LIST OF FESTIVAL PARTICIPANTS:

Boatyard

**Alexandria Seaport Foundation**, Alexandria, Virginia
The Alexandria Seaport Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing families, schools, and communities with education opportunities. At the Festival this year the Foundation will run an extension of its family boatbuilding classes. Fifteen teams of 3, 4, or 5 people will work together along with a volunteer to build Bevin Skiffs. The rowboats are approximately 12 feet long, and their design makes them easy to build and use.

**Jimmy Amspacher**, Marshallberg, North Carolina
Jimmy Amspacher grew up pulling crabpots, hauling scallops, and culling fish for the commercial fishhouses of his home community, Atlantic, N.C. Here he experienced firsthand what made a “good work boat,” learning from the fishermen and boat builders of Down East, as they worked the waters of Core Sound. Today he maintains the same high standards of traditional boatbuilding in his models and in his backyard boatbuilding operation.

**Heber Guthrie**, Gloucester, North Carolina
Heber Guthrie inherited his passion and appreciation for Harkers Island boat-building from his father, Chauncey Guthrie, and his uncle, Julian Guthrie. They, in turn learned from Island legends Brady Lewis, Earl and James Rose, and a community of master boat builders. Today Heber Guthrie honors the old ways in traditional boat-building demonstrations at the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum throughout the year. Heber Guthrie and his son Clifford Guthrie are also model-boat builders and decoy carvers, keeping the family woodworking skills safe for another generation.

**Long Island Maritime Museum**, West Sayville, New York
Volunteers from the Long Island Maritime Museum work on boat-building projects. Their latest project is a 22-foot catboat, built with the plans of legendary Long Island boat builder Gil Smith. This boat will be finished and rigged at the Festival, and the museum volunteers will also carve scale models of the boat.

**The Mariner’s Museum**, Newport News, Virginia
The Mariner’s Museum has an extensive collection of small craft from the Chesapeake Bay region and also maintains a boat-building and repair shop. They will work on repairing a deadrise work boat at the Festival.

**Skipjack Captains and Restoration Experts**, Chesapeake Bay Region
Mark Donohue, rigger
Bill Bens
Capt. Ed Farley
Karnell Hillscan
Patrick LaChapelle
Captains of the oyster-dredging sailboats known as skipjacks and ship-restoration experts have been working together to ensure a future for this Chesapeake Bay craft. They will be on hand daily to help interpret the skipjack, the Joy Parks.

Commercial Fishing

Nadine and Joey Benevides, Gloucester, North Carolina
Nadine Benevides is known as a jack of all trades in the fishing industry. She works at Beaufort Fisheries, Beaufort, N.C., one of two menhaden factory plants left on the eastern seaboard. She can do it all, from making and repairing nets, working on deck, and cooking meals for the crew on fishing trips to making and repairing other types of fishing gear. In addition, she uses her skills to craft items such as lobster-pot tables. Her son, Joey Benevides, in the strong local tradition of family businesses, crabs with his father, Joey Benevides Sr.

Danny Bowden, Chincoteague, Virginia
Danny Bowden can trace his family back to the 1600s on Chincoteague and Assateague Islands. Today, like many of his ancestors, he follows the seasons, gill netting for rockfish in the spring and fall, crabbing in the spring and summer, and guiding waterfowl hunters in the fall and winter, “taking whatever Mother Nature has to offer.”

Ivy Bradley and Warren Cook, Pamunkey Reservation, Virginia
The Pamunkey Indian Tribe runs the oldest fish hatchery in the United States. Mr. Cook and Mr. Bradley are two managers of the hatchery, which works to restore American shad, a fish important to the Pamunkey tribe for centuries, in the rivers of the Mid-Atlantic.

Captain Virgin “Gus” Dunaway, Lancaster County, Virginia
Captain Dunaway learned the waterman trade from the bottom up, handling most waterman tasks until he received a captain license in 1973. He remained a captain for 20 years, retiring in 1994.

Ronald Fithian, Rock Hall, Maryland
Ronald Fithian left full-time fishing to become the town manager of Rock Hall, a historic waterman’s town. In his position, he has helped create a safe harbor for commercial fishermen in the town, which is also an important recreational fishing and boating center.

Captain Charles and Helen Forrest, Matthews County, Virginia
Captain Forrest retired in 1996 after working as a menhaden fishing boat captain for 33 years. His wife, Helen Forrest, worked as both parents whenever Captain Forrest was away fishing.

**Captain Matthew “Sonny” Gaskins Sr.,** Lancaster County, Virginia
Captain Gaskins learned the menhaden fishing business at an early age, attained the level of captain, and retired in 1991 after captaining menhaden fishing vessels for 26 years. Matthew Gaskins Jr. followed in his father’s footsteps and currently captains a menhaden fishing vessel in Louisiana.

**Skye Hilton,** Patchogue, New York
Skye Hilton works with his father, Bob Kaler, in Patchogue, NY. In the spring, when he is not crabbing, he catches bait mussels on the North Shore of Long Island.

**Wayne “Hon” Lawson,** Crisfield, Maryland
As an 11th-generation waterman, Wayne “Hon” Lawson has performed nearly all aspects of work related to crab and oyster harvests in Crisfield. Lawson’s long family history dates back to the 17th century with records of their work on the Chesapeake Bay. When his son decided not to continue the family tradition of working the water, “Hon” dubbed himself the “last waterman.”

**Stewart Lester,** Amagansett, New York
Stewart Lester has fished all of his life. He grew up in Amagansett as part of an extended haul-seining family. He has also been a dragger-man, lobsterman, swordfish harpooner, and pound-trap fisherman, as well as a clammer and scalloper. He is an accomplished net maker and mender.  {NOTE: Mr. Lester passed away in 2005.}

**Steve and Sue Meserve,** Lambertville, New Jersey
Steve Meserve is the fourth generation of fishermen who manage the Lewis Fishery, a seasonal shad fishing operation on the Delaware River. His wife, Sue Meserve, works with the fishing crew and organizes sales of the fish.

**Flo Sharkey,** Brookhaven, New York
Flo Sharkey is the only woman working the bay in Patchogue. A second-generation baywoman, she learned from her father how to catch clams, scallops, blue-claw crabs, and eels when she was very young. She uses one-foot-long, handmade wooden stilts to wade into the mud flats.

**Scott Sheppard,** Port Norris, New Jersey
Scott Sheppard fishes for oysters, crabs, and conch on the Delaware Bay. By diversifying the species he catches, he negotiates the economic and ecological difficulties facing many Mid-Atlantic fishermen. He is passionate on all matters relating to the Bay’s maritime culture.

**Bradley Styron,** Cedar Island, North Carolina
Bradley Styron is descended from a long line of Cedar Island watermen. He was reared on the water, worked as a shrimp, fish, crab, oyster, and clam fisherman, and later started his seafood wholesale business, Quality Seafood. Bradley joined the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission in 2000 and continues to serve as a voice for commercial fishermen on that rule-making body.

**Carl Tarnow**, Raritan Bay, New Jersey
Carl Tarnow has been a pound-net fisherman, a clammer, and an oysterman and is an expert net mender. He has many stories about the history of fishing in New Jersey bays and about marketing fish at the Fulton Fish Market and has collected family pictures of older fishing methods and boats.

**Melvin Twiddy**, Manns Harbor, North Carolina
Melvin Twiddy has worked as a pound netter in the Croatan Sound in Dare County over the past 50 years. He owns two Albemarle shad boats, the only working sailboat indigenous to North Carolina.

**Cory Weyant**, Freeport, New York
Cory Weyant is an expert eeler and crabber, dragger mate, fish smoker, and storyteller. He builds his own traps and, like most commercial fishermen, has learned a variety of skills in order to work year-round.

**The Cisrow Family**, Port Norris, New Jersey
Philip Cisrow
Sarah Cisrow
Shirlene Smith
The Cisrow family were originally from Crisfield, MD, where they worked in the seafood industry. The family began to work seasonally in the oyster-shucking houses of the Port Norris-Bivalve, New Jersey, area in the late 1920s. Over the years, besides working in the shucking houses, the family worked on clam and oyster boats, in the fish houses, and at tomato factories. They are also gospel singers.

**Community Program Presenters**

**Karen Willis Amspacher**, Marshallberg, North Carolina
Karen Willis Amspacher is a native of Harkers Island, where her family has been a part of the boat-building and fishing traditions of the community for generations. She left her teaching career to work for her community as director of the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum in 1993. She has also worked with documentary projects focusing on eastern Carteret County and edited numerous publications.

**James Lane**, Crisfield, Maryland
James Lane is a community scholar with an interest in the history and traditions of African-American communities in Maryland. He was involved with other local scholars in the Delmarva Folklife Project, as well as the Folklife Field School, conducted during
the summer of 2003 by Salisbury University and the Library of Congress’s American Folklife Center.

Tom McHugh, Rock Hall, Maryland
Tom McHugh first came to the Eastern Shore in 1967 to teach at Washington College before moving to New York State and Vassar. Now retired, Dr. McHugh returned to his beloved Eastern Shore. A musician, Dr. McHugh is the founder and director of The Mainstay, located in a former grocery store, where he offers high-quality artistic experiences; at the same time he uses the organization and the arts as a way to effect social change, promote businesses, and raise money for local charities.

Pam Davis Morris, Davis, North Carolina
Pam Davis Morris has spent the last 20 years in the family commercial fishing business. During this time she has become active in the North Carolina fisheries management process, representing local fishermen on several state and regional committees. Growing up with deep family roots in the area has instilled in her a love for the people living along Core Sound and strengthened her contributions at the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum, where she works with community members to document the stories of the region.

Feather Phillips, Columbia, North Carolina
Feather Phillips is Executive Director of Pocosin Arts, an organization that combines the arts with learning about the environment and local cultural traditions. She initiated the “7,000 Junipers” project that created a Millennium Forest of 7,000 seedlings of Atlantic white cedar (locally called juniper), important in boat-building, decoy-carving, and other traditions of the area. She is married to a crabber.

Meghan Wren, Bivalve, New Jersey
Meghan Wren has worked as a shipwright’s apprentice, a deckhand, and a crabber. She is now the founder, executive director, and acting education director of the Delaware Bay Schooner Bay Project based in Port Norris, NJ. The project’s mission is to build stewardship for the history, culture, and ecology of the Delaware estuary through education and celebrations. It began with the restoration of a historic Delaware Bay schooner, the A. J. Meerwald, which has become the focal point and catalyst for programming and events. In 1998 the A. J. Meerwald was designated New Jersey’s official Tall Ship.

Keeping the Waters Safe Area

Dick Buckaloo III, Lewes, Delaware
River pilots help guide large container and oil ships up the Delaware Bay and River. Dick Buckaloo will be on hand to tell about this craft and how he learned it, and to relate stories of his experiences.

Herbert Groh, Catonsville, Maryland
Captain Groh is a retired docking pilot who was been on the water since he was 16 years old. After a six-year apprenticeship, he worked his way up to Senior Docking Pilot,
handling ships of up to 265,000 tons in the Baltimore Harbor and throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.

**Reggie Jones**, Jones Beach, New York
Reggie Jones is a living legend, the longest serving lifeguard at Jones Beach. He started with a summer job in 1944, at 17, and since then, has kept watch over thousands of swimmers, a tradition that he has passed on to his two sons.

**Overfalls Maritime Museum Foundation**, Lewes, Delaware
The Overfalls Maritime Museum Foundation seeks to restore and preserve articles of maritime significance in the Delaware Bay region and educate the public about their significance. Its initial project is the restoration of one of the few remaining lightships of the U.S. fleet, which guided mariners to safe harbors. This 422-ton ship, now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, has been a fixture in the Lewes harbor for over 30 years.

**The United States Sailing and Power Squadron**
The United States Sailing and Power Squadron (USPS) was organized in 1914 and is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to making boating safer and more enjoyable by teaching classes in seamanship, navigation, and related subjects. The members are boating families who contribute to their communities by promoting safe boating through education. USPS has some 60,000 members, who are organized into 450 squadrons across the country; among them is District 5 in Northern Virginia. USPS is America's largest non-profit boating organization and has been honored by three U.S. presidents for its civic contributions.

**Kids’ Coast Environmental Learning Center**

**Hudson River Clearwater Sloop, Inc.**
The Hudson River Clearwater Sloop, Inc., was founded in 1966 by a handful of river-lovers who decided to change the course of events destroying the Hudson River in order to reclaim this natural treasure. Clearwater conducts environmental education, advocacy programs, and celebrations.

**Mildred Moore**, Pamunkey Indian Reservation, Virginia
Mildred Moore is a potter who carries on an ancient tradition of using Pamunkey River clay. She is currently teaching an apprentice as part of a program of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy’s Folklife Program.

**The Nature Conservancy**
The Nature Conservancy has been working with communities, businesses, and individuals since 1951 to protect more than 117 million acres of the earth’s surface. The Nature Conservancy's mission is to preserve the plants, animals, and natural communities that represent the diversity of life by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.
The organization has chapters in New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, and Virginia.

**Oyster Recovery Partnership**
The Oyster Recovery Partnership was founded in 1994 by Chesapeake Appreciation Inc. and is the leading regional organization that initiates, coordinates, and manages oyster restoration efforts in the Maryland waters of the Chesapeake Bay. The Partnership planted over 73 million oysters in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries in 2002 and a record 79 million in 2003.

**Maritime Kitchen**

**Dawn Chesser**, Sanford, Virginia
Dawn Chesser runs the Holden Creek Gun Club with her husband, Grayson Chesser, who is a master decoy carver. Chesser is well known on the Eastern Shore for her down-home cooking.

**Janice Marshall**, Smith Island, Maryland
Janice Marshall is a sixth-generation Smith Islander. She is a crab picker by occupation and an entrepreneur by necessity, having founded a crab-picking cooperative to comply with state health regulations. She is also an award-winning cook.

**Kenneth Pinkard**, Burgess, Virginia
Kenneth Pinkard was a cook on a large menhaden fishing vessel. He was instrumental in unionizing the menhaden fishery in the Northern Neck area and is still active in the union.

**John Shields**, Baltimore, Maryland
John Shields is a nationally acclaimed expert in regional American coastal cuisine, and has been called the “culinary ambassador of the Chesapeake Bay.” John is the author of three award-winning cookbooks on the cuisine of the Chesapeake, and had a public television series, “Chesapeake Bay Cooking.” For the series, Shields interviewed people around the Chesapeake region and showed how they prepared their favorite regional dishes. He has written for numerous national publications, is a frequent guest chef on radio and television, and teaches classes in American coastal cooking.

**Debbie Styron**, Cedar Island, North Carolina
Debbie Styron is a native of Cedar Island and wife of commercial fisherman Bradley Styron. She grew up in the fishing business, from opening clams and culling fish to heading shrimp. Today, with daughter Beverly and sons Samuel and Brad Styron, she helps manage the family seafood business, Quality Seafood. Debbie also works at the Cedar Island ferry terminal.

**Ramona Whittington**, Crisfield, Maryland
As a part of a third generation of women revered for their cooking, Ramona Whittington preserves traditional family recipes and prepares local seafood in ways that are the mainstay of her maritime community.

**Marshlife / Waterfowling Area**

**Anthony Brooks**, Harkers Island, North Carolina
Anthony Brooks is a carver of traditional working duck decoys. Raised on Cedar Island and Harkers Island, he studies the work of well-known Core Sound carvers of the early 20th century: men such as Mitchell Fulcher, Eldon Willis, and Elmer Salter. Brooks creates his decoys using only the hand tools of the old masters: hatchet, penknife, and rasp.

**Chatmon Bryant**, Alligator, North Carolina
Chatmon Bryant is a long-time hunter and trapper, and a beloved storyteller, in the small Alligator community near Columbia.

**Grayson Chesser**, Sanford, Virginia
Grayson Chesser is one of the most respected decoy carvers of his generation. He learned carving from old-time masters like Chincoteague carving legend Cigar Daisy and Miles Hancock. He spent much of his childhood duck hunting in the marshes around the Chesapeake Bay and collecting hand-carved decoys the way other boys take up model cars. In 1995 Grayson Chesser wrote the definitive guide to decoy carving, *Making Decoys the Century-Old Way*. Currently out of print, this book is coveted nearly as much as his decoys. He currently runs the Holden Creek Gun Club in Sanford with his wife, Dawn Chesser.

**Jack Combs**, Long Island, New York
Jack Combs is a fourth-generation decoy carver who carves traditional decoys without power tools. He grew up on the Great South Bay, son and grandson of local baymen gunners and guides, but left the Bay to work on tugboats.

**Douglas Gibson**, Milville, Delaware
Douglas Gibson has been carving duck decoys for over twenty years. His biggest pleasure from carving, he says, is to look at a live bird and see that there’s not much difference between that bird and his--except his doesn’t move.

**Bo Lusk**, Cape Charles, Virginia
Bo Lusk represents the new tradition of “eco-tourism,” guiding kayak trips through the marshes of the Eastern Shore of Virginia. He grew up exploring the marshes of the Eastern Shore, fishing and boating, and is happy to have turned his love of the natural beauty of the area into a profession.

**Kelley Nelson**, Morehead City, North Carolina
Kelley Nelson is an accomplished decorative decoy carver and artist, whose love of hunting led him to pursue the art of carving. Sharing in the long-standing tradition of
Core Sound carvers, he teaches decoy-carving at Carteret Community College and volunteers at the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum as a demonstrator. He also has entered, placed, and won in many carving competitions across the United States.

**Glenn Phillips**, Ocean City, Maryland
Glenn Phillips is a skilled craftsman who specializes in duck, goose, chicken, and turkey calls, as well as all kinds of wildlife whistles. Several years ago, Phillips started the Little Quackers Outdoor Club and also began appearing at a number of outdoor shows each year, conducting duck and goose calling contests.

**Fred Reitmeyer**, Tuckerton, New Jersey
Fred Reitmeyer is an avid hunter and decoy carver who demonstrates the traditional carving techniques he learned from his father. He is also known for his model sneakboxes, which are traditional Barnegat Bay area duck-hunting boats.

**Ron Rue, Cambridge**, Maryland
Ron Rue is a master carver and hunter from Dorchester County who spent a significant amount of time around the legendary Ward Brothers of Crisfield, Maryland. The green winged teal is one of his specialties. He has served as a judge for carving competitions, and is a great storyteller of Eastern Shore tales. [NOTE: Mr. Rue passed away in 2005.]

**“Ray” Lonnie Sykes**, (Alligator Community) Columbia, North Carolina
Mr. Sykes’s skills, which have been handed down from generations of fishermen, include hunting, trapping, commercial fishing, and raising and training deer- and coon-hunting dogs. He builds fishing traps, turtle traps, and steel traps. He is also a community activist and organizer, as he has worked with the Conservation Fund to organize a local hunting club.

**Recreational Fishing**

**Pete Ames, Sr.,** Little Neck, New York
Pete Ames learned to make fishing rods from his father and grandfather. He makes rods for recreational fishermen who fish the South Shore of Long Island. Ames makes rods using decorative “wraps”; designing and wrapping the rod is a meticulous process, one that requires aesthetic judgment and mechanical dexterity. Ames has taught his son how to design and decorate the rods, so that this family tradition continues on Long Island.

**Shawn Giacobbe**, Chincoteague, Virginia
Shawn Giacobbe is a former commercial fisherman who is now in the sport fishing business as a charter boat captain. He is the founder of Fishawn Charters which he operates with his brothers.

**Richie Tillman Jr.,** Chesapeake Bay, Maryland
Richie Tillman learned to fish as a toddler, and his uncle taught him to tie flies at an early age. He turned his love of fishing into a fly-tying business after he was inspired by a college project that combined business with art.
Sailing and Related Crafts

The Bayshore Discovery Center/A. J. Meerwald Schooner, Bivalve, New Jersey
The A. J. Meerwald is a restored oystering craft from the Delaware Bay, used today by the Bayshore Discovery Center to teach about the rich history of oystering in the region. Schooner crew and Center educators are knowledgeable on topics ranging from oyster ecology to tall-ship restoration.

Jim Langley, Solomons Island, Maryland
Learning the artistry from his father Leroy Langley, Jim Langley paints boats, builds beautiful and precise models from wood, and carves wooden signs with maritime themes. He has built about seventy-five boat models over the years. Langley is on the staff of the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons Island, MD.

National Maritime Heritage Foundation
The National Maritime Heritage Foundation (NMHF) is a non-profit corporation located on Washington, DC’s waterfront. It has a fresh approach to educating today's youth while stimulating economic and cultural community development. NMHF's maritime education and community outreach programs offer hands-on exploration for children in the area by providing a unique perspective on history.

Harry Saarinen, Amityville, New York
Like other “bay rats” from Great South Bay, Harry Saarinen spent his childhood clamming, fishing, and killeying (catching bait minnows) with his father and friends. As a welder, he creates spectacular steel fish from metal and fire. Saarinen also paints intricate maritime scenes on skimmer clams found on nearby beaches.

Kelly Smyth, Chadd's Ford, Pennsylvania
Kelly Smyth has been working as a blacksmith for nearly 20 years and has been named one of the top 200 traditional craftsmen in the country by the prestigious magazine Early American Life. Although Smyth is adept in all facets of the blacksmith's trade, she has a special talent and love of maritime blacksmithing. She has worked as the master blacksmith for the restoration of the Susan Constant and the Kalmer Nyckel, as well as the building of the Sultana, creating authentic hinges, hooks, chainplates, marlin spikes, hanks, and other period items.

Lynn Stevens, Shadyside, Maryland
Lynn Stevens was introduced to sailing by her husband and learned to repair sails while living with him on their sailboat in Ft. Lauderdale. Since then she has taken up the job of cutting out sails the traditional way (by hand rather than computer) at a sail loft in Florida, and currently works on all parts of sail making from measuring the boat to installing the sails.

Shore Memories Performance Area
Earl and Leland Carawan, Swan’s Quarter, North Carolina
Earl and Leland Carawan grew up Hyde County in a family that followed the seasons and lived off the land and water. The family was also very musical, and the Carawan brothers play a variety of old-time, bluegrass, and country music.

Davey Crockett, Tangier Island, Virginia
Captain Crockett runs a small ferry boat from the mainland of the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake to his native Tangier Island. He also sings, plays the guitar, and composes songs about life on the Chesapeake Bay.

Dr. Tom Flowers, Dorchester County, Maryland
Dr. Tom Flowers grew up on the Eastern Shore of Maryland on Hooper's Island and has worked in the Chesapeake Bay area as an educator for over 40 years. He has written a book about his experiences entitled *Shore Folklore*, and leads tours called “Crab Mania,” taking groups to Hooper's Island to learn about crab-picking. Dr. Flowers currently serves as a Dorchester County councilman but also gives talks on the folklore of the Eastern Shore.

Rodney Kemp, Moorehead City, North Carolina
Rodney Kemp’s love for the people of Carteret County has been the centerpiece of his lifetime’s work in collecting, teaching, and telling the stories of this region. His storytelling, known affectionately as “fish-house lies,” tells the facts through the voices and experiences of the generations of folks who have lived and shaped this history. Kemp was named the NC Historian of the Year in 2003.

Elmer Mackall and The Faith Singers, Prince Frederick, Maryland
Elmer Mackall, 79, grew up singing with his mother in churches and camp meetings in Calvert County, Maryland. He is a powerful singer and talented piano player. Mackall has recorded many pieces from his mother’s repertoire--never published in any book--which are vigorous, refreshing, and deeply moving. His music is reminiscent of that of Mississippi John Hurt, with an original style containing elements of ragtime and barrelhouse piano. His three daughters, Thelma Clagett, Margaret Copeland, and Allie Williams, back him up as The Faith Singers. [NOTE: Mr. Mackall passed away in 2005.]

Magpie, Takoma Park, Maryland
This musical duo made up of husband and wife Greg Artzner and Terry Leonino has written and performed a number of pieces inspired by the Chesapeake Bay and its ecology. Their performance piece, “Tales of the Blue Crab,” is a favorite of schoolchildren learning about the bay.

Connie Mason, Carteret County, North Carolina
Connie Mason is a museum historian, musician, and award-winning folklorist descended from eastern North Carolina fishermen, farmers, blacksmiths, poets, and musicians. Her repertoire includes both traditional and original material. Her grandmother, Rosa Mason, toiled as an oyster shucker but could play any musical instrument she picked up. Her distant cousin, Rouse, wrote the famous fiddle tune, “The Orange Blossom Special.”
Janie Meneely, Eastport, Maryland
Janie Meneely, who by day is an editor at Chesapeake Bay Magazine, is also a local Eastport entertainer and raconteur, who shares a delightful mix of cruising information, folklore, and anecdotes about good (and bad) cruising destinations around the northern Chesapeake.

The New Gospelites, Worton Point, Maryland
The New Gospelites celebrated 30 years of service in performing gospel music on September 14th, 2003. The group originated in 1974, from the kitchen of the same house where most of the original members grew up in the small town of Worton Point on the upper eastern shore of Kent County, MD. They have performed at numerous churches, festivals, and universities throughout the Mid-Atlantic region and beyond.

David Norris, California, Maryland
Southern Maryland singer/songwriter David Norris has been crafting songs for most of his life. His family has deep roots on the western shore of the Chesapeake, going back to the 1600s. In 1996, his song “Timberline” won Nashville's Chris Austin Songwriting Contest at Merlefest, in Wilkesboro, NC. His songs reflect his connection to the Chesapeake Bay region.

Joseph Norris, California, Maryland
Joseph Norris, like his twin brother David, is a singer/songwriter and storyteller. He performed for the Duke and Duchess of Kent at Historic St. Mary’s City during Maryland’s celebration of its 350th anniversary in 1984, and with legendary folk singer Pete Seeger in Baltimore. His stories also reflect the Native American heritage of his great-grandfather. Norris sings of rivers and riverboats, lighthouses and lost love, of ghosts and green fields. His newest CD is called, Mariner’s Compass and focuses on the water traditions of southern Maryland.

The Northern Neck Chantey Singers, Northumberland and Lancaster Counties, Virginia
The Chantey Singers have been reliving and reviving the history and the culture of watermen through their animated performances of songs and chants. In rhythmic fashion, they replicate the cadence of movements used by menhaden fishermen in order to create unity when hauling nets. Their songs are telling, soulful, and sometimes funny as they are based upon the true experiences of fishing for menhaden.

The Phillips Gangplank Ragtime Band, Baltimore, Maryland
The Phillips Gangplank Ragtime Band has been together for over 30 years and has performed throughout the continental U.S., in the Caribbean, Canada, and over 30 times in Europe. The band performs a mixture of Dixieland jazz, ragtime, vintage standards, and novelty tunes from what is commonly referred to as the “Golden Age of American Popular Music and Song” (1890-1950). They are currently performing in their 25th year at Phillips Harborplace Restaurant in Baltimore, MD.
The SAIF Water Singers, Lancaster and Northumberland Counties, Virginia
The SAIF Water Singers organized in 2001 to support the SAIF Water Committee. They sing old-time prayer-meeting music in voice and sign language and usually perform a capella. The singers are from families that have been helped by SAIF Water. SAIF Water has brought indoor plumbing and repaired a contaminated well for the families.

Them Eastport Oyster Boys, Eastport, Maryland
Since the early '90s, the Oyster Boys' collaborative creativity has yielded songs ranging from a deck-shoe chantey to a tango about sub-aquatic vegetation to reggae verses about sailing. They even composed the “Maritime Republic of Eastport” national anthem.

Sonny Williamson, Cedar Island, North Carolina
Sonny Williamson, a native of his beloved Down East Carteret County, spends his retirement researching, documenting, and publishing historical records of everything from shipwrecks and sailing vessels to hunting stories and recipes. His storytelling fuses these elements in a “mix of fact and fiction” known locally as “fish-house lying.”

Tom Wisner, Solomon’s Island, Maryland
Tom Wisner, a native of the Chesapeake watershed, is a singer, songwriter, and educator devoted to raising awareness of the spirit and beauty of his home. He is the recipient of the Maryland Governor’s Citation as well as excellence awards from the University of Maryland and from the president of the United States. These awards celebrate the unique quality of his work to preserve the Chesapeake Bay through song and stories in education programs for all ages.

Bob Zentz, Norfolk, Virginia
Bob Zentz has traveled the world playing more than 30 instruments with a repertoire of over 2000 songs. He presents thematic programs that educate and entertain through his sense of history, humanity, humor, and musicianship, using his native Norfolk area as an inspiration.

Ralph Rinzler Memorial Concert in Honor of Roland Freeman: Gospel Traditions from Maryland and Virginia

The Christianaires, Baltimore, Maryland
The Christianaires was organized in 1960, most of the current members having replaced the original performers. The group performs almost every week for church functions, and does many benefit concerts to raise money for sickle cell anemia. The Christianaires have released five recordings and a video.

Gospel Supreme, Baltimore, Maryland
The Gospel Supreme reunited in 1994 and is made up of five God-fearing women: two sets of sisters and a lead singer. The group has released two recordings and is working on a third.

The Paschall Brothers, Norfolk, Virginia
The Paschall Brothers stand firmly in the great tradition of unaccompanied religious singing in Tidewater Virginia. Reverend Frank Paschall Sr. formed the ensemble in 1981 with his five sons. Reverend Paschall Sr. passed away in 1999, but his sons have carried on his legacy. They are one of the few remaining ensembles performing this once-flourishing art form. The Paschalls perform frequently at local area churches and festivals in the Tidewater area, including yearly appearances at the Tidewater Gospel Festival held at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg. They have recently completed their first recording, supported by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

The Zionaires, Princess Anne, Maryland
The Zionaires celebrated their 50th singing anniversary in February 2004; more than 50 singers and musicians have been members of the group over the years. For 40 years the group broadcast on radio station WJDY, Salisbury, MD, and in 2003 the group headlined the August Quarterly Gospel Festival in Wilmington, DE, the largest gospel event in the state. Through their music, The Zionaires spread the word of God to radio audiences throughout the lower shore of Maryland, Virginia, and Delaware.