$500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	_____

Total: _____

I prefer an electronic newsletter.

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

SMRWA
PO Box 94
St. Mary's City, MD 20686

Name _____
Address _____
Email Address _____
Phone _____



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.

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

Upcoming Events:

- [Annual Members Meeting](#) to be held at *A River Affair*
- [A River Affair Fundraiser & Birthday Party](#)—Sunday, May 15 from 1 PM to 4 PM at the [Brome-Howard Inn](#) -Tickets \$50 in advance. (Volunteer recognition ceremony and election of Directors)
- [Sotterley Garden Fair](#)—Saturday-Sunday, May 14-15
- [Marylanders Grow Oysters](#) Cage Collection and Oyster Planting— May 20 through 30 - St. Mary's College of Maryland Waterfront by appointment—301-862-3517
- Oyster Bar Restoration Project—Saturday, Aug 27 from 9 AM until Noon at Muldoon River Center.
- Making The Most of Your Native Plants, Part 2—Saturday, August 27 (9:30-12:30) Pre-registration is required. Fee \$20 (\$15 for HSMC members) ([SMCM Arboretum event](#)—240-895-4964)
- [RiverFest 2011](#)—September 3 from 10AM to 5 PM at Historic St. Mary's City, *FREE ADMISSION*
- MGO Cage Distribution TBA (likely dates September 10 or 17)

