

# Life CHESAPEAKE

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## Going Green

### Thirty-one ways you can help the Bay

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#### 1 Plant a Tree

What do you get the person who has everything? How about a tree? With a donation of \$25 or more, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation will plant a tree in the Bay area in honor or in memory of whomever you wish. Trees absorb nitrogen and phosphorus (two main pollutants in the Bay) and also control runoff and soil erosion. Besides, Aunt Rita doesn't need another silk scarf, anyway. 410-268-8816, <http://www.cbf.org/trees>.—J.S.

#### 2 Adopt a Native

If you're challenged for garden space, you can adopt one of the many species of plants, from white wood aster to orange coneflowers, growing in the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's native plant garden, designed and maintained by Takoma Park-based Chesapeake Natives. Adoptive "parents" are required to weed their plants' beds during the growing season and, in the fall, harvest seeds, which are stored at Chesapeake Natives and reserved for landscape projects organized by schools and parks. Often, adoptive parents plan an adult "play date" to go to the garden together and afterward kayak in the bordering tidal creeks. Nurturing has never been so much fun. 301-580-6237, <http://www.chesapeakenatives.org>.—K.B.

#### 3 Dress Smart

The next time you're craving a shopping spree, avoid the malls and head for The Happy Fish, the region's first all-organic clothing store for men, women, and kids. From zip-up cardigans for him to organic Peruvian cotton tights for her, all items are made from merino wool, organic cotton, linen, cashmere, bamboo, soy, and hemp. (17 Lexington Dr., Milford, Del. 302-684-1229, [happy-fish.com](http://happy-fish.com)) And at Che Bellezza, check out more green-friendly clothing, handbags made from recycled belts, and organic goats' milk soaps. 6 Fleet St., Annapolis. 410-268-2258, <http://www.chebellezza.com>.—K.B.

## 4 Plant an Oyster Garden

We're not exactly sure if you need a green thumb to become an oyster gardener. We do know, however, that you'll need a dock and at least one foot of water in which to "plant" your oyster spat in several twelve-by-eighteen-inch cages. To get started, attend one of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's oyster gardening workshops, where you'll pick up your cages and 3,000(!) tiny spat. Nine months later, just return the oysters to CBF, which will plant them in one of the Bay's protected oyster reefs.

The mature oysters have a much better chance of surviving than if simply planted on the reef as spat. One caveat: CBF asks oyster gardeners not to eat their crops, please. 410-268-8816, <http://www.cbf.org/oysters>.—J.S.

## 5 Grab a Drink

Happy hour just grew a (green) conscience. Every other month, folks converge at selected Annapolis watering holes for Green Drinks Annapolis, the local chapter of the international organization. The object of the game is to network with the environmentally likeminded and chat about topics ranging from recycling to architecture to alternative fuels. "The best part is meeting folks who would not otherwise have crossed paths," says Annapolis chapter founder Lynne Forsman. "I'm hoping that people will find out all the different things that are going on concerning the environment in this town." 410-269-4213, <http://www.greendrinks.org>.—K.B.

## 6 Get a Green Buzz

Sometimes the water in the Bay looks like a latté, perhaps the inspiration behind Chesapeake Bay Roasting Company, the new Crofton, Md., coffee roaster. The people behind these Fair Trade, organic beans pledge 3 percent of their sales to Bay restoration groups and use a roaster that recycles part of the bean chaff and burns it as fuel. Their recyclable and reusable cans can be found at stores and cafes up and down the Chesapeake coast. 410-451-6600, <http://www.cbayroasting.com>.—[E.B.W.](#)

## 7 Recycle It

Electronic equipment is just loaded with nasty stuff—mercury, radioactive materials, old music downloads of the Baja Men singing "Who Let the Dogs Out?" So don't dump that old Radio Shack TRS-80 in the trash; instead, check out the Maryland Department of the Environment's eCycling page ([mde.state.md.us](http://mde.state.md.us)) to see who handles recycling for televisions, computers, stereos, and other electronics in your area. And if your office is looking to unload a bundle of old computers, call Edgewater-based *Annapolis Office Technologies* (443-336-3018), and they'll take them off your hands for a fee.—J.S.

## 8 Adopt a River

Unlike a pet, you can't cuddle with a river or name it or take it to the vet when it gets sick. But you can take care of it and nurture it, and it will reward you with many happy hours of play. There are a dozen major rivers in the Chesapeake watershed and each one is indelibly connected to the health of the Bay. The Anacostia, Patuxent, Severn, South, James, Potomac, and the West/Rhode rivers all have riverkeepers, such as Severn riverkeeper, Fred Kelly (above), who could use a hand in spotting polluters, monitoring the waterway's health, and cleaning up trash and debris. What a better way to ensure you'll keep rollin' on the river.

*www.waterkeeper.org.—J.S.*

## 9 Get an Energy Audit

That drafty basement may not just be keeping you cold, it may be costing you big bucks in energy costs. TerraLogos Green Home Services to the rescue. The Baltimore-based company will come to your home and conduct an energy audit to determine areas where you could be saving money. Drafty doors and windows could be a problem, but it's more likely a poorly insulated basement or attic that's sapping your greenbacks. Find out for sure by setting up an appointment. \$345 and \$495. 443-451-7130, <http://www.terralogos.com>.—J.S.

## 10 Dock at Clean Marinas

Thanks to Maryland's Clean Marina Initiative, boaters can support venues that are committed to reducing water pollution. The program, implemented in 1998 by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, requires participating marinas to excel in eight areas, including vessel maintenance repair, petroleum control, sewage handling, and storm water management. The program also teaches boaters how to keep clean with information on phosphate-free, biodegradable, and non-toxic detergents as well as a list of recycling centers that accept solvents and waste gasoline. So far, 103 marinas from Havre De Grace to Solomons Island are certified clean. *Only some 500 more to go... www.dnr.state.md.us/-boating/cleanmarina.—K.B.*

## 11 Wear Grandma's Clothes

Think of buying vintage clothing as doing your wardrobe—and the environment—a favor. After all, it's no different than recycling. Check out the selection of hip frocks at Coco & Company. Owner Kim Ruark scours auctions and second-hand stores for hip, gently worn pieces, from June Cleaver-style, hook-and-eye wool cardigans to silk evening gowns to '50s swirly A-line skirts. If your finds are just a hair too big, Ruark will arrange for custom tailoring. Who knew shopping could be so good for the earth? *Coco & Company, 209 S. Talbot St., St. Michaels, Md. 410-745-3400, <http://www.cocoandcompany.com>.—K.B.*

## 12 Get a Green Dry

Clean Your clothes may be killing you. Most dry cleaners use a chemical called perchloroethylene, or perc, a solvent that removes organic matter from clothing. The chemical is classified as toxic waste by the EPA and has been proven to affect the nervous system in cases of high exposure; plus, the chemical also contaminates the soil. But Dry Cleaning Station uses something called GreenEarth Solvent, a silicone-based solution that uses sand as its main ingredient and has been shown to clean garments more effectively and gently than perchloroethylene. Most importantly, GreenEarth can be safely disposed of because it breaks down within days into its basic compounds—sand, carbon dioxide, and water. *Locations: South River Crossing, 3059 Solomons Island Rd., Annapolis. 410-956-6134; 4315 Mountain Rd., Pasadena, Md. 410-360-7712, <http://www.drycleaning-stationatlantic.com>.—J.S.*

## 13 Think Pink

The crustaceans at Marvesta Shrimp Farms enjoy clean living. Grown in five 100,000-gallon tanks filled with water trucked in from the Atlantic, they're raised in an antibiotic-, hormone-, chemical-, and preservative-free environment. And since they're farm raised, no ocean ecosystems or aquatic life is harmed during their harvest. Some 50,000 shrimp were shipped to restaurants last year and are now available online for the rest of us. Thanks to the company's recent expansion to twenty-four tanks and a hatchery, these fresh little guys will likely be swimming to a supermarket near you. 410-943-1733, <http://www.marvesta.com>.—E.B.W.

## 14 Eat Green

If all goes according to Matt McLaughlin's plan, The Rockfish will be a no-waste restaurant as of next summer. "I'll just call up Waste Management and tell them to take their dumpster away," says the general manager, who is transforming the Eastport restaurant into the region's greenest eatery through a series of recycling, energy-reduction, and conservation programs. McLaughlin already takes all of the restaurant's organic waste to a compost facility and has organized a recycling program for the businesses of Eastport. He grows organic herbs on the building's roof (in soil made from the restaurant's compost), and last winter, Rockfish purchased 1.14 million kilowatts of wind power renewable energy credits, enough juice to offset the business's carbon footprint for the next three years. The restaurant boasts an eco-friendly menu, too: 80 percent of its seafood comes from sustainable sources. "Businesses in Anne Arundel County should be a national model for taking care of the local ecology, and we're not," says McLaughlin, whose restaurant is one of just two in Maryland certified by the EPA as a Green Power Partner. "There's so much at stake here." 400 Sixth St., Annapolis. 410-267-1800, <http://www.rockfishmd.com>.—J.S.

## 15 Sign up for a CSA

With housing developments replacing family farms in our area faster than the corn grows, joining a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program not only guarantees fresh produce all summer but also helps a farmer know his crops will be sold. Here's how it works: You sign up with a farmer, pay a monthly fee, and he or she delivers produce to you (or a mutually agreed upon meeting place) during the growing season. Your selection of produce depends on whatever the farmer grows—you might end up with ten pounds of zucchini—but at least it's all farm fresh. Visit <http://www.maryland-agriculture.info> for a list of CSAs in Maryland.—J.S.

## 16 Step on It

Not all floors are created equal—or eco-friendly. The Green Heron Flooring Company is changing that with an abundance of sustainable flooring products made from the likes of bamboo, recycled linoleum, cork, and wool carpeting. Like the rugged look? How about flooring made from reclaimed barn wood, river-recovered heart pine, and plantation-raised exotic hardwoods? Also, check out the countertops made from recycled glass and granite. 114 South Cross St., Chestertown, Md. 410-810-3350, <http://www.greenheronflooring.com>.—K.B.

## 17 Build a Straw House

It's easier to turn your home green than you think. Just ask Polly Bart, owner of Greenbuilders, a general contracting firm specializing in eco-friendly renovations and additions. No drywall used here; Bart's work centers around environmentally friendly building techniques, including using salvaged building materials, straw bale construction, geothermal and solar energy units, green roofs, and low VOC (volatile organic chemicals) paints and finishes. Want to bring your office building up to standard as well? Bart is also a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) accredited professional consultant for commercial projects. Besides, compost toilets make great fodder for lunchroom conversation... 410-833-4814, <http://www.greenbuilders.com>.—K.B.

## 18 Invest Green

If you're an environmentalist who feels just a little bit uneasy about her mutual funds being invested in companies that harm the planet, check out Benchmark Asset Managers, a Philadelphia firm with a branch in Baltimore that only invests its clients' money in environmentally and socially responsible companies. That means no oil companies, cigarette firms, casinos, or major polluters. So who's both environmentally sound and profitable? "I like to give the example of two companies," says John Campagna, managing director. "Hansen Natural Soda has been very concerned with recycling, and it also happens to be the highest returning stock of the last five years. And there's also Virco, which makes most of the school desks in the country. They started taking back desks from schools and using parts to remake new ones. That way, they've cut costs, kept clients happy, and, from a business perspective, remained environmentally friendly." Benchmark only accepts high-end clients (\$500,000-plus), religious

organizations, and nonprofits, so you'll have to earn some green before investing green with them. 410-878-7084, <http://www.benchmarkam.com>.—J.S.

## 19 Get a Proper Pampering

When it comes to hair dye, Rachel Epstein sees red. The unhealthy mix of toxic chemicals convinced the long-time stylist to abandon traditional salon products when she became pregnant—and when she and her husband, Alan Kolb, opened Spout: An Organic Salon, in Baltimore's Hampden neighborhood, they decided to keep the all-natural theme. “Rachel and I were just incorporating our basic values into every aspect of our lives, so it just made sense,” says Kolb. “You walk into a typical salon and you get that horrible smell. Our salon actually smells good.” Clients receive a completely organic experience, from the plant- and mineral-based hair dyes to the all-natural shampoo and conditioning products to the vinegar water used to scrub the floors. If you'd like a green manicure or massage after your dye job, visit Renew Organic Day Spa down the street, which uses all organic products in its services, from massage oils to vegan nail polishes. 843 W. 36th St., Baltimore. 410-400-2745, <http://www.renewdayspa21211.com>. Spout, 925 W. 36th St., Baltimore. 410-235-2269, [sproutsalon.com](http://sproutsalon.com).—J.S.

## 20 Volunteer for a Good Cause

There are so many environmental organizations in need of volunteers. You could be cleaning up streams or planting oyster beds or rescuing horseshoe crabs. So how do you find out which organization needs what? Several ways. WMPT's “Chesapeake Bay Week” ([mpt.org/bayweek/volunteer.shtml](http://mpt.org/bayweek/volunteer.shtml)) lists the variety of bay nonprofits looking for help. Or punch up the website ([volunteermatch.org](http://volunteermatch.org)) and select your geographic area plus “environment.” You'll be getting your hands dirty—and the environment cleaner—in no time.—J.S.

## 21 Switch to Sustainable Energy

In an ideal world, we'd all get our energy from the sun or the wind or Rachael Ray. Barring any radical developments anytime soon, Clean Currents hopes to fill the void. The year-old, Rockville-based energy broker arranges for clean power contracts for both residential and business clients. And while you won't necessarily be getting your power direct from windmills, the money you spend will provide a subsidy to electricity generated from renewable sources via renewable energy credits. President Gary Skulnik promises that Clean Currents can help find clients rates that are competitive to BGE or PEPSCO, and his company will lock in that rate for up to three years without any price increases. “The only thing that changes is where your money is going,” says Skulnik. “You get more peace of mind knowing that you're helping the environment.” 301-754-0430, <http://www.cleancurrents.com>.—J.S.

## 22 Snack Well

Not only is Chesapeake Fields helping keep the tradition of farming alive on the Shore, it's giving serious snackers organic—and tasty—options. The organization, founded to create consumer products that increase the profitability of regional family farms, produces non-genetically modified snack foods, including several varieties of flavored popcorn, and soy chips, available at grocery and retail stores in the region. 410-810-2082, <http://www.chesapeakefields.com>.—K.B.

## 23 Take Root

Instead of heading to big-box stores for spring flowers, purchase your plantings at one of the region's many native plant sales. Ideal venues include Adkins Arboretum, Historic London Town, and most garden and master gardener clubs. All have well-stocked annual and bi-annual sales of homegrown trees, shrubs, and flowers that are indigenous to the Chesapeake watershed. (Visit the Maryland Native Plant Society web site ([mdflora.org](http://mdflora.org)) for a list of regional sales). [www.Adkinsarboretum.org](http://www.Adkinsarboretum.org); <http://www.historic-londontown.com>; *Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland*, <http://www.hometown.aol.com/fgcofmd>; *Maryland Master Gardeners*, <http://www.mastergardener.umd.edu>.—K.B.

## 24 Search & Rescue

The folks at Second Chance believe that architectural details should last a lifetime—several lifetimes, in fact. From Colonial Revival-style eight-pane widows to railing spindles to Victorian crystal door knobs—not to mention scads of cabinetry and doors—the nonprofit stocks hundreds of architectural details salvaged from condemned buildings and existing homes. The company, which boasts 150,000 square feet of warehouse space, also gives new life to the community by hiring and training low-income Baltimoreans in the art of carpentry and disassembling buildings. 1645 Warner St., Baltimore. 410-385-1101, <http://www.secondchanceinc.org>.—K.B.

## 25 Shop Green

Looking for organic cotton sheets? A journal made from “tree-free” paper? Or a business card holder made from recycled bicycle chains? Baltimore's Bluehouse is the area's only complete green lifestyle store, stocking everything for your eco-friendly home or office. Choose from furniture made from oak wine barrels or reclaimed Brazilian barn wood, dinnerware fashioned from recycled glass, or colorful totes made from Luna Bar wrappers. And the store even carbon-offsets their deliveries. Now that's shopping green. 1407 Fleet St., Baltimore. 877-276-1180, <http://www.bluehouselife.com>.—J.S.

## 26 Hug the Shoreline

The next time you take a stroll along the banks of the Bay, thank the folks at Environmental Concern in St. Michaels, Md. Since its inception in 1972, the organization has restored more than thirty-five miles of Chesapeake Bay shoreline on private and public lands. They also have the nation's first wetland native plant nursery, comprised of thirteen acres, nineteen buildings, and two greenhouses. Not only are the plants grown for usage in stormwater management and restoration projects (they installed some 500,000 on Poplar Island in 2005), but 120 species, from blooming asters to soft bulrush, are for sale to the public. The bi-annual plant sales are worth cleaning out the back of the station wagon for. *201 Boundary Ln., St. Michaels, Md. 410-745-9620, <http://www.wetland.org>.—E.B.W.*

## 27 Leave Your Land

It doesn't matter if you have three or 30,000 acres: The Eastern Shore Land Conservancy wants to help you protect your land. Through programs such as conservation easements that restrict future development to estate plans that ensure the transfer of preserved land to the next generation, the ESLC is preventing precious—and rapidly disappearing—green space on the Shore from turning into strip malls and housing developments. Since 1990, it has preserved more than 40,000 acres as well as partnered with many counties to tackle growth issues. *410-827-9756, <http://www.eslc.org>.—K.B.*

## 28 Get Fired Up

This is one restaurant that's on a mission to "do the right thing." Out of the Fire is one of the few regional eateries with an organic food-focus. Here, diners enjoy the likes of antibiotic- and hormone-free meats and chicken, locally grown veggies, organic wines, and quinoa (an ancient, gluten-free grain). And proceeds from Wednesday nights go to the new Out of the Fire Foundation, which supports environmentally and socially minded children's charities. "I am making changes gradually, like not offering sugary sodas but suggesting Steaz Green Tea Soda sweetened with stevia [a natural sweetener made from the stevia leaf]," says owner Amy Haines. "I live my life this way at home, so why shouldn't I do this at work?" Seems to be working. Locals and visitors alike beat feet to the door—yet leave very small (carbon) footprints. *22 Goldsborough St., Easton, Md. 410-770-4777, <http://www.outofthefire.com>.—E.B.W.*

## 29 Use Alternative Fuels

If you've got a diesel engine in your car, truck, boat or tractor, it only makes sense to use biodiesel. The alternative fuel, made locally from soybean oil, releases fewer harmful emissions, eases our dependence on foreign oil, and best of all, smells like french fries when it burns. Cropper Oil, located in Berlin, was Maryland's first biodiesel manufacturer when it opened in 2006. You can fill up with one of three grades of biodiesel at its pumps, located at 10535 Ocean Gateway, 410-641-2251. Cropper also sells home heating oil made from 5 percent biodiesel.

Closer to the Bay Bridge, the Hillside Quick Serve in Centreville (2640 Centreville Rd.) also has biodiesel available at the pump.—*J.S.*

## 30 Play In the Dirt

Ever wonder what happens to the shells when you buy a pound of local backfin crabmeat? It's likely they've become an ingredient in Chesapeake Blue, one of the four types of organic soil enhancement products made by Bay Organics, a composting facility in Hurlock. The company is helping the local environment by finding new uses for seafood byproducts from local crab houses. Chicken waste is golden here, too. In Chesapeake Green, chicken byproducts (everything from the beaks to the feet) are used to create a lawn care product, while HY-CAL uses hatchery byproducts to create a top dressing for athletic fields and golf fairways. "We provide a cost effective and environmentally sound alternative to landfills, proving you can make a silk purse out of a crab's claw," says owner Lonnie Heflin, 410-349-9396, <http://www.bayorganics.com>.—*K.B.*

## 31 Care for the Critters

Who says organic food is just for people? Crunchies Natural Pet Foods in Crofton, Md., stocks all-natural and holistic foods and vitamins for cats and dogs. Hard-to-find Natura pet foods, like Innova EVO dry cat and dog food, are a big seller. Also check out Artemis holistic dry food, made with real veggies and probiotics, and Wellness WellBars, treats made from whitefish, sweet potatoes, and whole grains. Freeze-dried and frozen Steve's Real Food dinners await pets who prefer ingredients such as duck, liver, sardine oil, and broccoli for supper. If your pets had thumbs, they'd stick them up. 2421 Crofton Ln., Crofton, Md. 301-261-6280, <http://www.crunchies.com>.—*E.B.W.*