



**Fall 2008
Calendar**

Tues., Oct. 28 - Board Meeting, Don Pedros Restaurant, 6:15 PM
Fri., Nov. 7- Rent Party, 6:30 PM John and Betty Jensen's house, Aylett.

November Rent Party

The next MPRA Rent Party will be held Friday, Nov. 7 at Betty and John Jensen's "cook shak," the log building next to their house at 13375 West River Rd., King William near Aylett. There is a wood stove in the building, but dress accordingly. The Jensens will provide brunswick stew. Members are asked to bring side dishes and beverages of your choice. RSVP so they'll know how many to expect by calling 769-1565.

MPRA's rent parties are a fun way for members to get together to share concerns about the rivers, tell fish stories and paddling experiences and raise a few bucks for our projects. Besides food and drink, you are encouraged to throw a few bucks in the kitty. It's a great way to meet others interested in conservation and recreation of our rivers. Join the fun and come!



Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers Association newsletter

River Day on the Mattaponi was cold, wet and fun

At 9 AM on Friday, Oct. 17, middle school students from King and Queen Elementary School arrived at Sandy Point. The day before the temperature was 86 degrees and sunny. Friday it turned cool and rainy. Even though the kids and instructors were wet, it was a great day of learning about the river habitat and history. Science teacher Carolyn Daniel had been working with MPRA volunteers and 4-H Extension agent for more than a year on a Schools of Shad project and grant from Virginia Naturally to bring the students to the outdoor classroom at Sandy Point.

Students visited seven stations before lunch. MPRA volunteers Randy Shank, John and Betty Jensen helped the students net grass shrimp, bull minnows, a hog choker and crappie in seine nets. Meaghann Terrein from Three Rivers SWCD used a watershed model to demonstrate runoff pollution from different types of land uses.



Willie Balderson, historical interpreter, took students back to the time when John Smith explored the Chesapeake Bay. (left)

(below) MPRA volunteer, Brad Davis, showed students a hawk and talked about birds that live on the river.

John Wilburn, Virginia Dept. of Forestry led the forestry station. MPRA volunteer Mike Embrey led the water quality monitoring station and Catherine Short, 4-H Extension agent talked to students about what they might find in the mud (skeletons, turtle shells, fossils, etc.) Dawn Shank gave an overview at the beginning of the day and led the students in a watershed planning activity after lunch.



"I can't believe I saw a real live hawk, touched a fish and walked in the woods on the same day. I've never done any of that before," said one young lady as she walked in the rain with a trashbag covering her clothes.

Everyone was cold and wet when they got on the bus, but they were smiling. It's a field trip they probably won't forget . . . a "meaningful watershed experience."



MPRA had a busy summer

MPRA had another busy summer beginning with the 17th annual River Stewardship Day in June. Volunteers picked up trash on the rivers concentrating on a few specific spots this year, including the boat landing at West Point. MPRA also partnered with Three Rivers SWCD on a rain barrel workshop.

This year many of the stewardship projects were at Sandy Point State Forest. Boy Scouts and a group of horseback riders worked on trails at the State Forest. It was a hot day, but the Scouts got an extra treat by being able to visit with Willie Balderson in a historic camp set up beside the river and then canoed from Sandy Point to Dick Campbell's cottage.

After a delicious lunch of barbecue, fried chicken and sides, volunteers got door prizes. A highlight of the event was recognition of MPRA President as Volunteer of the Year presented by Gary Heiser from the Virginia Dept. of Forestry. Chris was recognized for his work at Sandy Point State Forest (*below, left to right: Dawn Shank, Gary Heiser and Chris Henicheck.*)



Vicki Underwood helps kids decorate rain barrels at the Locust Grove Wine and Art Festival.

After a long hot day, several exhausted MPRA members, their kids and scout leaders spent the night camping at Sandy Point and had a great time fishing, swimming and playing tag in the dark with glow bracelets.

The next weekend was another scorcher as MPRA manned the Kids and River tent at the Locust Grove Wine and Arts Festival. Kids helped decorate two rain barrels.

In June, we also hosted Christ Church School's River Adventure Camp for dinner at the Shank's on Garnett's Creek before they paddled across the river after sunset to Sandy Point.

MPRA was also involved in a planning session for the future Meadow Farm Event Park, the new site for the State Fair of Virginia near Doswell. Garrie Rouse, Chris Henicheck and Dawn Shank attended an information and discussion sharing at the site with other providers of environmental education in the watershed. Whew! Another busy summer.

Invite a friend to join. MPRA - \$15 year for individual or family, \$50 Business/organization

Make checks to: Mattaponi & Pamunkey Rivers Assoc. Mail to: MPRA, Box 157, Walkerton, VA 23177.

Include your name, address, phone, email address and special interest in the river.

The Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers Association is an all-volunteer 501(c)3 charitable non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and stewardship of the resources of the Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers.

MPRA

P.O. Box 157

Walkerton, VA 23177



MPRA website: www.mpra.org

MPRA Officers

President: Chris Henicheck

Vice-President: Phil Rose

Sec.: Marion Jones

Treas/newsletter.: Dawn Shank

Website: Bob Gray