

MAGOTHY RIVER ASSOCIATION DECEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

Editor: Andrea Germain

Happy Holidays to you all!

MRA has had a busy 2024. Here are some of the highlights.

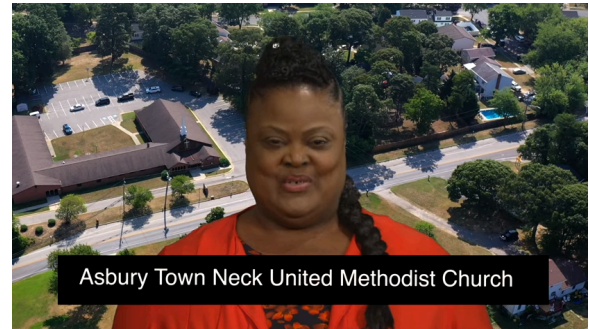
First, thank you to all of our volunteer officers, donors, members and volunteers who are dedicated to collecting data and working to improve and monitor water quality, fish populations and improving awareness of damage from excess nutrients coming from fertilizers and damage from storm water runoff.

Without all of you, the MRA could not be effective and impactful. Working together, we will preserve and protect the quality of life within the Magothy River watershed.

We have so many activities, and we need your help. Please consider becoming a member and volunteer.

LIVING HISTORY: Asbury Town Neck (ATN) United Methodist Church Documentary

Local filmmaker and MRA volunteer Charles Germain, created an impactful 50-minute documentary about ATN in Severna Park. This work was a two-year collaboration between the ATN Church and MRA, featuring



extensive interviews with ten longtime ATN members, who talk about growing up in Severna Park in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s.

ATN recently celebrated their 136th anniversary. The church was founded in the 1880s initially as a Sunday school for little Black boys and girls in the neighborhood around the headwaters of Cattail Creek. The church was built on land that was originally part of the Old Stone House Plantation. A two-room Rosenwald School and church was first built in the 1920s. Many of the ATN members attended elementary school there and later, until 1967 were bused to Bates High School in Annapolis,

As ATN grew, it became the center of the local Black community. The church members who were interviewed shed light on the way that life used to be in the Magothy River watershed, including topics ranging from the environment to segregation.

The project was funded in part by the Arts Council of Anne Arundel County.

You can view the documentary on YouTube at

<https://youtu.be/ZqSaB03wqvs>



ALERT: Berrywood Community Experiences Dangerous Sulfur Bacteria Bloom

In October, the Berrywood Community experienced a dangerous sulfur bacteria bloom on Cattail Creek. This bloom is also known as a Pistachio Tide, because of its color. We believe that the bloom was caused by a week of rain that washed nutrients, particularly fertilizers, into the water.

At low levels, hydrogen sulfide causes irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat. Moderate levels can cause headache, dizziness, nausea, and vomiting, as well as coughing and difficulty in breathing. Higher levels can cause shock, convulsions, coma, and death.

MRA reported the situation to the County Health Department, but there has been little response. We also alerted Berrywood parents to keep children away from the creek until the bloom subsided.

We are certain that the bloom will recur as we continue to contaminate the creek with nutrients.

Stay alert for an unpleasant rotten egg smell coming from the water: It is a warning sign that our creek is dangerous during the bloom.



Lake Waterford

For those of you who have driven by Lake Waterford, you may have noticed that the County is removing a parking lot and installing a bioretention/ stormwater wetland area that will capture roadwater runoff from Rt. 648, so that the runoff does not contaminate the lake and compromise the yellow perch spawning corridor.

The MRA applauds the AA Co. Executive Pittman administration and DPW for protecting this very valuable resource. There are also plans to dredge Lake Waterford in June 2025.

The dredging is necessary to remove the toxic sediment that has accumulated over the years. Without the dredging, the lake will continue to shrink and eventually be half the size.

Attend the State of the Magothy in March to hear the keynote speaker, Joe Ports from Anne Arundel County Department of Public Works Watershed Restoration.



LIVING HISTORY: Documentary, Betty Cooke Memories of Whippoorwill Girl Scout Camp

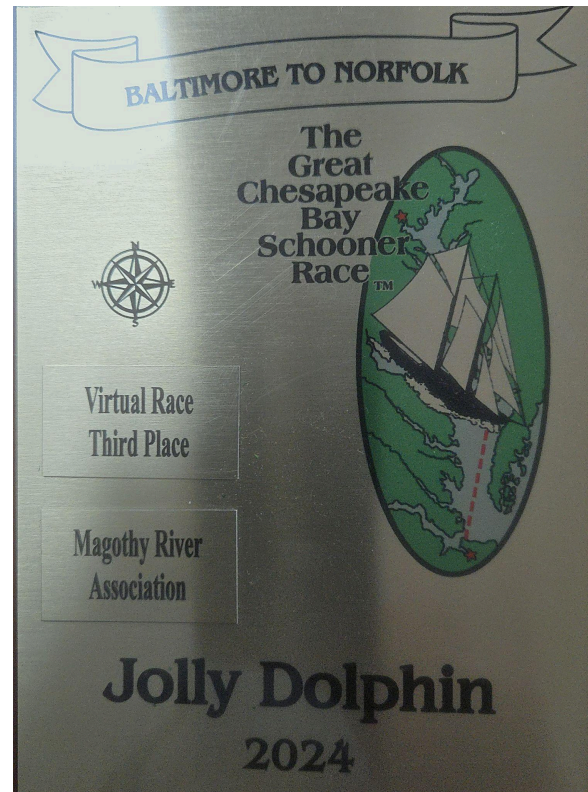
In the fall, a 12-minute video, produced by MRA member and volunteer, Charles Germain was released for viewing on YouTube.

Betty Cooke, was a well-known artist and jewelry maker, and a former department chair at the Maryland Institute College of Art, and she was a Girl Scout from 1937-1945 who spent summers attending Camp Whippoorwill. The interview focused on her memories of attending Girl Scout camp on the Magothy River. Mrs. Cooke died in

August 2024, a few weeks after the interview; she was 100 years old.

This fascinating video can be viewed on YouTube at

<https://youtu.be/uCoJnEyOnUc>



FUNDRAISING: Jolly Dolphin Participates in the Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Virtual Race

In September, for the second year in a row, the MRA participated with the Jolly Dolphin in the Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Virtual Race. Our goal was to raise \$5,000 to purchase oyster spat for our reefs in the Magothy River. MRA donors raised \$7,000, exceeding our goal!

The most generous donors were invited by Captain Jack to participate in a parade of boats as they circled the Baltimore harbor.

Thank you Captain Jack!
Many thanks to all of the donors!

We are already working with Captain Jack Zuraw to do it again next year.



PROGRAM: And More on Oysters!

In October, the MRA quickly mobilized to accept about 365 bags of oyster spat donated to us by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. MRA volunteers made 2 trips to Shady Side to pick up the oyster bags and transfer the oyster spat into shallow water near Henderson Point. The next day, volunteers moved more bags to our Rock Point oyster bar for planting. MRA studies have documented

that the oysters planted in the Magothy will live 5-10 years and filter the water.

We are looking forward to studying oyster growth and survival in 2025. Contribute to the Oyster Restoration fund. Our goal is \$60,000 and so far we have raised \$20,000

Donations and Volunteers needed.
Watch for more detail to come.



PROGRAM: Cool Pond

Cool Pond, which is part of the Cattail Creek wetland, was destroyed by runoff and debris from the construction of the new Severna Park High School. The County accepted responsibility for the cleanup and restoration of the Pond.

MRA has been involved from the beginning in the restoration project, which has now been completed.

In November, MRA kept its promise to restock the pond with a donation of 125 Bluegill fish. We wish them well and hope they thrive!



EVENT: MRA Special Event at the Grachur Club

In June, the MRA hosted a special event at the Grachur Club. The event was "For the Birds: A Celebration & Call to Action for our Feathered Friends," a wonderful presentation by Jack Turner, an Annapolis-based photographer and environmental professional.

Focusing on wild birds, Jack's images highlight the beauty of nature and bring attention to the importance of protecting wildlife habitat. Thank you, Jack, for your presentation, and also thanks to Lise Crafton, volunteer, for organizing the event.

EVENTS: INDEPENDENCE DAY!

Fourth of July Parade

The Magothy River Association's float "Star[s] (fish) and Stripers Forever" was a huge hit at the Severna Park parade! This parade gives the all volunteer MRA the opportunity to show off what we are doing to preserve and protect the Magothy River, including building Noah's Reef to restore fish habitat. What pleased the crowd was the fish swimming in the air bathed in a sea of bubbles.

Thanks goes to Mike Maguire of Maguire Marine and his young family for providing the trailer and support staff. Special thanks goes to MRA member Brad Knopf for his creative work. More thanks to David Orso who sponsored the parade float.

We are looking forward to next year. We plan to feature a new educational placemat called Mills of the Magothy and feature a parade float with a working water mill.

Does this sound like fun?

We are looking for volunteers to help. Watch the FaceBook page for details in June.

Working together we can restore the Magothy for generations to enjoy.



PROGRAM: YELLOW PERCH

We are happy to report that the Magothy River had a very successful Yellow Perch spawn this year.

Did you know that the MRA has been actively engaged in restoring a sustainable Yellow Perch population since the 1960's?

Against all odds, these beautiful fish are trying to make a comeback and with a little help from us they will.



In November Dr. Sally Hornor and Paul Spadaro gave a presentation to the Pasadena Sportfishing club about the water quality and fish habitat of

the Magothy. Sally also gave a similar presentation to the Magothy River Sailing Association.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT: Stewarts Landing Living Shoreline Project.

We partnered with Stewarts Landing Community building a living shoreline on Old Man Creek.

In the spring we need to plant some trees and could use some help. Let us know if you have some time. Watch for details on FaceBook.



PROGRAM: Fish Community Study

Some seining in the shallow waters of the upper Magothy and in the to assess the diversity of the fish community. More details to follow .



PROGRAM: Circumnavigation

This year MRA volunteers on the annual 71 mile journey explored some very remote sections of the river. We were checking on the fish community in our pocket wetlands.



EVENT: Santa Visits the Magothy!!

Santa and Mrs. Claus took time from their busy schedules to visit the Magothy River! It was great for all ages. Thank you to Tow Boat US for bringing Santa to Donnelly's Dockside and The Point Crab House and Grill! Thank you Santa and Mrs. Claus for making it a great day despite the cold weather!

MEMBERSHIP:

Become a Member in 2025! We need you! Membership dues support river projects – oyster spat, water quality monitoring, yellow perch habitat and more. There are many ways to volunteer and you can help the watershed and your community. Help us preserve and protect the Magothy River for generations to enjoy.

Click on the link! Become a member today! <http://www.magothyriver.org/get-involved/become-a-member/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

State of the Magothy

Tentative date: March 28 at the Community College. The annual State of the Magothy will present the Magothy River Index and a presentation from DPW regarding the restoration work done at Lake Waterford. This will be a report based on the scientific data accumulated through 2024. Hope to see you there!

First Day Walk

10-2 pm on January 1 at Magothy Greenway from 10 am to 2 pm at 20 North Shore Road, Pasadena.

See you there!