



Growing oysters for a cleaner Bay

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

Spring 2020

"Dear Oyster Gardeners and friends,

Based on the CDC's March 15 announcement **all TOGA events scheduled through May 2020 are cancelled or postponed until further notice.** The determination was based on the health and well-being of our attendees in regards to COVID-19. Keeping everyone as safe as possible has to be our highest priority. Please check [oystergardener.org](http://www.oystergardener.org) home page for updates

All the best, the TOGA Board".



Winners of the 2019 Tidewater Oyster Gardeners Association Middle School Writing Contest got the chance to read their winning essays during the group's annual meeting on Saturday at VIMS. TOGA president, Terry Lewis is shown here with students Hannah Davis, Lucie Cox, Finley Payne and Ben Goetz, from left.

Photo by Charlie Koenig, Gloucester Mathews Gazette Journal

TOGA Annual Membership Meeting a Huge Success

More than 120 attended the TOGA Annual Membership Meeting at the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences on January 25. Starting at 1:00 p.m. interested members chatted with representatives of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission and the Virginia Department of Health to learn about water quality, permits for growing oysters, and how to safely harvest and consume oysters.

At 1:30 the audience was treated to the readings of this year's winning essays in the Middle School writing contest. The young students did a remarkable job in their presentations, and there were some very proud parents and relatives in attendance to support these fine young people. To read all of the 2019 winning essays, go to

<https://www.oystergardener.org/youth-writing-contest>

and click on "And the 2019 Winners Are...CLICK HERE"

A short business meeting followed which elected the new Board and added Brian Wood as President Emeritus/Education, presented a summary of our budget (which is doing very well thanks to full funding of our grant requests from the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund), and gave a summary of last year's accomplishments and proposals for this year's projects.

The newly-elected Board of Directors

President:	Terry Lewis
Vice President:	Doug Schaefer
Treasurer:	Brian Ingram
Secretary:	Carl Zulick
Past President:	Mike Saunders

At large members:

Lou Castagnola
Ken Hammond
Terry Halkyard
Ken Paugh

President Emeritus/Education
Brian Wood (elected for life)

Not elected-

President Emeritus/Engineer: Vic Spain
VIMS Advisor: Karen Hudson
President Emeritus: Jackie Partin
(inactive)

Past board members Charles Yarbrough, Bobby Morgan and Jennifer Palazzo were honored for their service. Also volunteer Laura Todd was thanked for her pioneering work on the Stratford Hall Wine and Oyster Festival and her support of LUCEE (Longwood University Camp for Environmental Exploration).

Then Shirley Morley from SeaGlass wines briefly discussed the origins of their company and why they became interested in supporting TOGA and its mission. SeaGlass wines donated \$3,000 two years ago, \$5,000 last year, and pledged another \$5,000 this year. This money results from putting aside \$1 for TOGA for each case of wine sold in VA.

The education portion of the meeting featured

Dr. Stan Allen,
Professor and
Director of the
Aquaculture
Genetics and
Breeding
Technology
Center (ABC) at
VIMS. The ABC
hatchery currently



operates the most extensive breeding program for oysters in the U.S. and arguably the largest in the world. Stan, assisted by Karen Hudson, held a "fireside chat" about the course of his career. Stan shared his perspectives and vast experience on oyster aquaculture locally and beyond.

VIMS Director of Development Susan Maples then gave an update on the status of the TOGA VIMS Fellowship Endowment. As of September 30, 2019, the book value was \$152,285.90, with a market value of \$182,185.92. To date, ten students have received a TOGA fellowship. Susan thanked the members present "for their support of the fellowship through TOGA and for the individual gifts members make. As you know, this fellowship is an investment in research that benefits oysters and our waterways in Virginia and around the world." So, you know you are doing a great service when you donate to the endowment and purchase or help build TOGA oyster floats because the proceeds go to the Endowment.

Susan then introduced the two most recent recipients of the Endowment, PhD candidates Joey Matt and Kristen Prossner. Please view the Winter 2019 Newsletter (<https://www.oystergardener.org/newsletters>) page 2 for their personal stories about work and studies at VIMS.

The meeting concluded just before 4:00. Attendees were treated to several varieties of oyster stews and casseroles, delicious sides, and desserts as they exited the hall. No one left the meeting hungry.

I'd like to personally thank everyone who attended for supporting our young writers and for helping to improve this organization. If you didn't make the meeting this year, please plan to attend next year-- again on a Saturday in January

–Terry Lewis

Note- Just before the Annual Membership Meeting, I received the attached from Brennan Lane, who won our Middle School Writing Contest two years ago and who placed second in the contest the prior year. I hope you agree that information like this is just one more reason why we should be proud to be members of TOGA.

--Terry Lewis

Dear Mr. Lewis:

I just wanted to touch base with you and let you know how much I wish that I

could attend the TOGA annual meeting. Unfortunately, I am swimming in two different swim meets over the three days from Friday through Sunday, and my coaches have left me no choice in the matter. I can't let my teams down. I hope that you will give my regards, though, to the incredible men and women of TOGA.

As I said before, choosing to enter the TOGA essay contest set me up for so much more than the satisfaction of learning about these heroes of Virginia aquaculture; it also gave me confidence when I was just beginning middle school and when I was trying to define my path. The essay contest brought me to TOGA, a world of adults who assured me that I had something worthy to contribute, and in return I learned so much from attending the meetings and keeping up with the latest news about oysters and the Bay.

TOGA also brought me to meet members of the Virginia General Assembly and taught me so much about advocacy and legislation. This past fall, I canvassed door-to-door for the sponsor of last year's oyster bill, Glen Sturtevant in his bid for re-election. In that effort, I learned how to converse with complete strangers about elections, politics, my plans, Senator Sturtevant's plans and the state of the Commonwealth.

In the meantime, with my increased confidence stemming from my beginnings in the TOGA contest, I stepped into high school and swept into the freshman class Presidency. I won my election by a landslide and represent over 500 freshmen this year at Midlothian High School. I also play on multiple lacrosse teams, making it to nationals this past summer, and earning a spot at a select camp at UNC two weeks ago. . . . This past year, I have worked with improving my local Central Virginia waterways and the removal of invasive species. Additionally, as Class President, I will be directing the Class of

2023 in a service project tied into the Clean the Bay day.

I 100% believe that the TOGA opportunity is certainly something that I count as an incentive and springboard to later success, and I hope that the essay winners this year and every year recognize that the essay contest can be a path for other rewarding exploration of science, service, political advocacy and community support.

Again, I hope that you have a very successful and enjoyable meeting! I will miss you all!

Respectfully,
Brennan

Tidewater Oyster Gardeners Association Middle School Writing Contest 2021

After seven very successful Middle School Writing Contests, the Tidewater Oyster Gardeners Association (TOGA) and People's Community Bank are continuing the writing competition with prizes of \$500, \$250, and \$100 for the top three essays. The theme of the essays is "Consider the Oyster"- a wide open category that must include an essay based on oysters.

Middle School Writing Contest!!!



TOGA
Tidewater Oyster Gardeners Association

"Consider the Oyster"
\$500, \$250, \$100 cash prizes
plus \$200 to the winning school

For details check out www.oystergardener.org



Additionally, the school of the first-place entry will be awarded \$200 to spend on educational aids.

The competition is open to all Virginia students in grades 6, 7 and 8. Home-schooled students are welcome to enter.

"This increase in prize money indicates the commitment TOGA members have shown to

increase the emphasis on education for our organization," said Terry Lewis, President of TOGA. "Reaching young people at an early age is very important to start a lifelong interest in ecology and the importance of the health of the Bay," he said.

Winners will be announced and awards presented at the Tidewater Oyster Gardeners Association annual membership meeting at the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences on January 9, 2021. The winner's parents, a mentor, or teachers may be guests of TOGA for the presentation event. The winning entries will be read by the students at the awards program during the Annual Meeting.

The three top winners will be published on the TOGA Web site and may be published in other publications or web sites, including the Virginia Outdoor Writers Association website.

Essays can be written about oyster life, history, recent developments, or even recipes with background from how the recipe came about. If you know Middle School students, please encourage them to enter.

Previous year's winners are now growing oysters in the floats they won for their essays. This is a great way to encourage youngsters to get involved with oysters, learn about the ecology of the Bay, and help improve our environment.

The article should be written in WORD format and attached to an e-mail. The submissions can be made between now and the December 15, 2021, deadline.

--Terry Lewis, MOG

**The 2019 Winning Essay by Ben
Goetz
8th Grade, Page Middle School,
Gloucester VA**

Nature's Forgotten Filters

Consider the oyster. Small. Brown. It doesn't seem like much. The most you probably

think about the oyster is when you hear Shakespeare's old saying "the world is your oyster." But popular idioms are not the oyster's only use. The oyster is great for a lot of things, like cultural dishes, keeping the water clean, and even making beautiful pearls!

Without a doubt, oysters are amazing creatures! But, the oyster population in the Chesapeake Bay may not be able to last much longer without help. Over the past century, 85% of oyster reefs have been lost globally, and in most bays, 90% of them are functionally extinct. This means that they no longer play a big enough role in the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem due to population loss. Most of this population loss can be attributed to overfishing, disease, and habitat loss. Now you may be thinking, "Why should I care if they go extinct? They're not doing anything for me!" Well, in truth oysters do so much more than most of us think.

You don't have to like eating oysters to appreciate their vital role in the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem. Oysters are natural filter feeders. This means they feed by trapping particles of food as well as nutrients out of the water around them. In doing so, oysters help keep the water clean and clear for underwater grasses and other aquatic life. One oyster can filter more than 50 gallons of water in a single day. The oyster is so important to the ecosystem that if they disappeared from the bay, almost 300 different species could die off! These days the Chesapeake Bay is a very polluted place, and these oysters are helping to fight the pollution one meal at a time.

When I say "Oyster" the second thing you probably think of is the dish, as in eating oysters. Oysters are culturally a very popular dish in the Chesapeake Bay area. The earliest evidence of oyster being eaten found thus far in the region dates to around 4,500 years ago. Shell deposits were formed as people harvested shellfish and dumped the empty shells in the same location repeatedly over the centuries. In the early 19th century, oysters were widely consumed by mostly working-class individuals until they began to be overfished and prices went up, making them a more expensive dish. Since then, oysters have

played a big role in food culture in the area. From fried to steamed to even grilled, there are a lot of ways to cook and eat an oyster.

One of the most popular pieces of jewelry is the pearl necklace. Most of the pearls you can find in jewelry are grown by oysters. A lot of people say that removing an oyster's pearl will kill it, but this is not true. A pearl forms when a small piece of debris makes its way into the oyster and the oyster begins covering it with a special fluid as a defense mechanism. As long as you are careful when removing the pearl, it does not harm the oyster and my even in fact help it survive.

If the oyster population disappeared tomorrow, we would lose the beautiful pearls they make, lose a culturally important food. And even have a more polluted Chesapeake Bay ecosystem! But luckily for us, people are working to help restore the oyster population by managing oyster harvests, establishing oyster sanctuaries, and helping the oysters overcome diseases. However, we can all do our part by doing things like recycling oyster shells so they can be used to build new reefs, reducing our negative impact on the Chesapeake Bay watershed, or even raising oyster larvae at home. The next time you see oysters at the store or on the menu at a restaurant, stop and take a moment to consider the oyster.

2020 Middle Peninsula Spring Oyster Fair (Cancelled)

The TOGA-sponsored Annual Spring Oyster Fair will be held April 18 at the Gwynn's Island Civic Center, 1996 Old Ferry Rd, Hudgins, VA 23076. Directions and the program follow.

Directions- Many mapping services do not accurately direct you to the Civic Center. When you cross the bridge to Gwynn's Island, you will be on Cricket Hill Rd. Keep straight onto Old Ferry Road for 1.6 miles, then turn right, still on Old Ferry Road and after 150 yards, the Civic Center is the white building on the right with a horseshoe driveway in front.

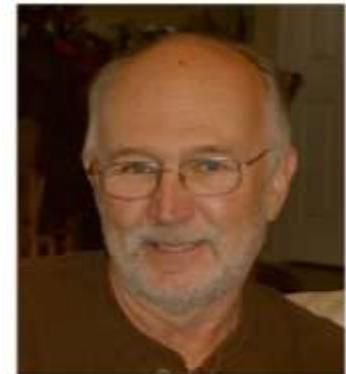
9:00 AM – Registration begins with coffee, fruit, breakfast rolls, etc.

9:00 to 10:00 – Vendors of oyster gardening equipment, spat and supplies are invited to display their wares for sale. Spat availability is uncertain at this time due to the cold weather. Normally, spat are larger this time of year because they were spawned in the previous fall. This is also a good time to question Master Oyster Gardeners and vendors about your gardening issues.

10:00 to 10:10 – Remarks by TOGA President Terry Lewis including a preview of upcoming events.

10:10 to 11:00 – We are happy to welcome back our old

friend and VIMS advisor Mike Oesterling, Executive Director of the Shellfish Growers of Virginia, who will be our feature speaker. Mike was TOGA's



first VIMS Advisor and was responsible for many of the educational programs, such as the Master Oyster Gardener Course, that made it possible for non-professionals to have private oyster gardens. He was essential to the founding and early growth of TOGA. He worked hard for TOGA from about 1997 to 2011 when he retired from VIMS. The TOGA/VIMS Student Fellowship Endowment was named to honor Mike and Jackie Partin, TOGA President Emeritus.

Commercial Oyster Culture in Virginia -- Status and Challenges

Mike will review the current commercial industry, highlighting how his association (Shellfish Growers of Virginia) fits in and then address some of the current issues facing the industry.

11:00 to 11:20 – For new oyster gardeners, Vic Spain will discuss How to Get Started Oyster Gardening. Details include how to get

spat (oyster seed) and when best to deploy, equipment needed (on display) and how to maintain it, how many per cage, how long to harvest, sanitation, how to get help, helpful literature, etc. We had several "critter" problems reported recently, so we will discuss those problems and possible solutions. You are welcome to share your experiences and questions. Experienced gardeners should feel free to skip this portion but are welcome to join the discussion.

--Vic Spain, MOG

Wine & Oyster Fair, Good Luck Cellars, March 14, 2020, 1 to 4 PM

The Tidewater Oyster Gardeners Association (TOGA) and the Good Luck Cellars Winery will



again team up to sponsor a wine and oyster

event at the beautiful winery location on 1025 Goodluck Road, Kilmarnock, Virginia.

At the TOGA tent you will be able to get one-on-one attention for your oyster gardening questions, best practices or concerns. Vendors will be on hand selling oyster gardening equipment and spat (if available).

This is always a fun event with plenty of wine, oysters and



other good food available. The public is invited to join in on this festive activity.

Free admission and plenty of parking. For questions, please contact Ken Hammond, kennyhammond39@yahoo.com

–Ken Hammond, MOG

TOGA Oyster Float Sales Event-- Deltaville Maritime Museum "Holly Point Market Day" June 27, 2020

The Tidewater Oyster Gardeners Association will be offering various TOGA-built oyster cages for sale at Deltaville Maritime Museum's Holly Point Market Day from 9:00 am to



12:00 pm on

Saturday, June 27, located at 287 Jackson Creek Rd, Deltaville, VA 23043. Cage sale proceeds go to the TOGA/VIMS Student Endowment.

This event is a great opportunity to get floats, cages, bags and accessories.



Master Oyster Gardeners (MOGs) will be available to discuss with you how to get started and the latest

techniques in oyster gardening and regulations.

The pictures and descriptions of these floats and cages are on our website www.oystergardener.org. You can also use the Order Form at the end of this newsletter or on our website under Events/Float Workshop to order these pre-built floats and cages so the products can be available for you to pick up at this workshop. You may also order by email as explained on the order form.

Volunteers are welcome to attend our spring float workdays at Camp Kekoka (1083 Boys Camp Rd, Kilmarnock, VA 22482) on April 23 and 24, and June 24 and 25. Two days are scheduled for each event in case of bad weather or to complete our needed inventory.

You may build your own float and get a \$10 discount, and you can help build floats for TOGA to sell. Your work will contribute to TOGA/VIMS Student Fellowship Endowment. For questions, please contact Carl Zulick, czulick@verizon.net or Vic Spain, vicspain@rocketmail.com.

–Carl Zulick

Camp Kekoka Kiosk Educational Display

TOGA has completed the Camp Kekoka kiosk educational display consisting of rugged aluminum panels.

This first photo shows the 12 panels giving a description of TOGA and what we do-- “How to Grow Oysters in Your Own Waters,” “Predators of Oyster Gardens and Other Threats,” and “TOGA Designs and Devices.”



This next photo shows 20 panels giving the “Highlights of the History of Oysters in the Chesapeake Bay” by Vic Spain.



This third photo is of the end of the kiosk with 3 large panels describing the TOGA oyster reef at Camp Kekoka.



Thanks to Kent Eanes for the aerial photos of Camp Kekoka.

For more details and to read the contents of the display, please go to <https://www.oystergardener.org/camp-kekoka>.

Thanks to Ken Hammond for managing the construction of the kiosk, mounting the panels and providing the photos.

Tidal Tumbler Cage Design Change

TOGA introduced the Tidal Tumbler to its float inventory last year, and it has been very popular. Since then we have had more orders for the Tumbler than any other cage we make.

This photo shows the Tumbler we have been building for the past year. Late in the year we heard about some issues that we have addressed in an alternative configuration for our 2020 float sales.



Some oyster gardeners have had trouble with the black screw-on paint bucket lids. In one case it appears that the screw-on part just fell off in the water. In another case barnacle fouling was so thick that it jammed the screw-on part of the lid. Others just thought having to unscrew the lid and dump oysters out of the end was awkward. We appreciate the feedback we get on our cages.

So, we have experimented with an alternative configuration shown here. The end lids on this Tumbler are attached permanently and there is a hinged hatch in the center of the cylindrical



cage that closes with bungee cord and a hook. The oysters can easily be accessed through the hatch.

Everything else works the same as before. See the Spring 2019 Newsletter at <https://www.oystergardener.org/newsletters>.

The price of this cage sold by TOGA will remain \$50. A \$10 discount is available for those making their own at one of our float-making workdays. We will be happy to show

you how to make them if you want to purchase your own supplies and make them at home. Of all the cages we sell and use, it seems to be the easiest to build and handle.

For those of you who have the 2019 model, we will be happy to modify it free if you will come to our Spring Oyster Fair at Gwynn's Island April 18 or to any of our Float-Building Workshops or pre-build workdays. You can also make arrangements with Vic Spain (vicspain@rocketmail.com, 804-642-6764) to have your tumbler modified.

– Vic Spain, MOG

Dues for 2020

If you received this newsletter in the mail, please check the year by your name on the address label. If it is 2019 or earlier, then 2020 dues were due in January 2020.

If you believe there is an error, please contact Vic Spain at vicspain@rocketmail.com or 804-6426764.



Annual membership is \$15 (per family) and are for one calendar year, not 12 months from payment date.

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.



MASTER OYSTER GARDENERS COURSE

JUNE 6 and 13, 2020

Virginia Institute of Marine Science
Gloucester Point, VA

Apply online: <http://forms.wm.edu/44584>

Cost - attendees are asked to pay a modest \$40 fee to cover food and beverages. The Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund (a.k.a. the License Plate Fund) is covering the cost of course materials.

Purpose & History - to provide a steady stream of highly trained volunteers who can lead TOGA's outreach mission. The first Master Oyster Gardener (MOG) course was held in 1998 and graduated nineteen enthusiastic MOGs. Nine further courses have been held in subsequent years each with roughly 15 to 20 students.

What do MOG's do? MOG's lead TOGA's outreach mission through their dedicated volunteer service. Opportunities include newsletter or website support, assisting oyster gardeners, outreach events, float building, research projects, special committees and board membership.

Instruction is covered by a variety of knowledgeable experts including VIMS faculty and staff, State officials, and experienced TOGA MOG's. It's a mix of classroom and hands-on learning with lots of time for discussion.

Content - generally consists of basic oyster gardening skills; oyster biology and life history; oyster diseases; understanding the various "critters" that live in and around oyster gardens; and the regulatory and human health issues surrounding oyster gardening. Attendees will also get a start-to-finish look at the oyster cultivation process at the VIMS oyster hatchery.

Applicant Criteria -

- Have a VMRC oyster garden permit.
- Agree to attend the course in its entirety.
- Have been growing oysters for a minimum of one year.
- Commit to helping TOGA respond to questions from gardeners.
- Be willing to assist with at least 3 TOGA events or activities.

Interested, curious and have questions?

- Karen Hudson, VIMS, khudson@vims.edu, (804) 684-7742
- Terry Lewis, TOGA President, lewistmn@msn.com, 804-693-2687
- Doug Schaefer, TOGA VP candidate, subiceguy@hotmail.com, 804-580-1456
- Vic Spain, President Emeritus/Engineer, vicspain@rocketmail.com, 804-642-6764



EXPERIENCE HANDS-ON LABS



SEE INSIDE THE HATCHERY



LEARN FROM KNOWLEDGEABLE EXPERTS

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 August 3, 2020. 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 (vicspain@rocketmail.com) or Kathy Haurand (kathaurand@aol.com).

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!



<https://oystergardeners.qbstores.com/home.html>

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?idm=CB>

Chesapeake Oyster Alliance Survey

In support of the Chesapeake Oyster Alliance goal of putting 10 billion oysters in the Bay by 2025, we are continuing to collect TOGA member data on how many spat are put in each year.

We are asking that, 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, the first is to simply fill out our new membership form when you renew your membership or update your information. The second is to annually complete the online survey at

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, MOG

Results - April 2019 - February 2020

322 People responded to the survey

Based on 2020 Dues paying members, then balance of 2019 dues paying members.

Type Grown

139 Both	43.4%
54 Diploid	16.9%
127 Triploid	39.7%
320 Responded	100.0%

Spat Annually*

246,940 Both	53.5%
66,750 Diploid	14.5%
147,475 Triploid	32.0%
461,165	100.0%

Shell Disposal

235 Back to Water	79.9%
9 Erosion Control	3.1%
30 Landscaping	10.2%
17 Recycling	5.8%
3 Other	1.0%
294 Responded	100.0%

Main Tributary to Chesapeake Bay

Back River	0	0.0%
Chesapeake Bay	12	3.7%
Chincoteague Bay	1	0.3%
Fleets Bay	11	3.4%
Horn Harbor	0	0.0%
Ingram Bay	33	10.2%
James River	15	4.6%
Milford Haven	9	2.8%
Mobjack Bay	43	13.3%
Piankatank River	29	9.0%
Poquoson River	11	3.4%
Potomac River	45	13.9%
Rappahannock River	71	22.0%
Winter Harbor	4	1.2%
York River	29	9.0%
unknown	10	3.1%
Total	323	100.0%

A Spat of History, One Battle in the Oyster Wars

The McLane arrived at the mouth of the Chester River on the night of 10 December 1888 where a fleet of 70 pirate dredges were at work. Gus had set two outlying dredges to act as sentinels. Captain Howard and two of his crew got into McLane's skiff and silently captured both of the sentinel dredges and their crews. After capturing the second dredge, the skiff and the McLane were both spotted and the alarm went out across the collected pirate dredges. Howard sped the skiff back to the steamer, meanwhile the pirate dredges began to disperse, however the wind was blowing downstream the Chester River and the dredges had to tack back and forth to maneuver upstream. This made the dredges easy targets for McLane's howitzer, pirate chief Gus Rice had planned for this, he had lashed together a raft of a dozen dredge boats with a chain that was quickly drifting downstream with the current. The upper decks of each of the dredges on this raft were fortified with large iron plates.

"Join me boys in victory or in hell!" Gus Rice, Pirate Chief

Thirty pirates proceeded to open fire on the McLane from behind the iron plates on their raft. In return, the McLane fired off four shots from its howitzer, each passing through the rigging of the makeshift raft bearing down on them. The McLane was too close to depress its gun any lower to fire and the raft was so well fortified that neither rifle nor the howitzer had any effect on the pirates. Captain Howard then ordered the McLane to turn toward the raft and ordered full ahead and rammed its iron hull into the wooden pirate dredge Julia H. Jones taking the full brunt and was damaged in the stern all the way to the companionway. One of the pirate crew had fallen onto the deck of the McLane and was captured. The gunner at the howitzer was brought down by a bullet through his arm. Howard then ordered the McLane into full reverse and then full forward again to ram into the raft this time directly into the stern of Rice's flagship the dredge J.C. Mahoney. As this last ram lodged the McLane into the center

of the fortified raft, the crew began to open fire at the now exposed pirates. With two of the dredges on the raft sinking and their iron plates rendered ineffective, the rest of the dredges still attached began to cast themselves off and disperse along with the rest of the pirate dredges. Gus Rice was able to escape into history, after this battle there is nothing further mentioned of him. Unfortunately, unbeknownst to the crew of the McLane there was shanghaied crew trapped inside both of the sinking pirate dredges, unable to escape, they went down with the pirate dredges. The McLane was later joined in the Chester River by its sister the Thomas. The two steamers then patrolled southward in an attempt to find Rice and his fleeing fleet of pirate dredges, where a few days later they encountered a fleet on Easton Bay and the crews apparently surrendered. The Oyster Navy and the Governor McLane had won its first victory and in light of this, many oyster pirates beached their boats and ran but the conflict was by no means over. Both steamers returned to Annapolis to a hero's welcome.



Police Steamer, The Stalwart Governor R. M. McLane, is currently sunk in Baltimore Harbor. This article was borrowed from <https://jaysearchaeology.wordpress.com/> March 14, 2020.

TOGA 2020 Events as of 10 March 2020

Contact the Event Coordinator if you would like to participate

Continuous to 15 December 20, Middle School Writing Contest, Event Coordinator: Terry Lewis, lewistmn@msm.com See TOGA Website for Information at www.oystergardener.org

March

- 7 March 20**, TOGA Volunteer Thank You Party – Event Coordinator: Terry Lewis, lewistmn@msm.com Piankatank Community League, 11888 Harcum Rd., Gloucester, VA 23061, 1PM – 4PM
- 11 March 20**, Cople Elementary School Oyster Education Day - Event Coordinator: Mike Sanders, sndrsmich@gmail.com , Cople Elementary School 7114 Cople Hwy, Hague, VA 22469
- 14 March 20**, Wine and Oyster Fair – Event Coordinator: Ken Hammond, kennyhammond39@yahoo.com , Good Luck Cellar, 1025 Goodluck Rd, Kilmarnock, VA 22482, 12PM-4PM, **There will be both Vendor Spat and Float sales at this event.**
- 19 March 20**, Oyster History Presentation at Piankatank Community League - Event Coordinator: Terry Lewis, lewistmn@msm.com Piankatank Community League, 11888 Harcum Rd., Gloucester, VA 23061 (Cancelled)

April

- 1 April 20**, (2 April 20 (rain date)) Richmond County TOTS (Think Outside the Sink) – Event Coordinator Nick Ferriter, Ferriter@aol.com , 8:50 AM – 2:15 PM (TBD)
- 15 April 20**, (16 April 20 (rain date)) Lancaster County TOTS (Think Outside the Sink) – Event Coordinator Nick Ferriter, Ferriter@aol.com , 8:50 AM – 2:15 PM (TBD)
- 18 Apr 20**, Spring Oyster Fair – Event Coordinator: Vic Spain, vicspain@rocketmail.com, Gwynn's Island Civic Center, 1996 Old Ferry Rd, Grimstead, VA 23064, 9AM – 12:45PM, **There will be both Vendor Spat and Float sales at this event. (Cancelled)**
- 18 Apr 20**, Heathsville Farmers Market Earth Day – Event Coordinator: Doug Schaefer, subiceguy@hotmail.com , Historic Rice's Hotel / Hughlett's Tavern, 73 Monument Place, Heathsville, VA 22473, 9AM – 1PM (TBD)
- 23 Apr 20**, (24 Apr 20 (Rain date)), Float Workday, Event Coordinator: Carl Zulick, czulick@verizon.net , Camp Kekoka, 1083 Boys Camp Rd, Kilmarnock, VA 22482, 10 AM – 3 PM (TBD)
- 29 April 20**, (30 April 20 (rain date)) Northumberland County TOTS (Think Outside the Sink) – Event Coordinator Nick Ferriter, Ferriter@aol.com , 8:50 AM – 2:15 PM (TBD)

May

- 17 May 20**, Summer Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge annual Go Wild! festival – Event Coordinator: Brian Wood, awood45858@aol.com , Hutchinson Tract, 19180 Tidewater Trail, Tappahannock, VA 22560, 11 AM- 4 PM (TBD)

June

- 6 & 13 June 20**, Master Oyster Gardener Course - Event Coordinator: Karen Hudson, khudson@vims.edu and Doug Schaefer, subiceguy@hotmail.com , VIMS (Virginia Institute of Marine Science), 1370 Greate Rd, Gloucester Point, VA 23062
- 24 Jun 20**, (25 Jun 20 (Rain date)), Float Workday, Event Coordinator: Carl Zulick, czulick@verizon.net , Camp Kekoka, 1083 Boys Camp Rd, Kilmarnock, VA 22482, 10 AM – 3 PM
- 27 June 20**, Summer Oyster Float Sales Event (Deltaville Museum Float Building Workshop) – Event Coordinator: Carl Zulick, czulick@verizon.net , Deltaville Maritime Museum, “Holly Point Market Day” 287 Jackson Creek Rd., Deltaville, VA 23043, **There will be TOGA Float and Vendor Spat sales at this event.**

TOGA 2020 Events as of 10 March 2020 – continued

July

Nothing scheduled at this time

August

Get slurping on August 5th with National Oyster Day! Its reputed that Casanova, that infamous 18th century cad, started his day with a breakfast of 50 oysters. Whether he ate them for their aphrodisiac properties or simply because he had a penchant for the briny bivalve mollusks, we'll never know!

September

12, 13 September 20, Stratford Hall W & O Festival, Event Coordinator: Brian Wood, awood45858@aol.com , Stratford Hall, 438 Great House Rd. Montross, VA 22558

15 Sep 20, (16 Sep 20 (Rain date)), Float Workday, Event Coordinator: Brian Ingram, bandbingram@gmail.com , Camp Kekoka, 1083 Boys Camp Rd, Kilmarnock, VA 22482, 10 AM – 3 PM

25, 26 September 20, Guinea Jubilee – Event Coordinator: Ken Paugh, kenpaugh@gmail.com , Abingdon Ruritan Club, 8784 Guinea Rd., Hayes, VA 23072 3PM-6PM Fri. and 9AM-5PM Sat.

26 September 20, Northern Neck Land Conservancy's Boots and BBQ – Event Coordinator: Doug Schaefer, subiceguy@hotmail.com , Ditchley VA 12PM – 4PM

29 Sep 20, (30 Sep 20 (Rain date)), Float Workday, Event Coordinator: Brian Ingram, bandbingram@gmail.com , Camp Kekoka, 1083 Boys Camp Rd, Kilmarnock, VA 22482, 10 AM – 3 PM

October

3 October 20, Fall Oyster Float Sales Event (Williams Wharf Landing Float Building Workshop)– Event Coordinator: Brian Ingram, bandbingram@gmail.com , Williams Wharf Landing, 1039 Williams Wharf Rd. Mathews, VA 23109 10AM – 1PM, **There will be TOGA Float and Vendor Spat sales at this event.**

31 October 20 Fall Wine and Oyster Fair Float Sales - Event Coordinator: Brian Wood, awood45858@aol.com , Good Luck Cellar, 1025 Goodluck Rd, Kilmarnock, VA 22482 12PM – 4PM, **There will be TOGA Float and Vendor Spat sales at this event.**

November

Nothing scheduled at this time

December

15 December 20, Middle School Writing Contest Essays due, Event Coordinator: Terry Lewis, lewistmn@msm.com See TOGA Website for Information at www.oystergardener.org

January 2021

9 January 21, TOGA Annual Meeting, VIMS (Virginia Institute of Marine Science), 1370 Greate Rd, Gloucester Point, VA 23062, See TOGA Website for Information at www.oystergardener.org

2020 MASTER OYSTER GARDENERS COURSE APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

Preferred phone number _____ Email _____

Are you an active oyster gardener? _____ Yes _____ No

How many years have you been growing oysters? _____ 1-3 _____ 3-5 _____ 5-10 _____ >10

Where is your site located? (include river and creek name) _____

Do you hold a current oyster gardening permit with VMRC? _____ Yes _____ No – but will apply
_____ I don't know

Is your growing area approved for shellfish harvest or condemned? _____ Approved/Open
_____ Condemned/Closed _____ I don't know

Check all that apply: _____ I grow oysters for home consumption _____ I grow oysters to donate to
restoration efforts _____ I grow oysters to improve water quality

What has been your most unusual or memorable experience growing oysters?

Please provide any other information that will aid the committee in choosing applicants (i.e., your
volunteer interests: public speaking experience, photography, biological science training, computer
expertise, etc)

By signing this application, I agree to meet the criteria listed to the best of my ability: have a VMRC oyster
gardening permit, attend the course in its entirety, be willing to assist TOGA's volunteer mission with at
least 3 events or activities.

Signature

Date

Oyster Float Order Form

Please mail this Form to TOGA, P.O. Box 2463, Gloucester, VA 23061
Or email your order to vicspain@rocketmail.com

This order form may be used for the float sales at the Deltaville Maritime Museum on June 27, 2020.

Note- You may also order by email specifying exactly what you want. Contact **Vic Spain**, (vicspain@rocketmail.com).

Name: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Pre-Built Floats and Devices

Qty	Cost Each	Description	Qty	Cost Each	Description
_____	\$110	Taylor Float with Top	_____	\$15	Top for Taylor Float
_____	\$95	Taylor Float, no Top	_____	\$50	Tidal Tumbler
_____	\$65	Flip Float	_____	\$45	Bender 42 inch
_____	\$55	Bottom Cage	_____	\$50	Bender 50 inch

Payment for floats, devices will be collected at the check-in table at the Oyster Float Workshop

Build Your Own Floats

If you wish to build your own floats at our workdays, you will receive a \$10 discount on each float. Float workdays will be held at Camp Kekoka, (1083 Boys Camp Rd, Kilmarnock, VA 22482) April 15 and 16, June 24 and 25. If you are interested in building your own float or volunteering at workdays, please contact Vic Spain, vicspain@rocketmail.com, or Carl Zulick, czulick@verizon.net.

TOGA Membership Form

Please complete and mail with dues to TOGA, P.O. Box 2463, Gloucester, VA 23061

Or you may join online at <https://www.oystergardener.org/join-toga>

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

Return Service Requested

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage **PAID**
Yorktown, VA
Permit # 33



Growing oysters for a cleaner Bay