

# River Champion

CHOPTANK RIVERKEEPER®

MILES WYE RIVERKEEPER®

Autumn 2016



Header photo credit: David Harp, Tim's photo credit: Pat Anderson

*"Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed; if we permit the last virgin forests to be turned into comic books and plastic cigarette cases; if we drive the few remaining members of the wild species into zoos or to extinction; if we pollute the last clear air and dirty the last clean streams and push our paved roads through the last of the silence, so that never again will Americans be free in their own country from the noise, the exhausts, the stinks of human and automotive waste..."*

—WALLACE STEGNER, *WILDERNESS LETTER*, DECEMBER 1960

## Founder's Notes

by Tim Junkin



Recently I have been screening prospective movies for our upcoming **Seventh Annual Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival**, to be held in November. With over 70 films to choose from, the selection process, though time consuming, amazes me and brings to mind Wallace Stegner's *Wilderness Letter*, excerpted above. Film after film depicts

local people and organizations fighting in myriad ways for their environment, and winning against large industrial interests—advocating for the Hurricane River in Alabama, fighting strip-mining to save the wild rivers of the Klamath-Siskiyou region of western Oregon, battling coal ash in western Pennsylvania, fracking in New York State, saving marine habitats in Scotland and Haiti. From Colorado to Lake Superior, the Chesapeake to the Gulf of Mexico, communities are standing together to fight for their lands. One film, *Faith Against Fracking*, portrays the growing consensus within all of the major faith communities—Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist—that not just caring for creation, but advocating for creation is a spiritual duty.

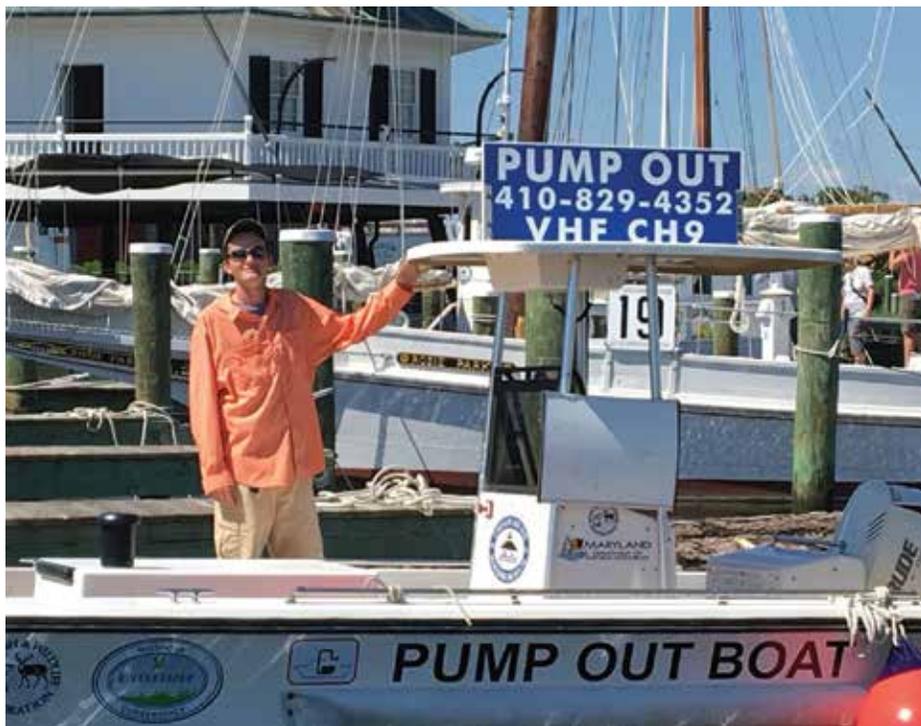
As this issue of *River Champion* reflects, at Midshore Riverkeeper Conservancy (MRC) each of our staff of ten is engaged in this effort. The spring and summer have been busy times.

- Our water quality monitoring program is underway with over 50 volunteer Creekwatchers supplementing the work of our Riverkeepers, scientists and other staff.
- We completed several large projects, including the Kudner Property Restoration in Queen Anne's County, an agricultural woodchip bioreactor in Delaware at the headwaters of the Choptank, the Cherry Lane stream bank restoration in Caroline County, and a large two-stage ditch restoration that runs to the Wye River.
- We installed a rain garden with a faith-based community at Waugh Chapel in Cambridge.
- We are in the process of installing awareness-raising signs at three public landings in Talbot County.

*(continued on page 2)*



- We completed our academic environmental education program *Students for Streams* and our *Nurture by Nature* summer program.
- We continued to expand and manage our Marylanders Grow Oysters (MGO) program, adding 500 cages.
- In June we learned that the Maryland Department of Natural Resources awarded MRC our largest project grant to date, nearly \$745,000 for stormwater retrofits at Chesapeake College.
- Our executive director continues to provide leadership on important state and regional policy panels, including the Delmarva Land and Litter Collaborative and the Maryland State Nutrient Management Panel.
- Our Choptank Riverkeeper helped lead the legislative effort that culminated in the new Sustainable Oyster Population and Fishery Act of 2016 that for the first time mandates science-based oyster management.



Teddy Miller, MRC Pumpout Boat Captain

- Our pumpout boat is operating on the Miles and Wye Rivers through October 16. It recently pumped out over 1,000 pounds of waste in one weekend. In the first two months of operation, we pumped over 5,000 gallons, just over one third of our goal for the 2016 season. Need a pump out? Call 410-829-4352 or VHF CH9.

All of this valuable work flows from the community support that you provide.

Looking forward, I hope all of you who enjoy cycling will participate in our *Ride for Clean Rivers* on September 18, and that all of you will plan to attend our film festivals on November 11 in Cambridge and November 18 in Easton and enjoy what I think is our strongest film program ever.

Please stop by our office any time if you have questions or concerns about our rivers, our work, our events, or just to chat. We enjoy and appreciate hearing from you. 🦀

Thank you for your support!

## Welcome Keitasha Royal!



MRC is pleased to announce that Keitasha Royal has joined our team as our 2016-17 Chesapeake Conservation Corps (CCC) Volunteer. CCC is a program that provides green job training for young people through environmental and energy conservation projects. This program is supported by Chesapeake Bay Trust, Constellation Energy, the National Park Service and the State of Maryland.

Originally from San Diego, Keitasha graduated this past June from the University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB) with a B.S. in Hydrologic Sciences and Policy. She's focused on fluvial systems, particularly river restoration and heavy metals contamination. In 2014, Keitasha cofounded a student organization at UCSB called *Your Children's Trees*, which coordinated various restoration projects to engage the community in urban forestry practices.

Keitasha says, "I chose MRC because it gives me the best opportunity to engage with the community, promote environmental education, understand water quality in Midshore rivers, and overall learn about the Chesapeake watershed." 🦀

# MRC Cuts Ribbon on Kudner Property Restoration



Pictured left to right: MRC Founder Tim Junkin, MRC Board Member Bruce Abel, Maryland State Delegate Steve Arentz, Queen Anne's County Commissioner Robert Buckey, MRC Director of Operations Kristin Junkin, Will Ryall and Jessica Lister of Environmental Concern, Queen Anne's County Commissioner James Moran, Sarah Hilderbrand of DNR, Kelly Swartout of Chesapeake Bay Trust, and Dana Reiss of DNR.



**On June 21 MRC celebrated the completion of a multi-year restoration project at the Kudner property in Queenstown.**

In 2012 MRC undertook the first-ever Wye River Watershed Assessment. The final report identified three priority areas where restoration projects could benefit the water quality in the Wye River: 1) the Kudner property; 2) Wye Ferry Landing; and 3) the Chesapeake College campus.

In April 2016 MRC completed its management of the design, construction, and grant funding of the Kudner Property Restoration Initiative. The Kudner property is part of the Queen Anne's County Parks system. The parcel comprises approximately 250 acres that drain directly into the Wye River. There are more than 80 acres in active farmland adjacent to Bennett Point Road.

The final project included the restoration of a 1.65-acre wetland and the construction of a 2.40-acre wetland along with the

creation of a two-stage gabion outlet weir, a series of grade control weirs to allow non-erosive passage of runoff and to reduce groundwater drawdown within the existing wetland, three berms, a shrub scrub habitat area, and a forested upland habitat area. By filtering nearly all of the farmland runoff, the project is expected to prevent approximately 47 pounds of total nitrogen, 4-5 pounds of total phosphorus, and 584 pounds of sediment from entering the Wye River annually.

MRC's collaborative partners included Queen Anne's County; Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT), which funded the design; and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), which funded the construction. Environmental Concern was hired to design and construct the project.

MRC has also completed projects at Wye Ferry Landing and Chesapeake College. We are currently working with the college on the design and completion of a major multi-component "step pool" stream restoration project being funded through the Chesapeake & Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund administered by DNR. Over the past few years, MRC has obtained significant outside funding to install restoration projects in four Midshore counties. 

# Choptank Riverkeeper Log

matt@midshoreriverkeeper.org

Photo credit: Pat Anderson



Matt Pluta

**Greetings water enthusiasts!** I thought I'd provide some flashes from the Choptank River, including a highlight on the early season water quality and updates on ongoing issues.

1. At the start of our water quality sampling season this spring (April–June), we saw signs of a rebounding river; but we also saw clear distinctions between the distant reaches of this great river system. From the Choptank River Bridge down to the Chesapeake Bay, we saw good water clarity levels, with an average above 5.5 feet, resulting in continued recovery of underwater grasses. Dissolved oxygen was also good in this region, with average levels of 8 mg/L. In contrast, the region north of the town of Choptank had average water clarity of 1.5 ft. and average dissolved oxygen levels below 6.6 mg/L.

Identifying the distinction between the upper and lower parts of the river will help us more accurately report on the overall water quality of the river. As a result, we've decided to make changes to the way we report the grade for the Choptank River. In our 2015 Report Card, the Choptank River received a B-grade overall. After better understanding the differences between the upper and lower part of the Choptank, we feel that giving the river just one grade does not accurately depict areas that experience lower water quality. Our future reporting will include two overall grades for the Choptank River: one for the lower river in the region below the town of Choptank, and another for the upper river in the region north of the town of Choptank.

2. This past legislative session in the General Assembly, we fought tirelessly for what became the Sustainable Oyster Population and Fishery Act of 2016, and we won! The new law requires the Department of Natural Resources, in consultation with the University of

Maryland Center for Environmental Studies, to conduct a "stock assessment" to provide guidance for the development of biological reference points; identify objective and measurable means to determine if the public oyster fishery is operating within those reference points; and identify management strategies to address the maintenance of a sustainable oyster population and fishery. Surprisingly, the oyster fishery has not been managed using sound science before this bill made it mandatory. The decreasing oyster population reflected that outdated management style. Incorporating science-based management strategies helped bring back the striped bass population, and we're enthusiastic that the same approach will revitalize our oyster population.

3. Awareness is a key factor in our advocacy and outreach initiatives. This summer, MRC initiated a new outreach tool in partnership with Talbot County. We designed and will install water quality awareness signs at three heavily-used boat landings throughout the county. These signs will emphasize the importance of clean water to our economy and environment. The signs will offer a list of practices that people can adopt on the water or at home.

We're hopeful that these positive changes in water quality and in the ways we view and manage our natural resources will bolster the growing community of believers willing to act in the fight for clean water. Outreach, statewide advocacy, and water quality monitoring are some of the many tools we use to protect our rivers and their natural resources. There are opportunities at all levels for you to get involved. Make your voice heard! 

### Stewards for Clean Water

Talbot County has some of the most beautiful rivers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. To restore and protect our natural resources, we all must do our part.



Photo credit: Mary Redgraves

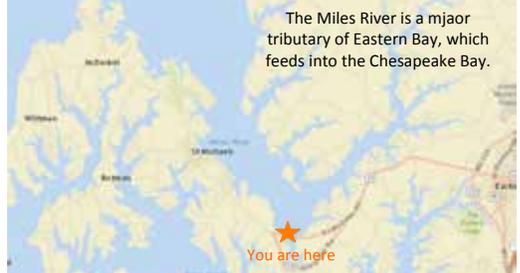
### YOU Can Help!

1. Never dump into the river! Only discharge boat waste into approved pumpout facilities. **Utilize Midshore Riverkeeper Conservancy's pumpout boat at no charge: 410-829-4352 or VHF Channel 9.**
2. Only dispose boat debris, including cigarettes, into trash cans.
3. Reduce your use of lawn fertilizer. If you must fertilize, please do so responsibly.
4. Properly dispose of your pet's waste.

Sign for Oak Creek Landing

## OAK CREEK LANDING

The Miles River is a major tributary of Eastern Bay, which feeds into the Chesapeake Bay.



**You are here**

### Clean Water?

Clean water supports all aquatic life and is the cornerstone of our economy. Polluted rivers pose a hazard to human health and threaten local livelihoods.



Photo credit: Kathy Bosin

 Thank you for doing your part to help keep our rivers clean! 

For more information, visit: [midshoreriverkeeper.org](http://midshoreriverkeeper.org)

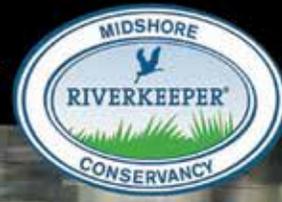
12th ANNUAL  
**RIDE for  
CLEAN RIVERS**

FORMERLY TOUR de TALBOT

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2016  
CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE  
WYE MILLS, MD

Register at [rideforcleanrivers.org](http://rideforcleanrivers.org)

In support of



On Sunday, September 18, MRC staff and riders from across the region will take to the backroads of Queen Anne's, Caroline, and Talbot Counties in support of clean rivers. It is a day filled with fun, friends, and fitness. Riders of all ages and levels enjoy cycling across the beautiful Eastern Shore of Maryland, choosing from 20-mile, 35-mile, or 62-mile (metric century) routes, which all include SAG support and rest stops with food and drink.

The ride begins and ends at Chesapeake College in Wye Mills, where participants will kick off their morning with a light snack. Upon returning to the campus, riders and volunteers will enjoy a BBQ lunch, beverages and beer, and live music in celebration of clean water.

MRC looks forward to continued support from the community for this year's event. Thank you to Agency of Record, BB&T Bank, *Bicycling* magazine, Bike Doctor, Chesapeake College, Dock Street Foundation, S.E.W. Friel, KELLY Benefit Strategies, Sprout, The Brewer's Art and YMCA-Easton for sponsoring the event. It is not too late to create your own team and join MRC in support of cleaner Midshore rivers.

Register online through September 15 or in person on the morning of the ride! All proceeds go toward MRC's ongoing education, restoration, and water quality monitoring programs.

To register or learn more, visit [rideforcleanrivers.org](http://rideforcleanrivers.org). For more information, please contact Sarah Boynton at 443.385.0511 or [sarah@midshoreeriverkeeper.org](mailto:sarah@midshoreeriverkeeper.org). 

**Andy Coombs Memorial Volunteer Award**



**Andy Coombs**

The Andy Coombs Memorial Volunteer Award is given to those individuals who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to help MRC in our many programs including water sampling, education, outreach and advocacy. These award recipients have personally contributed to a better environment for all of us.

Andy Coombs, a dedicated friend and volunteer for many years at MRC, passed away unexpectedly on April 15, 2016. Whether building oyster floats, planting oysters on local sanctuaries, collecting water quality samples, or assisting with our annual events, Andy was a lead volunteer and a beloved member of the MRC family. In his honor, our annual volunteer award will be named for him.

The Andy Coombs Memorial Fund will be active in perpetuity to help support MRC's many volunteer programs.

Without the hard work and strong support of volunteers, MRC could not accomplish our clean water goals. Our volunteers help with water quality monitoring, education, outreach, advocacy, oyster growing, and more.

**Volunteer of the Year Award Recipients**

2016: Mike Bilek, Joe Jelich, Linda Scoggins  
2015: Andy Coombs, Lois Lindsley, Dave Perry, Jean Rhian, Bob Wolffe 

## Kristin Junkin—Chesapeake College Restoration



Greg Farley and Kristin Junkin at Chesapeake College Photo by Will Junkin

### In the trenches...

This past year, MRC led an on-site meeting at a potential major restoration project location adjacent to the Wye River. The meeting had been scheduled for a weekday morning. In attendance were several officials from state and federal regulatory agencies, county staff, a design engineer, and representatives of the landowner, many of them arriving in pickup trucks and cammo' jackets. And Kristin Junkin represented MRC.

The forecast that morning was for rain. Kristin, always prepared, was dressed in her periwinkle foul-weather jacket with hood, waterproof pants, and yellow muck boots. Witnesses to this event describe Kristin, standing in the mud of the stream bank, in the pouring rain, dry and comfy, directing these dozen people around, all of whom were soaking wet, and all of whom followed her lead around the project site.

Flash forward to mid-June:

MRC was awarded its largest project grant ever, nearly \$745,000, by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Chesapeake & Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund to manage a group of restoration projects and stormwater retrofits on the campus of Chesapeake College. This is a project that Kristin developed, coordinated, wrote the grant for, and now will manage.

### History in the making...

In 2009, when MRC Founder, Tim Junkin, was beginning to get this fledgling organization off the ground, he asked Kristin to work one day a week to keep the finances and develop a database. Neither anticipated how quickly and substantially MRC would grow. One-day-a-week quickly morphed into two, and then into half-time, and soon Kristin was "all in" as MRC's director of operations.

Today, while she typically does her work quietly and behind the scenes, Kristin is involved in nearly every facet of MRC's effort, ensuring that all of its work is done with excellence and professionalism. While she has been instrumental in building MRC's grant program, one that has already brought several million dollars in outside funding to our communities for water quality improvement projects, and which continues to grow, her contributions are much more. Probably most important is her role in nurturing and

mentoring staff. Over the years, MRC has recruited a plethora of young professionals keenly passionate about conservation. In her unassuming way, Kristin has helped channel and guide their imaginative energies, day after day, project by project, teaching and leading by example.

A graduate of the University of Virginia's School of Law, Kristin briefly practiced corporate and tax law but ended up starting and building a successful government contracting business in Washington DC. In the process, she became adept not only at the complexities of government contracting, but also at all aspects of managing a business. MRC, its community, and our Midshore environment have all been the beneficiaries of the multifaceted skills she developed through these careers.

Kristin handles all of MRC's finances, writes key grant proposals, and supervises all grant reporting. Kristin selects and manages engineers and contractors and manages major design and construction work. As part of all this, she regularly interfaces with major project funders, grantors, county officials, and project partners. She helps the executive director with staff management, and is integrally involved in education, outreach, and strategic planning.

### Chesapeake College...

In 2013, MRC completed an Assessment of the Wye River, prioritizing locations where pollution-reduction projects would benefit water quality. Chesapeake College was one of the sites identified. Much of the infrastructure of the college was built in the 1960s. As the campus has grown, stormwater issues have magnified. MRC approached the college and, working



### LIFE APART FROM MRC...

In addition to her many responsibilities at MRC, Kristin still has time for other interests. These include her semi-retired husband; two infant grandsons, Huck and Forest; cycling and tennis; her two grown kids, Isabel (the Chester Riverkeeper) and Will (a PhD candidate in geology at UC Santa Barbara) and, of course, remaining loyal to the DC book club she founded twenty-seven years ago.

collaboratively with its officials, successfully obtained funding for and managed several small projects on the campus. Building on those successes, Kristin began working with the college to design a comprehensive project to address its major stormwater challenges.

The DNR grant is the first phase of that effort. It will fund the construction of a large Regenerative Stormwater Conveyance, which uses step pools to slow down and treat runoff from the college's hard surfaces and surrounding agricultural fields. The stream to be restored empties into the headwaters of the Wye East River. Additionally, the funding will pay for the construction of four bioretention projects and a wetland on the campus. The projects will intersect with education programs at the college, provide opportunities for students to study the effects of the restoration work and to help maintain the new infrastructure, and will result in significant reductions of nutrients and sediment entering the river.

Greg Farley, Professor of Biological Science and Director of Chesapeake College's Center for Leadership in Environmental Education, has been a key partner in the development of this project, and has worked closely with Kristin in shepherding it through the many levels of required approvals. He reflects on their joint accomplishment:

*I love working with Kristin. Her ability to bring together projects, people, and resources for the Chesapeake College campus is unparalleled. Through her, I've met scientists, engineers, environmentalists, and policy professionals, and I've consistently been impressed at her ability to get all of those people to work together. She never loses sight of the big picture, either, and she and MRC have had a lasting impact on our campus—one that will be visible for generations of future students, faculty, staff, and residents of the Midshore. I'm fortunate to count her among my friends and allies, and I hope we will continue to work together in the years to come!* 🦀



**NEWSFLASH:** On July 26, Queen Anne's County allocated an additional \$294,000 for this project.



environmental protections. Citizen science, with proper training and protocols, similar to our volunteer water testing program, is becoming more valuable in river and Bay restoration. So if you see an SAV bed, be gentle; do not run a boat through it as engine propellers can do significant damage to grass beds and could get clogged and cause engine overheating. 🦀

## Bay Grasses in Our Rivers

Recently there has been a resurgence of bay grasses, also known as submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV). As these underwater grasses are now more frequently seen in both the Bay and in our rivers, I thought it would be helpful to write about some of the more common varieties that grow locally on the Midshore. SAV is a vital cog in our ecosystem—one that has been decimated from nutrient pollution and largely absent from our watersheds for decades. However, recently large grass beds have emerged in the Miles and Wye Rivers and along the east and west shorelines of Eastern Bay. DNR, among others, has measured a 30% to 35% increase in SAV over the last two years. The good news is that SAV expansion and growth is a key indicator of the Bay's health.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PRESERVE SAV

- Reduce the amount of fertilizers applied to lawns.
- Reduce shoreline erosion by planting appropriate buffer vegetation.
- When boating, avoid disturbing SAV beds—propellers can tear up roots.
- If you own waterfront property, avoid using herbicides.

Bay grasses provide essential habitat and food for fish, crabs and waterfowl, absorb harmful nutrients, add oxygen to the water, trap sediment, and prevent erosion.

While about 20 species of SAV exist in the Chesapeake Bay, we have 5 or 6 varieties that we commonly find on the Midshore. Our rivers support SAV that thrives in low or medium salinity while Eastern Bay produces grasses that thrive in medium to high salinity. Local varieties are seen in the adjacent photographs.

MRC, in collaboration with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), is starting an SAV research and mapping project. We plan to study and map SAV beds on the Midshore and combine our data with others' to create a comprehensive database of SAV location, health, type, and other parameters that will assist VIMS. This is important for many reasons, including that mapped SAV beds receive additional



**Coontail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*)**  
courtesy Ches. Bay Program  
Stiff and brittle leaves with fine teeth, grass floats, no roots.



**Sago Pondweed (*Stuckenia pectinata*)**  
courtesy of UMCES  
Threadlike leaves abundantly branched, roots long and straight, tolerates strong current.



**Horned Pondweed (*Zannichellia palustris*)**  
courtesy Ches. Bay Program  
Long, linear leaves, tapering to a point, seeds horn shaped, first SAV to appear in spring.



**Widgeon Grass (*Ruppia maritima*)**  
courtesy Dave Harp  
Straight thread-like leaves, branching stems, most common in shallows with sandy bottoms, valuable food for waterfowl.



**Elgrass (*Zostera marina*)**  
courtesy NOAA  
Thick creeping roots, ribbon-like leaves, key habitat for crabs, scallop, seahorse, trout.



**Redhead Grass (*Potamogeton perfoliatus*)**  
courtesy Dave Harp  
Oval leaves wrapped around stems, extensive roots, named for redhead ducks which eat it.

## TERRENCE AND MARTHA HIGGINS



MRC has grown its membership to well over 2,000 families. As an organization, we are curious to learn how people find out about MRC and why they choose to support our mission. Recently, we had the opportunity to talk with Terrence and Martha Higgins, who live at the very headwaters of the Choptank River.

Martha and Terrence, denizens of the Choptank since 1964, appreciate the need for citizen-

supported organizations professionally equipped to improve Delmarva rivers.

Martha, a 22-year elementary and special education teacher in Kent County, Delaware, and Terrence, a 40-year professor

(now Professor Emeritus) and director of the Environmental Sciences Programs at Wesley College, have always considered themselves "blessed" to live and raise their family on the unique Choptank River. Several years ago, they acquired forested acreage with a spring-fed stream that flows into the mill pond at the head of the Choptank. They placed this mature woodland under permanent preservation with Delaware's Kent County Conservancy, an organization that they both played an active role in starting. They take great care in making certain that the various water flows that exit their properties "do no harm" to the downstream Choptank.

Martha and Terrence take pride in giving to MRC on a monthly basis and encourage others to do the same. They believe that monthly donations result in positive impacts on organizations. Terrence said, "It is our firm belief that MRC is worthy of our long term, continued monthly financial, professional, and volunteer support. The exceptional team of professionals that comprise MRC have the appropriate vision, plans, and dedication to dramatically and permanently improve our watershed and its river." 🦀

## Students for Streams School Bulletin by Elle O'Brien, elle@midshoreriverkeeper.org

*Students for Streams* ended with a bang in June as classes implemented student-led action projects. As part of the Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience, over 500 students participated in a local stream investigation. With guidance from MRC educators, students assessed local streams biologically, chemically, physically, and geomorphically. Based on their findings and what they had learned through the year about best management practices and threats to our local rivers, students researched, proposed, and implemented action projects to make a difference in their local environment.

*Students for Streams* 2015-2016 9<sup>th</sup> graders accomplished:

- Building 94 oyster cages to increase oyster populations
- Planting over 2,950 native plants
- Collecting over 27 bags of litter
- Designing two environmental educational signs
- Leading three environmental awareness campaigns
- Building a green roof structure
- Revitalizing a school courtyard

Linda Barnes, a *Students for Streams* participating teacher at North Dorchester High School described the process: "The students were extremely excited to get out of the classroom and actually be hands-on with their project! It gave students a sense of ownership as they felt as though it was really their environmental project and that they had total say in the development process."



Students celebrate the completion of their action project at ribbon cutting for the restored courtyard at Cambridge-South Dorchester High School.

Thank you to Chesapeake Bay Trust and Maryland DNR for funding these amazing projects! We're looking forward to what this coming year of *Students for Streams* brings! 🦀



Elizabeth Brown

As MRC's 2015-16 Chesapeake Conservation Corps (CCC) Volunteer, I've been able to rack up a long list of new experiences: shucking and eating an oyster, taking water samples at a bioreactor, and attending legislative hearings in Annapolis. Another one of these new experiences was planning and implementing the installation of a rain garden at Waugh Chapel United Methodist Church in Cambridge—my capstone project for the CCC program. Recently, MRC has begun to increase its presence in Cambridge. We hosted our first Wild & Scenic Film Festival there in Fall 2015, and our second State of the Rivers presentation last spring. However, great potential still exists for outreach and community greening efforts in Cambridge.

I was eager to work with Waugh Chapel because they were already an environmental leader in the community. Since spring 2015, they've installed 50 raised beds for a community garden behind the church, one of the largest community gardens on the Eastern Shore. The majority of these raised beds are available to community members for only \$5 per year, and the fee is waived for anyone unable to pay. The remainder of the beds either supply Waugh Chapel's food pantry or are tended by children participating in an afterschool 4H program.

Building on their successful community garden, I worked with Waugh Chapel to design a rain garden on their property. A rain garden is a shallow depression in the ground filled with native flowers, grasses, and shrubs, whose roots soak up stormwater running off of impervious surfaces, such as roofs and sidewalks. By holding this stormwater and allowing it to infiltrate into the ground, rain gardens reduce runoff and filter out nutrients and pollutants. The project at Waugh Chapel was installed so that the downspout, which drains a portion of the church's large roof, now flows directly into the rain garden.

After Kelly's Excavating and Wye Gardens excavated and tilled the site, over 25 Cambridge community members of all ages volunteered their Saturday morning to plant and mulch the rain garden. In total, these volunteers planted 173 plants representing 15 different native species. Thanks to their hard work, a large portion of the stormwater runoff from Waugh Chapel will be absorbed by the native plants in this rain garden, improving water quality in the Choptank River for years to come. Chesapeake Bay Trust and Royal Bank of Canada funded the project. MRC's partners included Wye Gardens, Kelly's Excavating, Environmental Concern, ACE Hardware, and the Cambridge Community Garden.

MRC hopes to continue partnering with places of worship in the area. If you belong to a center of faith that has space on its property for a rain garden, tree planting, or rain barrels, please reach out to us. Or if you would like to discuss ideas to engage your community in conservation advocacy we'd welcome the opportunity to help. At MRC we seek to engage as many groups as possible within our watershed. We're already working with youth, farmers, and citizen scientists; partnering with the faith community is a natural fit. 🦀

MRC staff members and volunteers gather around the finished rain garden at Waugh Chapel UMC in Cambridge. The planting was organized by Elizabeth Brown of MRC (center, in hat and green shirt) and Reverend Emmanuel Johnson of Waugh Chapel (third from the right, in yellow shirt).

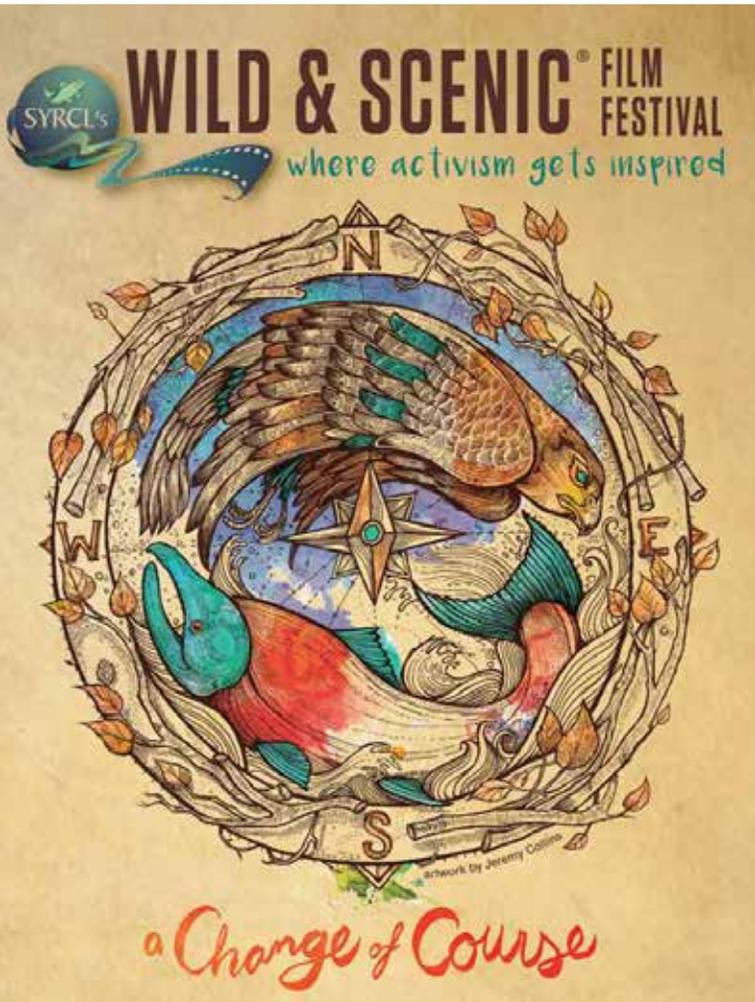
The CCC Volunteer program is funded by Chesapeake Bay Trust.



# SAVE THE DATES!

## 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival "A Change of Course"

two venues,  
two programs,  
two times to see great films!



When the leaves start to change and the air turns crisp, it's time for MRC's Wild & Scenic Film Festival. With the overwhelming positive response to last year's Cambridge event, MRC is excited to again open the Wild & Scenic Film Festival in Cambridge on November 11 at 6 pm. The festival will continue down the river, where the Avalon Theatre will open its doors on Friday, November 18 at 6 pm for an evening of films, friends, food, drink, and an exciting silent auction.

We invite you to attend both events—each of these evenings will present a different hour-long program of short adventure and environmental films. The evening at the Avalon includes a reception with an open bar serving wine and beer and a buffet of delicious appetizers and desserts from local community partners. While enjoying a beverage of their choice, guests may peruse and bid on silent auction items, such as an elegant evening at the Bartlett Pear, dinner for ten prepared by renowned chef Giancarlo Tondi and served in a semiprivate room at Scossa Restaurant, or a package of six relaxing massages at Kissed by the Sun Spa. Guests of the Cambridge event will view their own unique hour-long program while enjoying local brews and fare from in and around the community. New this year in Cambridge will be a wine pull raffle.

Again this year, MRC is pleased to host a Children's Film Festival for local elementary school classes.

For further information, please contact Sarah Boynton at 443.385.0511 or email [sarah@midshoreriverkeeper.org](mailto:sarah@midshoreriverkeeper.org).

To purchase tickets...

### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11 CAMBRIDGE

Gallery 447

447 Race Street, Cambridge, MD

**Online:** [midshoreriverkeeper.org](http://midshoreriverkeeper.org)

**In person presales:**

MRC, 24 N. Harrison Street, Easton, MD

### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18 EASTON

Avalon Theatre

40 E. Dover Street, Easton, MD

**Online:** [avalontheatre.com](http://avalontheatre.com)

**Avalon Box Office:** in person

or by phone 410- 822-7299

Tickets for both programs will be available at the door.



When planning for the future, please consider Midshore Riverkeeper Conservancy in your estate planning. MRC has multiple avenues on how one can leave a gift that will keep giving in perpetuity. For more information, call Jeffrey Horstman, Executive Director at 443.385.0511.



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## upcoming events

Get the most up-to-date info at  
[midshoreriverkeeper.org](http://midshoreriverkeeper.org)

### **OYSTERS & BEER BRASSERIE BRIGHTWELL, EASTON Saturday, September 17**

Featuring pairings of local aquaculture oysters and beer from Evolution Craft Brewing Company (EVO). Proceeds benefit MRC.

### **RIDE FOR CLEAN RIVERS (formerly Tour de Talbot) Sunday, September 18, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.**

Choose from 62-mile (metric century), 35-mile and 20-mile routes beginning and ending at Chesapeake College in Wye Mills. All proceeds benefit MRC. Info/registration: [rideforcleanrivers.org](http://rideforcleanrivers.org) or [sarah@midshoreriverkeeper.org](mailto:sarah@midshoreriverkeeper.org)

### **BOOK LAUNCH PARTY EASTERN SHORE CONSERVATION CENTER EASTON Thursday, October 27, 4–6 p.m.**

Tom Horton and David Harp will give a presentation and sign copies of their new book *Choptank Odyssey: Celebrating a Great Chesapeake River*. Cosponsored by MRC, Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, and Adkins Arboretum.

### **WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL Friday, November 11, 6 p.m.**

Gallery 447, Cambridge

### **Friday, November 18, 6 p.m.** Avalon Theatre, Easton

**MRC is supported by community donations. Please think of us in your year-end giving. Thank you.**

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