



## *Growing oysters for a cleaner Bay*

**Winter 2018**

<http://www.oystergardener.org/>

### **TOGA Annual Meeting, Change of Date to March 30, 2019**

We have some exciting news to share – the TOGA Annual Meeting date has been changed to Saturday, March 30, 2019. The change was based on member comments, including that many liked to get out of town in January. There has also been an expressed interest that we have float and TOGA apparel sales at the meeting. Float production in the winter is difficult and there seems to be more interest and volunteer help available in the early spring.

#### TOGA Annual Meeting Survey Results

Thanks to Karen Hudson (VIMS TOGA Advisor) for composing, posting and compiling the results of a survey to help us in planning for an improved experience for all at our future annual meetings. The results follow. Members were invited to participate in the survey by email on October 16.

#### Via Survey Monkey posted September 28, 2018 – November 6, 2018

Purpose: The TOGA Board was interested in feedback on the Annual Meeting event to determine if there are improvements needed to better serve the membership and promote attendance. Thanks to those who completed this short survey.

The meeting is typically held on a Saturday in January, although in 2019, the meeting will be held March 30. The program runs 2 hours, from 2-4pm, and includes: TOGA Business (30 min),

Educational Presentations (45 min), Middle School Writing Contest Winner Presentations (45 min), followed by food and fellowship. Prior to the meeting VMRC and shellfish sanitation staff are on hand to answer questions and, in some years, merchandise has been for sale.

#### Comments or suggestions on what changes would most improve TOGA's Annual Meeting (Selected responses)

- “The food was great, but there should be a way for non-cooks to make a contribution.”
- “Often I attend alone and most others are strangers. Would be nice to somehow have breakout session of different geographic areas so that we can meet ‘neighbors’ with similar interests in oyster gardening.”
- “More encouragement for non-members to join, and a more active effort to help the public start oyster gardening. Talk about how we can do that at the meeting.”
- “The more information given to increase success rate in oyster gardening, the better. Science updates are vital.”
- “Presentations of difference growers oyster garden setup. After 20 years of gardening I am still learning about better set ups than I have.”
- “Recruitment of adults is of primary importance. Those with kids will pass on the enthusiasm.”

## Quick Survey Stats

- Survey completed by 49 people with the bulk of responses split between those who never attended and those that attend when available.
- Meeting was well rated by those who have attended.
- Meeting “likes” had 2 main themes: food and fellowship and information provided (educational presentations, updates from regulatory agencies, science-based presentations).
- Meeting “dislikes” Mostly “none,” but there were a few that mentioned the student essays ran too long and too much time was spent on non-oyster gardening topics. Some said the meeting itself was too long.
- Length of time spent on the main components:

	too long	just right	too short
TOGA business	92%		
Educational speakers	4%	75%	21%
Student essays	30%	70 %	

\*Student essays had very mixed comments.

- If you haven’t attended – why? Most responses had to do with the month of January (weather, not around during the winter months) or the fact they were a new member and haven’t had the chance.
- Rate importance. (On “rate importance” a survey glitch prevented the first few responders from choosing more than 1.)

	Important	Doesn’t Matter	Not Important
VMRC and Shellfish Sanitation			
staff present	65%	30%	5%
TOGA merchandise for sale	26%	52%	22%
Science-based educational speakers	100%		
Oyster gardening education (how-to)	87%	3%	10%
Encouraging youth to attend	49%	28%	22%

### Karen’s Suggestions based on survey results:

Half the respondents were new members and there was interest in gardening information. A few options to address this – include a gardening talk on the program; suggest new members attend a spring forum event to get more information on the how-to’s and gear designs; have a “booth” at the annual meeting to provide 1 on 1 info.

The most notable to me was the very mixed results on the “kid-content.” It was suggested by more than 1 person that the annual meeting should focus on adults. I would suggest 2 possible options:

1. Create a separate TOGA meeting (not part of the Annual meeting) dedicated to kids. It would allow the opportunity to expand information on the essay contest, the winners and provide time to highlight the elements of TOGA that are dedicated to educating

children. The invites could target teachers, youth groups, scout groups, etc. Showcase resources TOGA has to help youth.

2. Keep the kid content in the annual meeting, but separated, so that people can choose to attend, or not. This was discussed at the last meeting held at VIMS. A suggested draft agenda:

1:00 – 2:00 pm Agency Reps available, TOGA merchandise for sale, visit TOGA booth for more info on how to get started?  
 1:00 – 2:00 pm TOGA “KIDS” Program [essay contest winners, highlight projects helping out youth]  
 2:00 – 2:30 pm BREAK with light refreshments  
 2:30 – 3:15 pm TOGA Business and Opportunities  
 3:15 – 3:45 pm Science-based education (2 short talks)  
 3:45 – 4:00 pm Gardening talk/ Group Discussion/Closing remarks  
 4:00 - 5:00 pm Refreshments

*--Karen Hudson, VIMS and Vic Spain, MOG*

## Status of TOGA/VIMS Fellowship Endowment

The TOGA endowment funds as of June 30, 2018, were book valued at \$141,393, and the market value was \$168,842. Every gift of support to the TOGA Fellowship, through donations from the float building efforts or individual gifts from TOGA members, allows graduate students the best education and the opportunity to engage in groundbreaking research. This year's recipient is **Ph.D. student Jennifer Beckensteiner**.

Thank you, from all of us to all of you, for making the endowment a reality and for continuing its growth for future students.

All charitable gifts to the TOGA Endowment held in the VIMS Foundation (a 501c3 organization) are tax deductible. The TOGA Endowment supports graduate students of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science researching oysters and shellfish, and the ecological restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. To learn more about VIMS, visit [www.VIMS.edu](http://www.VIMS.edu) or call Susan Maples at 804-684-7846.

--Susan Maples, VIMS

## Congratulations to the 2018 Endowment Recipient Jennifer Beckensteiner (also the 2016 recipient)

Greetings! My name is Jennifer Beckensteiner and I am a PhD student at the Virginia Institute



of Marine Science. I work with Dr. Andrew Scheld from the Fisheries Science Department and Dr. David Kaplan from UMR Marbec (France) on marine spatial management and the effectiveness of property rights for fisheries and aquaculture management.

Specifically, my research involves identifying potential challenges or inadequacies related with Territorial User Rights for Fisheries for the effective management of benthic resources in Chile and in Virginia.

Current oyster production in Virginia is a fraction of what it was a century ago due to overfishing, habitat destruction, disease, and pollution. Exclusive access rights such as leased areas are a tool used frequently in management of shellfish beds that has been considered successful at increasing oyster yields. In the last decade, Virginia has seen a significant increase in leased area, leading to what is currently the largest amount of area leased since the system began more than 100 years ago. However, current production is just 5% of its maximum historical level and only a small fraction of leased areas (18%) have reported oyster harvest in 2016 (about 30% over the 10 last years). Though in theory, private leases in Virginia must be used for oyster production, in practice, they can be held for other reasons, such as speculation or intentional exclusion of others. The information generated through this research will clarify current trends in leased area use and productivity, as well as determine what factors limit current and future industry growth and productive use of leased grounds.



(Photos by Aileen Devlin | Virginia Sea Grant)

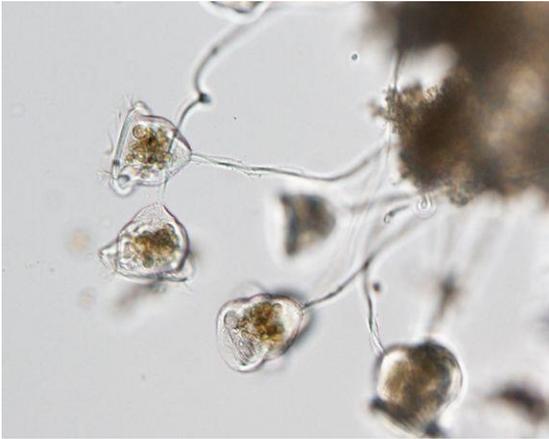
I met Pleasure House Oysters Owner Chris Ludford, to talk about conflicts existing in the Lynnhaven River on Sept. 6, 2018.

-- Jennifer Beckensteiner

## TOGA members offer their docks as research stations for VIMS PhD Candidate

At the request of VIMS Professor Ryan Carnegie, TOGA members happily provided "dock space" for PHD Candidate Lúcia Safi. Lúcia said "thanks" and passes on the following summary of her research.

"After recovering the traps from the water, I bring them to the lab where I screen for peritrich ciliates. These sessile protists are present



in all types of aquatic environments, and feed primarily on bacteria, which is why they are particularly abundant in Chesapeake Bay this time of the year (late Summer/early Fall), with high water temperature and a lot of organic matter.

They are incredibly diverse organisms, with over 1000 species described so far, and although they provide an important trophic link between bacteria and plankton, we know very little about their evolution. That is why when I sample them, my primary objective is to collect DNA, so I can study their relationships and interactions, sometimes as parasites, with other organisms in the water. The traps deployed in the piers of the TOGA volunteers provided 15 new DNA samples for my research, of at least 7 different species. Photo is of one species.

The next step is to process the molecular data I obtained with phylogeography analysis software so we can, perhaps, have a better understanding of their evolutionary relationships."

--Lúcia S. L. Safi, PhD Candidate, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, College of William and Mary

## TOGA's Youth Programs

Our mission statement calls for educating interested citizens in oyster aquaculture methods, promoting oyster gardening aquaculture in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries and promoting the environmental health of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries through oyster cultivation and by other means. One way we accomplish this mission is by educating local youths. Following are summaries of some of the youth activities we supported in 2018 and plan to continue in 2019.

*Chesapeake Bay Days* at Mathews in the fall of 2018 was held in the auditorium at Mathews Middle School. Besides TOGA there were another dozen participants who imparted environmental, ecological and historical information about Mathews. TOGA's focus was oyster aquaculture. We demonstrated the oyster's ability to help clarify the water by comparing two fish tanks, one with oysters and one without oysters. We also had a brief presentation on the oyster's anatomy, predators, and the history of oysters in the Chesapeake Bay.

The students were very interested and many, being from a sea faring town were highly aware of oystering and the importance of oysters to Virginia. Other students could not believe there was a living creature inside that "rock." We feel our participation in this event was a great success and we plan to continue participating in this annual event.



The second event, *Earth Day*, was at AP Hill.



This event is also focused on education and awareness of oysters in the Chesapeake Bay and tributaries.

There are dozens of other participants at this event demonstrating environmental and ecological

information. Hundreds of children are bused in from local middle schools to attend Earth Day. TOGA's main focus is to share our mission and educate them about the importance of oysters and aquaculture. We feel this is a very successful way to get our message out to young people and we plan to continue doing this event in the future.

--Bob Morgan, MOG

## Daisy Scouts

On October 13, Daisy Girl Scout Troop 1281 "planted" an oyster garden as part of their "Welcome to the Daisy Flower Garden"



journey. Vic Spain and Lindsay Cooper, a Girl Scout working on her Gold Award, traveled to

Poquoson to teach the girls about the importance of oysters in the Chesapeake Bay. Vic brought oysters of various ages and sizes for the girls to touch and explore, as well as children's books about oysters for the girls to read.

The Daisies transferred oysters that were donated from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to "Daisy Floats," small flip floats custom



designed and fabricated by Vic. Because they were the ones transferring the oysters, the girls were able to have ownership in the project.

The highlight of the girls' morning was

interacting with a homemade touch tank. This touch tank was made by capturing the sea life that was living in the oysters' temporary cages.

The girls were able to see crabs and shrimp and talk about how they interact with the oysters.

The Daisies experimented with an ancient



Japanese art form called gyotaku, or fish printing. They painted old oyster shells then pressed

rice paper onto them to make an imprint. They were able to keep both their hand-painted shells and a lovely piece of art!

Lastly, the girls were able to witness the "planting" of the oyster garden. The two "Daisy Floats" were placed into the water as the girls watched from the back yard. In the spring, the girls will participate in the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Oyster Roundup where they will return their "mature" oysters to be transplanted to a sanctuary reef.

--Anjie Emmett, Girl Scout Troop #1281

## High-School Senior Lindsay Cooper works for prestigious Girl Scout Gold Award\*

Lindsay Cooper is passionate about Bay oyster recovery, and her interests led her to some ideas about using concrete to supplement



natural shell (which is getting harder to get in the quantities needed) as cultch for wild oyster spat set. Vic Spain is

mentoring Lindsay and supporting her efforts to design and test the use of concrete to catch natural spat. In the photo at left Lindsay

displays one of the Downunder oyster cages she made for TOGA, and a scale model she made as part of her Gold Award display.

In Lindsay's own words: "Thanks to this project I get to be surrounded by a great group of people who really care about helping the oysters, teaching others, and striving to make a positive impact. It is such a wonderful experience and I am continuing to learn so much from Mr. Spain every day. For my Gold Award I wanted it to be meaningful. The opportunity of having Vic Spain as my mentor, taking this award beyond my original thought, and turning it into a research project is absolutely amazing."

--Vic Spain, MOG

*\*The Gold Award is the highest achievement within the Girl Scouts of the USA, earned by Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts. (Wikipedia).*



## TOGA Educational Oyster Garden at Camp Kekoka, Summer and Fall 2018

During Summer and Fall, volunteers continued to meet with the Young Oyster Gardeners of the Kilmarnock Boys and Girls Club (B&GC) at the Camp.



The photo shows a group of the young gardeners sorting through oysters and looking for

spat strikes and other critters that live among the oysters. Our volunteers ended the season by providing oyster stew for the B&GC at the August back-to-school rally. It was a great hit.

The Educational Oyster Garden, with the help of a group of Councilors-in-Training from the YMCA, was able to see the oyster shells in our storage bins emptied and moved to the barge from which they were distributed onto the oyster reef. Other shells were bagged and placed in the cages of our spat-on-shell barge. In the



process, we discovered that our derrick that lifts the cages was not high enough to lift them sufficiently to clear the barge and be emptied. Madison Boyd, Terry Halkyard, Nick Ferriter, and Klaus Boese got together in October and increased the

height of the derrick and while they were at it, took out a sample of oyster shell to see if there were any strike. The sample looked far more successful than the slightly earlier samples we took from tonging on the oyster reef where we



found almost no strike (the picture shows Madison Boyd tonging with Nick Ferriter).

TOGA is continuing its negotiations with the owners of

Camp Kekoka, the Alexandria Police Youth Camp, to allow us to rebuild the dock and convert it to a facility that will be safe for our B&GC Young Oysters Gardeners to access and to provide limited future public use. (Earlier agreement had been reached on the construction of an information kiosk.) At this stage we are close to a preliminary agreement on the dock and access. When that is achieved, the Educational Oyster Garden will

truly be able to reach its full potential. The rebuilding of the dock will require considerable financial resources, and we are looking for financial contributions. Anyone willing to help may send a tax-deductible donation to Charles Yarbrough, Treasurer of TOGA, with the reference: Kekoka Educational Oyster Garden. For those that cannot make a financial contribution, we are always looking for volunteers.

-- Klaus Boese, MOG

## Middle School Writing Contest

The annual writing contest is getting more popular every year, both with young students who love the Bay and their teachers.



The photo shows the 2017 winners and Judges. The winners of the 2018 contest will read their papers at our Annual Meeting on March 30, 2019.

## Middle School Writing Contest!!!



"Consider the Oyster"

\$150, \$100, \$50 cash prizes plus outdoor oyster gear for winners

For details check out [www.oystergardener.org](http://www.oystergardener.org)



The deadline for entry was originally December 15 annually. Because of the change in the Annual Meeting date, **we have extended the entry deadline to February 1 annually.** You can still enter this year. See <https://www.oystergardener.org/youth-writing-contest> for more information.

--Terry Lewis, MOG

## Chesapeake Oyster Alliance- Fall 2018 Meeting

The Chesapeake Oyster Alliance is a multi-year collaborative effort intended to spark park governmental action, public attention, and support on oyster recovery efforts in the Chesapeake Bay.



Brian Ingram and Vic Spain attended the second meeting\* of the Alliance on November 5 and 6 at VIMS Gloucester Point. On November 5, as part of the "Field Experience," we visited 3 aquaculture operations along the York River east of Gloucester Point. These included Rappahannock Oyster Company's processing facility, Colonial Oyster Company and Big Island Aquaculture. The operators were generous with their time demonstrating how they sorted, packaged and distributed their product. The companies varied in size from a single woman to an extended family to one of the largest operators in Virginia. Their methods and equipment varied accordingly.

\* The first meeting, attended by Terry Lewis and Vic Spain, was held in Fredericksburg in April and was covered in the Fall Newsletter.

On November 6, we divided into teams and proposed subcommittee strategies for meeting the Alliance goals which are:

**Goal 1: Restoration:** Enhance the oyster population of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries by adding 10 billion oysters to the Bay by 2025.

**Goal 2: Fishery Management:** Effectively advocate for sustainable, science-based

adaptive fishery management that contributes to the recovery and growth of the oyster population.

**Goal 3: Aquaculture:** Achieve a robust, financially successful aquaculture industry in Maryland and Virginia.

Later on, November 6 we toured the VIMS Hatchery and were briefed by Dr. Stan Allen on the history and future of the Aquaculture Genetics & Breeding Technology program.

In supporting the Alliance goals, TOGA seems best suited to educating the public on the importance of aquaculture and Bay restoration, encouraging and supporting oyster gardeners all over the Bay (even if not TOGA affiliated), putting oysters and shell in our waters, and approximating the number of oysters we put in.

We are asking that you, if you have not done so yet, please consider providing information about how many oysters you and your family are putting in the Bay. There are 2 ways. One way is to simply fill out our new membership form when you renew your membership or just to update your information. A second way is to complete the online survey at <https://www.oystergardener.org/member-survey>. The following chart shows the data we have collected so far. Thanks to those who submitted their information.

--Kathy Haurand and Vic Spain, MOGs

So, have you heard  
about the oyster who  
went to a disco and  
pulled a mussel?

### Results - April thru November 2018

142 People responded to the survey

#### Type Grown

45	Both	42.9%
20	Diploid	19.0%
40	Triploid	38.1%
105	Responded	100.0%

#### Spat Annually\*

103,700	Both	62.5%
28,900	Diploid	17.4%
33,450	Triploid	20.1%
166,050		100.0%

\* 82 participants responded to spat annually

Note: 50,000 "both" were one respondent

#### Shell Disposal

73	Back to Water	76.0%
7	Erosion Control	7.3%
7	Landscaping	7.3%
8	Recycling	8.3%
1	Other	1.0%
96	Responded	100.0%

#### Main Tributary to Chesapeake Bay

Back River	1	0.7%
Chesapeake Bay	3	2.1%
Chincoteague Bay	1	0.7%
Fleets Bay	5	3.5%
Horn Harbor	1	0.7%
Ingram Bay	16	11.3%
James River	9	6.3%
Lynnhaven River	1	0.7%
Milford Haven	4	2.8%
Mobjack Bay	12	8.5%
Piankatank River	17	12.0%
Poquoson River	2	1.4%
Potomac River	25	17.6%
Rappahannock Rivr	30	21.1%
York River	12	8.5%
unknown	3	2.1%
Total	142	100.0%

## Spring Float Sales at Deltaville Maritime Museum

Our Spring Oyster Float Sales Event was held on June 23, 2018 from 9am to 1pm at the Deltaville Maritime Museum's Holly Point Market, located at 287 Jackson Creek Rd in Deltaville.



This event was a great success with pre-assembled floats available for sale along with float

supplies, t-shirts/hats, educational materials, and one local vendor selling Oyster Seed. This event was one of TOGA's primary fundraising activities with proceeds benefiting TOGA (501c3 charity) as well as the TOGA/VIMS Student Fellowship Endowment.

--Brian Ingram, MOG

## Oyster Float Workshop, October 6, 2018

The Oyster Float Workshop was on the beautiful first Saturday of October at the VIMS Hatchery. TOGA focused on the sale of pre-built floats, accessories and answering



questions. The crowd was not great but the event was successful. Over 30 Pre-Built Floats were sold.

Thank You to Lynton, Judy and Capt. Mike who attended as vendors. TOGA will be holding this event in 2019 on the first Saturday in October; location still to be determined.

--Charles Yarbrough, MOG

## Wine & Oyster Fair October 20, 2018, Good Luck Cellars Winery

On October 20, 2018 the Tidewater Oyster Gardeners Association (TOGA) and the Northern Neck's Good Luck Cellars Winery teamed up to sponsor another Wine & Oyster event at the beautifully verdant winery location on 1025 Good Luck Road, Kilmarnock, Virginia. Even slightly foul weather could not dampen the high spirits of the day. The fair began at 11AM and lasted until 4PM, and the winery's close-by easy parking was most appreciated, especially for those who dodged sporadic raindrops all day. Ample delicious food choices included different raw and cooked bivalves (and such special recipes like fried oyster tacos!) from the established local grower Great Wicomico Oyster Company. Their scrumptious crab cake sandwiches were a big hit, too. They managed the hungry crowd with pleasing tasty treats in a most efficient way.

Also, there were various oyster seeds (diploids and triploids spat) and different caging &



accessories for sale, from small "Downunder" pots (that easily hang under a dock) to the large Taylor floats

(that sold out!) for those bigger bivalves to live and thrive. Oyster Mama Babies company had a great day selling all her brood and Lynton Land had no leftover diploids. Wonderful to know that all those young oysters found new homes!

Those who wanted to learn more about oysters and how to take care of them went to the TOGA tent and spoke at length with the many helpful knowledgeable MOGs (Master



Oyster Gardeners) and took away much of the most useful pamphlets and paraphernalia. TOGA welcomed in many new members that day. Getting more of the Northern Neck and surrounding areas public educated and involved is what TOGA loves to do.



A booth manned by the “Ready Reef” shore enrichment folks informed us of a new waterfront bulkhead alternative.

For the full vineyard experience people gathered in the spacious, comfortable (and toasty

warm with its big blazing fireplace) Good Luck wine tasting bar and lounge where welcoming servers expertly kept pace with the crowd. They provided a special blend available just for this TOGA occasion. Favorite bottles were brought out onto the large covered veranda with many tables overlooking the oyster related fun. Congenial laughter filled the air, and so many happy people had a special day.

In addition to the Chesapeake Bay bivalves, the Good Luck winery activities, all the



available oyster spat and equipment and the yummy food choices, there were many crowd-pleasing items raffled all day long, solely for the benefit of the non-profit

TOGA. It was such an amazing time. Looking forward to more such events in 2019!

--Ann Wood, MOG

Our newsletter and many of our activities are funded by the sale of **Chesapeake Bay license plates**



<http://dmv.virginia.gov/exec/vehicle/splates/info.asp?idnm=CB>

## 2018 Stratford Hall Wine and Oyster Festival Cancelled by Florence

Thanks to all of those who volunteered to work at the 2018 Stratford Hall Wine and Oyster Festival.

Unfortunately, Mother Nature had other plans. This is a letter Jon Bachman,



Events Coordinator at Stratford Hall, sent to the vendors. It perfectly summarizes why the extremely hard decision to cancel this year's festival was necessary.

We are so very sorry we had to cancel the annual Wine and Oyster Festival. This festival has become more than “our biggest event” at Stratford Hall, it has become an annual expression of success of the Virginia oyster industry.

By agreeing to participate you placed your faith in our efforts to support your business. We were ready to offer what we now think is the finest festival of its kind anywhere!

Sadly, this was not to be.

I just wanted to relate the events that led up to the cancellation of the festival and subsequently, your participation.

By Thursday, September 6 I was informed about a potential hurricane that was predicted to hit somewhere on the East Coast. We continued to make plans hoping that the hurricane would recurve northward and out to sea. That obviously did not happen. On Monday, September 10, we held our first hurricane meeting and decided to wait until Tuesday, the 11th gathering more information and the forecasted path, to make a final decision. This decision was based on the following: the tenting company would not put up tents due to a clause in their insurance company; the insurance company would not insure damage to tents in a “named” storm; the Governor had declared a state of emergency; 1400 national guard troops had been notified and readied to respond; I

had been receiving calls from vendors who had decided not to come; and an increasing number of visitors began requesting a refund.

We made the decision that we would have to cancel.

This has been a traumatic experience for us. We have dealt with rain and soggy conditions...but not the prospect of a looming hurricane.

Who knows about the chances of another hurricane next year. All we can do is plan for September 21-22, 2019 so please extend our sincerest expression of thanks for all the pre-planning and preparation that must have gone into your organizations' festival plans.

I will be sending out a refund policy later this week.

I look forward to picking up the pieces and doing all again for 2019. The very best to your staff and their families and a profitable year to come!

We shall return in 2019!  
Jon Bachman

As Jon says they shall return in 2019 with bigger and more exciting festival offerings.



That said, TOGA volunteers will be needed more than ever. Please mark your calendars now to help on September 21 and/or 22, 2019. Make this a New

Year's resolution you can actually fulfill. First opportunity to sign up will be the Saturday, March 30th TOGA Annual meeting.

Thanks again to all those who had volunteered and to those of you who mark your calendars now.

--Laura Todd and Brian Wood, MOGs

## 2018 Summary of Oyster Float Sales

Our three float sales events for 2018 (Deltaville Museum, Float Workshop and Good Luck Cellars) are described above. Our Float Workdays for producing the Pre-Built Floats were scheduled around the weather in the spring and fall, which made showing up for the real workdays very confusing. Having the



wonderful volunteers to build floats and visit us in Weems is always a pleasure for Kathy and me. These workdays are

fun with lots of "Good Eats". Please plan to join us in 2019 for one or more workdays.

Overall, TOGA sold over 85 Pre-Built Floats at these events and earned \$4,800\* for the VIMS TOGA Endowment. Our TOGA volunteers



enjoyed good times and good food and met many other oyster gardeners. Thank You.

--Charles Yarbrough, MOG

\*This amount was enhanced by the generous donation of PVC pipe and endcaps by Southern Plumbing, 4214 George Washington Memorial Hwy, Hayes, VA 23072.



The thin-wall PVC was slightly used but perfect for our float construction. Thanks to Pam Rowe at Southern Plumbing who coordinated the donations.

## Seaglass Wines

The TOGA board recently received some unexpectedly outstanding news. Shirley Morley, Senior Regional Manager for Trincher



Family Estates, contacted us last April to see if we would be willing to let them use our logo as a cooper

ator with their company. She said they would donate to TOGA, \$1.00 per case of their Seaglass brand wines sold in Virginia. They would use the TOGA logo at the point of sale (for the businesses that allow it) to let people know they are trying to help with the ecology of the Chesapeake Bay.



Ms. Morley contacted us in late September to let us know that they were donating \$3,000 to TOGA. This generous donation could not have come at a more opportune time, since it helped cover the loss of revenue we normally expect from the Stratford Hall event, which had to be cancelled because of Hurricane Florence.

As an added bonus Ms. Morley provided a wine tasting of their excellent variety of Seaglass wines at our November board meeting. There are a few benefits of being on the TOGA board!!! Ms. Morley also said they would like to continue this program for next year and indicated their donation could be around \$5,000.



The TOGA board wishes to extend our sincere appreciation to the Trincher Family Estates for their generous contribution.

--Terry Lewis, MOG

## Barcardi/Grey Goose

TOGA recently received a \$1,000 donation from Bacardi USA (Grey Goose) vodka. Tara



Jones, the trade development director for the transatlantic division of Southern Glazer's Wine and Spirits became interested in work being done by TOGA when she visited our

website. She attended one of our board meetings and wanted to help.

Bacardi USA (Grey Goose) sent the check to TOGA to help us continue our work to improve the ecology and health of the Chesapeake Bay.

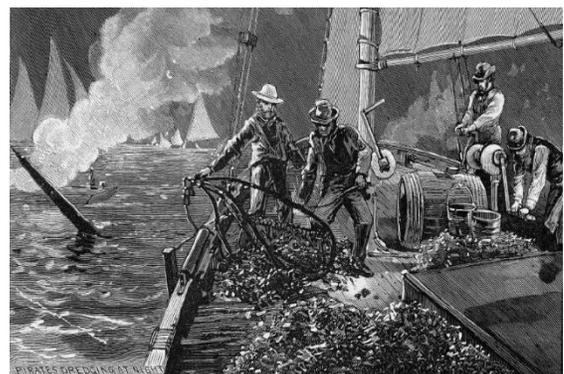


We send a big thanks to this company for their generous donation.

--Terry Lewis, MOG

## A Spat of History- Tongs and Dredges, 1800 to 1850

By the early 1800s, New Yorkers and New Englanders had exhausted their oyster grounds. They came into the Bay with the windlass dredge, not then used in the



Oyster pirates using windlass dredges.  
Wikimedia Commons

Chesapeake Bay, Virginia, realizing that dredges could rapidly deplete oyster bars and that Virginia watermen used tongs and did not possess dredges, banned them in 1811. Maryland followed suit in 1820. Both the legal and illegal use of dredges has been a major issue ever since.

By the 1830s shipping and railroads had expanded, and Baltimore first opened an oyster packing plant in 1834. In the 1830s and 1840s, large oyster reefs were discovered in Tangier and Pocomoke Sounds, so deep they could only be harvested with dredges. So, these deep reefs were the territory of pirates.



TOGA member and waterman Dudley Biddlecomb holding oyster tongs. Wikimedia Commons

Oysters were becoming big business and big crime. (Dredges became legal again at the end of the Civil War.)

#### References-

Miller, Henry M., *The Oyster in Chesapeake History*, Historic St. Mary's City, MD. Date unknown.

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--Vic Spain, MOG

## Dues for 2019

If you received this newsletter in the mail, please check the year by your name on the address label. If it is 2018 or earlier, then 2019 dues are due in January 2019. If you believe there is an error, please contact Vic Spain at [vicspain@rocketmail.com](mailto:vicspain@rocketmail.com) or 804-642-6764. Annual membership is \$15 (per family) and are for one calendar year, not 12 months from payment date.

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL *Annual Dues*

Members...

- Receive newsletters with the latest oyster gardening information
- Participate in educational events sponsored by TOGA
- Learn about innovations in oyster gardening techniques
- Benefit from the expertise of hundreds of others interested in growing oysters

Please use the form at the end of this newsletter to update your membership. You may also use it simply to update your information. It is important that your address and email address are correct as that is our primary way of communicating with members. You may also share this membership form with a friend.

When you login to buy from Amazon, please try Amazon Smile, <https://smile.amazon.com/>

Enter Tidewater Oyster Gardener Association as the nonprofit you support, and a portion of your purchase price will come to TOGA, at no extra cost to you. TOGA thanks you.

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You shop. Amazon gives.

## Newsletter News

The newsletter is published 3 times a year and is mailed to all TOGA members. Full color copies of this and past newsletters may be seen on the website at

<http://www.oystergardener.org/newsletters>

The deadline for the next newsletter is **February 12, 2019**. Any TOGA member who wishes to submit an article for the newsletter may do so prior to the deadline date. Articles will be printed as space allows.

Email to either Vic Spain at [vicspain@rocketmail.com](mailto:vicspain@rocketmail.com) and/or Kathy Haurand at [kathaurand@aol.com](mailto:kathaurand@aol.com)

Happy Oystering!!

--Kathy Haurand, MOG



## Oysters First

A History of TOGA, Oyster Education and Oyster Recipes for your enjoyment

TOGA is still working to put together a cookbook featuring Oysters. What else would it be?

We are in the early stages of planning the book, but at this time we need your recipes. Recipes should be emailed to Kathy Haurand at [kathaurand@aol.com](mailto:kathaurand@aol.com) or snail mailed to 136 Arrowhead Drive, Weems, VA 22576.

*Oyster Pie, Oyster Fritters, Oysters Rockefeller, Oyster Stew, Oyster Chowder, Oyster Stuffing, Oyster Casseroles ... we want them all!*

## Check out the TOGA Store!

For your convenience and enjoyment, TOGA has arranged for Port and Company to sell TOGA logo merchandise directly to you online. TOGA takes no income from your online purchases. You are buying directly from the vendor. Enjoy!





## TOGA Membership Form

P.O. Box 2463, Gloucester, VA 23061

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Please Check: \_\_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal Annual Dues are \$15

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Body of water where oysters will be grown: \_\_\_\_\_

What type do you grow? (sterile triploids, fertile diploids or both) \_\_\_\_\_

Approximately how many spat of each type do you plant each year? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you do with your shell from harvested or dead oysters? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Please check here if you use this form only to update your information (and not to pay dues)

PO Box 2463  
Gloucester, VA 23061

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U.S. Postage **PAID**  
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*Growing oysters for a cleaner Bay*