



(opposite page) Project Manager Marc Barto explains the purpose of a worm shoe to a large group of visitors. (top row, from left) Using a forklift, Barto, along with shipwrights Jenn Kuhn and Seth Walton and several volunteers, remove the rudder. The old rudder sits side-by-side with the new one. Kuhn, Walton, and Barto remove the keelson. The new deadwood is installed. (bottom row, from left) The crew works to complete the transom. During the Rosie Parks Community Work Days Program, Kuhn shows Parker White, the great-great grandson of Bronza Parks, how to make wooden sweet nails. Bronza's great granddaughter, Katrina Smith, and her husband Greg, paint the worm shoe with anti-fouling paint. Working from the back of the boat forward, the crew now has a new transom in place. (below) Barto hands a young visitor a nail from Rosie Parks. Bronza's great-great grandson Parker, great-grandson Josh, and his wife Natalie White.

# Skipjack *Rosie Parks* is Coming to Life

by Dick Cooper with photos by Tracey Munson

The *Rosie Parks* is starting to show major signs of recovering from her near-death experience. Board-by-board, nail-by-nail, the revered old skipjack, once the pride of the Eastern Shore oyster fleet, is regaining her classic lines.

Since being appointed project manager for the rebuilding of *Rosie Parks*, Marc Barto, the Museum's former vessel maintenance manager, has spent the last few months systematically working to stabilize *Rosie's* skeletal remains.

With the help of shipwright apprentice Jennifer Kuhn and

Museum volunteers, Barto has rebuilt the shapely, wine-glass transom that was first crafted by renowned Dorchester County boat builder Bronza Parks in his Wingate shop 56 years ago. The old rudder was removed and used as a template to build an accurate replacement. Parks never used blueprints or drawings to build his boats and left no records of their design features to help in the reconstruction. The crew just completed repairing and replacing key sections of the "worm shoe," the planks that help form the keel that runs the length of the boat.

Barto says the hand-crafted sections of wood that allow the centerboard to pass through the keel were saved and repaired, and the nails that had fastened them to the keel had rusted away.

Volunteers using "sweet nails," wooden plugs glued into the old nail holes, were able to preserve those sections for reuse. The centerboard trunk is next on the rebuilding agenda.

Once the hull is stabilized, the shipwrights will begin the more detailed work of repairing and replacing *Rosie's* inner framework.

On a recent afternoon, a woman and her young son are listening as Kuhn explains the rebuilding process to Museum

visitors. Barto quietly works a rusted nail free from *Rosie's* hull. "Here's a real nail from the *Rosie Parks*," Barto says as he hands the nail to the boy.

"Oh, he just loves this sort of thing," the mother says as her son, speechless, cradles the nail in his hands as if it is a Spanish doubloon.

Community members are encouraged to volunteer to help rebuild *Rosie* from 10am to 3pm every Saturday. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old and have an interest in working with wood.

For more information go to [cbmm.org](http://cbmm.org) and click on "*Rosie Parks*" tab or call the Museum at 410-745-2916.

