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NEWS RELEASE

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OysterFest is November 6 at CBMM

From 10-4pm on Saturday November 6, come celebrate the Chesapeake's oyster at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum's (CBMM) *OysterFest* in St. Michaels. The event features live music, oysters and other food, children's activities, boat rides, oyster demonstrations and harvesting displays, oyster tonging, cooking demonstrations and an oyster stew competition among local restaurateurs.

Live music with *Blues Deville* and *Three Penny Opera* will entertain guests with everything from blues to rock and roll throughout the day. The Talbot County Watermen's Association will have several boats dockside to display oyster harvesting techniques including dredging, hand tonging, patent tonging and diving.

The Talbot County Watermen's Association and the Choptank Oyster Company will offer fresh Chesapeake Bay oysters on the half shell for sale. The Talbot County Watermen's Association, who recently hosted the inaugural Watermen's Appreciation Day at CBMM, promotes Chesapeake seafood and supports the industry through ecological as well as economic revitalization measures. The Choptank Oyster Company is the only privately-funded oyster hatchery in the state of Maryland, culturing only the *Crassostrea virginica*, the Chesapeake's native oyster species.

Oyster stew tastings and a competition begin at 11am, with bragging rights awarded to the winning Eastern Shore restaurant. Early registrants include Characters Café, the Crab Claw, Sherwood's Landing at the Inn at Parry Cabin, Rupert's Bar and Tea Room, and Two If By Sea. Fried oyster sandwiches, platters and more will also be available.

Local restaurants will also offer cooking demonstrations of their signature oyster dishes throughout the day. Early registrants include 208 Talbot, Sherwood's Landing at the Inn at Perry Cabin, and the Tilghman Island Inn. Cooking demonstrations will begin at 10:30am and follow at 11:30, 12:30, 1:30, and 2:30pm. For those who prefer to learn about oysters rather than eat them, a variety of other food along with cold beer, hot chocolate and coffee will be available.

Throughout the day, boat rides and ecology cruises at 1 and 3pm will be available on CBMM's replica buyboat *Mister Jim* at a nominal cost. *Martha Lewis*, a skipjack built by

legendary Bay boat builder Bronza Parks, will be dockside for visitors to walk aboard and tour.

OysterFest boasts plenty of family educational and fun activities designed to help kids get to know the oyster and how important the bivalve is to the Chesapeake Bay. Families will be able to design their own oyster cans and labels, explore an oyster nursery, participate in a scavenger hunt or face painting. *Mr. Oyster* and *Johnny Oysterseed* will show kids and their parents how oysters filter the Bay's water. University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science's Horn Point Laboratory will have its touch tank at the event. CBMM's Model Boat Guild will also offer a hands-on build-a-boat activity at a small boat pond, with model boats available for children at a \$3 fee. Dip net making and knot-tying demonstrations will also be available.

Two films will be featured at *OysterFest*. *Watermen*, a 1960s documentary by acclaimed filmmaker Holly Fisher, follows the life and work of Captain Art Daniels and other skipjack captains of the era. The second film, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's *Common Ground* looks at the history of the oyster fishery, examines the biology, habitat, and explores critical role of the oyster in the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem. Both films will be screened in the Museum's *Van Lennep Auditorium* throughout the day.

Festival goers can also explore the Museum's ten exhibit buildings, including *Oystering on the Chesapeake*, an entire building dedicated to interpreting the history of the oyster and the Bay, and *Waterman's Wharf*, where visitors can try their hand at tonging or nipping for oysters. The Museum's bug-eye, *Edna Lockwood*, a log-bottom oyster dredgeboat and a National Historic Landmark, will also be on display during her restoration at the Museum.

Admission to *OysterFest*, which includes general admission to the Museum, is \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors, and \$6 for children between the ages of six and 17. Children five years and under and CBMM members are admitted free. Food and boat rides are an additional cost. For more information about the festival or upcoming events at the Museum, visit www.cbmm.org or call 410-745-2916.

OysterFest also concludes the month-long "Fall into St. Michaels" celebration hosted by the St. Michaels Business Association. For more information, visit www.stmichaelsmd.org or call 410-745-0411.

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The Chesapeake's oyster will be celebrated in a variety of ways, including eaten on the half shell, at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum's November 6 *OysterFest* in St. Michaels, Maryland. The event features live music, oysters and other food, children's activities, boat rides, oyster demonstrations and harvesting displays, oyster tonging, cooking demonstrations and an oyster stew competition among local restaurateurs.