



2024 Annual Report

Bayshore Center at Bivalve



WHERE HISTORY AND THE ENVIRONMENT MEET

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A Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Bayshore Center at Bivalve Supporters:

This year we focused on a strategic port schedule, advanced advertising campaigns, and rebuilding relationships with our community. We were excited to visit the port of Trenton in the spring working with Mercer County Parks. We signed a three year port visit with the Delaware River & Bay Authority to sail from the Cape May Lewes Ferry Terminal. We had two port visits this year with overwhelming success. We partnered with the New Jersey State Park Service at Liberty State Park with sails in New York Harbor with views of the Statue of Liberty and lower Manhattan.

The Delaware Bay Museum invested in shifting several exhibits to focus on visitor engagement and utilizing exhibit space for interactive education programming. Please visit our new exhibit focusing on A.J. Meerwald and her life's journey over the past century.

This year saw growth in volunteers and volunteer hours throughout the organization. We will continue to expand our volunteer training programs in 2025.

In the spring of 2024, the Bayshore Center identified the next milestones for the organization. Looking forward, our goal is to build a 21st century history and environmental education center for youth and adults on land and on water, building capacity focused on education. This year we launched a new summer camp for youth. We look forward to building programs around the new five pillars of community education: Oyster Reefs & Ecosystems; Coastal Resilience; Bayshore History & Culture; Marine Technology; and Sustainability & Stewardship.

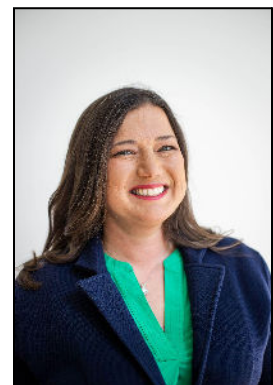
The Bayshore Center at Bivalve (BCB) Board of Directors and staff are dedicated to building the infrastructure and long-term planning needed. We plan to continue to develop dynamic educational experiences and opportunities for our history and the environment to meet. We hope to continue to create a culture which inspires the next generation of leaders for our waterways and ecosystem.

Thank you for continuing your support!

Sincerely,



Jessica Yorke
Executive Director



Our Mission, Vision, and History

Mission

Through the state's official tall ship, the oyster schooner *A. J. Meerwald (AJM)* and historic waterfront museum, the Bayshore Center at Bivalve (BCB) will advance the understanding of the human impact on New Jersey's aquatic environment through education, advocacy, and programming.



Vision

BCB envisions a New Jersey with clean, safe and healthy water for recreation, consumption and commercial fishing.

About

BCB "Where History and the Environment Meet" was founded in 1988. It is an organization focused on using local history featured in our Delaware Bay Museum, combined with hand-on learning aboard our floating classroom, the 1928 Oyster schooner *AJM*. The organization is housed in the historic 1904 Oyster Shipping Sheds & Wharves located in Port Norris (Bivalve), NJ.

BCB was founded by Meghan Wren and John Gandy to save *AJM*, a Delaware Bay Oyster Schooner. In 1996, *AJM* was listed on the National/State Register of Historic Places and was given the title by Gov. Whitman as the Official Tall Ship of New Jersey in 1998, but without funding..

What started out as a grassroots effort has grown into a professional staff of 10 plus a seasonal crew including a well-respected and proficient Museum Curator and a ship's Captain. The organization is a proud ambassador of New Jersey's maritime history both on land and sea.

Where We Work

The Bayshore Center at Bivalve works with schools and organizations throughout the tristate area of New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania. The majority of youth educational programs come from Cumberland, Cape May and Atlantic County.

Oyster Schooner *A. J. Meerwald* (AJM)

3,419 passengers sailed aboard *AJM* on a “Public Sail” in 2024, experiencing her history, connection with local waterways and the environment and her ongoing support of the oyster industry.

A. J. Meerwald visited **11** ports, with **147** public sails and a total of **3,594** tickets sold.

- Our goal ticket sales was 60%
- Our average ticket sales was **49%**
 - This ranged from a 15% ticket sales average in Bristol, PA and an 88% average in Trenton.
- Most of our individual sails averaged between 50% - 65% ticket sales.
- Our average passenger capacity per sail was **72%**
 - 19 sails were canceled due to weather.
- In addition, 8 private sailing charters were held with approximately 350 passengers.

All Aboard!
Go Sailing on New Jersey's Historic Tall Ship
A.J. Meerwald

2024 Sailing Schedule

PUBLIC SAIL TICKETS \$50 PER PERSON

SCAN TO BUY TICKETS OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Bayshore Center at Bivalve
2800 High Street
Port Norris, NJ 08349
bayshorecenter.org
856-785-2060

Port	Dates	Scheduled Sails	% Sold	Passengers
Port Norris (Spring)	5/01-6/23	12	37%	166
Bristol, PA	5/08-5/10	3	15%	33
Trenton, NJ	5/13-5/14	2	88%	88
Lewes, DE	5/19	1	83%	38
Cape May, NJ	6/26 - 7/6	19	63%	539
Atlantic Highlands, NJ	7/18-7/21	9	40%	170
Liberty State Park - Jersey City, NJ	7/24-7/27	6	52%	145
Alpine, NJ	7/10 - 7/14	5	50%	124
Cape May, NJ	8/1-9/13	62	52%	1538
Greenwich, NJ	9/27 - 9/29	6	25%	69
Port Norris (Fall)	10/5 - 10/27	14	17%	119
HarborFest - Norfolk, VA	6/7-6/9	4	99%	194
Sultana Downrigging - Chestertown, MD	11/1-11/3	4	100%	196
2024 Totals		147		3,419 Passengers

The Delaware Bay Museum

The Delaware Bay Museum had **1,473** visitors this year plus approximately **6,000** that visited during fundraising and community-based events throughout the year.

Exhibit Update

- A new exhibit was created featuring the history of our schooner *A.J. Meerwald*, and Al Huber's collection, which helped form the museum. The exhibit features the maritime history of AJM, the Meerwald family, and vessel specifications.
- The "Play on the Bayshore" recreation exhibit was moved and reinstalled in the "silver room".
- The Abundant Oyster oyster shucking house exhibit was moved upstairs.
- Museum volunteers and our intern helped with the move, reinstalling, spackling and painting and updating the collection database.

Special Projects

- **A.J. Meerwald virtual tour** - People can now go below deck aboard AJM. Click on video clips and historic photos. Don't forget to go aloft!
<https://www.bayshorecenter.org/our-ship/a-j-meerwald-virtual-tour/>
- **Wooden Boat Magazine** wrote a major feature article on *A.J. Meerwald*. It is authored by Randy Peffer (author of the highly regarded book *Watermen* and retired teacher from Andover). He conducted interviews with John Gandy, Clark & Eisele, etc. The article is 7 pages long and includes several phonographs in the November/December 2024 issue.
- NOAA Voices from the Fisheries now has 27 transcribed oral histories and recordings posted.<https://voices.nmfs.noaa.gov:8453/collection/new-jerseys-delaware-bayshore> It can also access through the museum info page on BCB's website.
- Andy Urban, Associate Professor of American Studies and History at Rutgers New Brunswick received grant funding from Mellon to fund a NJ Im/migrant Laborer's Project that includes programming and public art. BCB was asked to serve as a site for a community dialogue session, suggest facilities and artists and host a public event in 2025 with regards to migration and labor. Other South Jersey partners include Seabrook Farms museum, Noyes Museum and WheatonArts.
- Black Heritage Trail- successful nomination of Bivalve, Shellpile and Maurice River to the NJ Black Heritage Trail. Approx.30 sites were accepted out of 60+. A plaque will be installed at BCB.

Collection Highlights

Print of the A.J. Meerwald, 1959

Artist: Florence Errickson Meerwald (1902-1969)

Florence's husband William A. Meerwald and his brother, Augustus C., built and operated *AJM*. Florence and her sister-in-law Edna James Meerwald became owners after a bankruptcy sale in 1935. The original painting was given to Florence's grandson Frank Unkle. His widow, Connie Ross, rediscovered the painting in 2022. During this time, *AJM* was undergoing a restoration and it was decided to paint the boat the color and order of the stripes used by Mrs. Meerwald. Thank you to Connie and the Unkle family for donating a beautiful print!

Education Programs

1,906 youth participated in educational programs with the Bayshore Center at Bivalve in 2024. Field trips held at our home port at the Bayshore Center include a robust experience consisting of a 2 hour education sail with 4 education stations onboard and a 2 hour visit to the Delaware Bay Museum with 4 land based stations. Field trips held at visiting ports consist of a 2 ½ hour sail with 4 education stations.

This year we piloted a Maritime Careers & Tech Ed program with the Atlantic Highlands Sailing Education Program, highlighting careers and systems aboard *AJM*.

In the spring of 2024, the Bayshore Center spent a significant amount of time identifying the next milestones for the organization. Our goal is to **build a 21st century history and environmental education**

center for youth and adults on land and on water. Our vision for the future centers around building capacity focused on education. This includes a two year \$1.5M plan to create financial sustainability for the organization while building new partnerships and educational programs.



This is a groundbreaking initiative for the organization, and we are so grateful for the tremendous support in 2024. Through this annual appeal, it is our goal to raise an additional \$50,000. We need your help.

2024 Support for the Education Capacity Building in 2024 went directly toward:

- Hiring museum and education interns.
- Piloting a new summer camp curriculum and facilitating curriculum development.
- Scholarships were provided to students for education sails and programs.
- Hiring an Education Director who will initially focus on local programs and partnerships in Cumberland County.

Community Events

Second Fridays

Approximately **5,500** people visited the Bayshore Center for Second Fridays in 2024. These events are free to the public. BCB invites the community out on the wharves and opens the museum with the goal of connecting the community with the local environment. It provides the opportunity to walk back in time, learn something new, relax by the water and enjoy fresh oysters harvested by local watermen and women.

Each month an expert presents on a topic connecting and informing the public on our ecosystems, marinelife, and connecting our history to today. 2024 topics included the American Oyster Catcher presented by Emmy Casper; Earth, Wind & Ice: Ancient Climate Change to Periglacial Landscapes presented by Mark Demitroff; Jim Blumenstein on The Great Migration of



Oystermen and more. Experts also shared current research and innovative solutions to today's challenges of sea level rise, erosion, and coastal resiliency. Special thanks to our sponsors for supporting these events.

Community Partnerships and Education Outreach

Approximately **1,500 people** engaged with BCB through our community programs. As a community based program BCB was able to engage with the community through partnerships with local organizations, education facilities, businesses, and outreach events.

- Millville Women's Club
- Nature Center of Cape May
- Commercial Twp 150th Celebration
- Maker's Day, Bridgeton
- Our Fishing Log - Fishadelphia
- Society of Environmental Journalists
- University of Pennsylvania
- ReClam the Bay
- Impact 100 South Jersey
- CU Maurice River
- Partnership for the DE Estuary tour
- Barn Studio of Art
- American Littoral Society interns
- Osprey Point Men's Group
- Maurice River Festival
- Delaware Bay Lighthouse Assoc
- Endicott Reardon Family Museum
- OceanFirst Bank Wavemakers
- Greenwich Artisan Faire
- Rowan College

Fundraising

The Bayshore Center at Bivalve held several fundraising events in 2024. The biggest success was the NJ Oyster Festival with over 500 tickets sold, lots of local oyster vendors, and sponsors. Thanks to everyone who attended, sponsored, donated raffle baskets, and those that helped make the event possible.

Huge thanks to Haase's Crabs for donating all of the crabs for our Crab Night Fundraiser and to Bonanza II for donating the boat and staff for the Bayshore Boat Ride.

Fundraising events in 2024 more than doubled in revenue since 2023. In 2024, event sponsorships, ticket sales and raffle income totaled **\$60,106**. In 2023, fundraiser revenue totaled \$28,880.

Looking forward to 2025, participation in fundraising events is growing in every area. This is an area that continues to have opportunity for growth.



2024 Fundraising Event	Tickets
Souperfest 2/10/24 (Tickets \$10)	108
Speakeasy Luncheon 3/23/24 (Tickets \$100)	62
Seafood Boil - 6/29/24 (Tickets \$50)	68
Bayshore Boat Ride - 8/13/2024 (Tickets \$60)	24
Crab Night - 9/21/24 (Tickets \$40)	52
NJ Oyster Festival - 10/26/24 (Tickets \$50)	503
Total Fundraiser Tickets Sold	817



A. J. Meerwald Mainsail - Fundraising Campaign

In the fall of 2023, the Bayshore Center at Bivalve initiated a campaign to raise the funds for a new mainsail. Our previous mainsail carried us through some great achievements and some challenging times here at the Bayshore Center. The aged sail safely powered the A.J. Meerwald along the coast of New Jersey, up to New England and throughout the Delmarva Peninsula for almost 20 years. Our aged mainsail was raised for the last time as our captain and crew sailed home from Sultana downrigging in Chestertown, MD in November of 2023.

The mainsail was crafted by Traditional Rigging Co., an independent Maine loft specializing in sails and rigging for vessels of every size from the 17th century to the early 20th. Located in Appleton, ME the loft is run by Tom and Dayle Ward.



The new sail arrived in March of 2024 and was bent on by our crew in late April. This was the final piece of the original vision of the 2021-2022 million dollar restoration which began back in 2016. This year, A. J. Meerwald is 96 years old. Thanks to the craftsmanship, dedication, and perseverance of our supporters. She will hopefully continue to connect youth and adults to the Delaware Bayshore for generations to come. In the words of one donor, "My contributions to the organization have been made to honor the vision, commitment, and work ethic of those who brought the boat back to life."

Thank you to the individuals who came together to fund the 2024 mainsail project:

Dr. Nils & Patricia Herdelin
George Phelps
Charles & Hilary Pritchard
Henry & Barbara Colie
Mary Patricia McCann
Charles Lammers
Joseph & Louise Huber
Jane & Peter Galetto
Jerry "Indiana Lanz" Lanz
Dr. Jill Mortensen
John & Rona Gandy
Matthew Edson
Anonymous
Patrick "Pete" Slavin

Robert & Kathryn Michel
Robert Sawyer
Scott Eves
Scott Williams
Stanley & Pamela Switlik
Steve Fleetwood
The Thorne Family (TCFF)
Anthony "Tony" & Marcia Klock
Cynthia White & Robert Kenny
Bill & Denise Carton
Dave Acree
Nancy Linden
David Bennett
Judy Nichols

2024 Bayshore Center at Bivalve Members

Membership

A Membership drive was held in late April of 2024 resulting in a total of 149 members. Our goal was to increase 2023 memberships by 25% and that goal was achieved. Thanks to all of our 2024 members.

Grand Mariner (\$1,000)

Burt & Jeanne Doremus
Joe & Louise Huber
Jerry "Indiana" Lanz

Kathryn & Bob Michel
Jill Mortensen
Wade & Pamela Sjogren

Jason Vail & Aimee Burgin
Robert Woodruff

Chief Mate (\$100)

David Acree
Mark Allen
Craig Becker
Nancy & Robert Benz
Roseann Berggren
Don & Lil Boose
John & Ben Romanik
Ed & Mary Broderick
Patricia & Ken Cavender
Jerry C. & Tracey Mitchell
Dan Chelius & Jen Dudley
Carlton Chew
Michael Chirappa
Bob & Valerie Conley
Robert Frantz
Sandra Cummins
Suzanne C. & Ken Kramer
Wendy & James Daly
Matthew Edson & Laura B.
Scott Williams
Robert Franz

Ted & Judy Frett
Greg Graham
William Daily
Barbara Guardiola
Nicholas Hillyer
Barney & Debi Hollinger
Ron & Cora Holmes
Helen Jackson
Roger Justis
Brian Keenan
Gary Dos Santos
Joe Kroger of KC
Consulting
Chuck Lammers
Shirley Lauer Eggert
Nicole McCoy
Elizabeth & Dan Thompson
George & Joan Miller
Rita Moonsammy
Richard Moran
Bruce & Linda Nicholson

Kevin & Kimberly Nocon
Carlton & Patricia Penn
Donald Robbins
John Hancock
Kathleen Wagner & Jeff
Menzel
Stephen & Bonnie Schmidt
Pat & Richard Smith
Carol Steketee
Kathleen Arleth
Walter Surdam
Jan Tarpine & John Barton
Elizabeth McCutcheon
Carl & Beverly Totten
Margaret Daily
Tom & Jane Verba
Kathleen Stevenson
Richard Westergaard
Susan Wiggins
Carl & Eloise Williams
Michael Wynne
James & Penelope Yorke

Deckhand (\$35)

Felix Agosto
Barbara Ahrens
Kathleen & Ralph Salber
David Bennett
Dawn Boughal
Virginia Campbell
Mary Claire Canlelmo
George & Lois Carr
Theodore Chase, Jr
Devin Chelius
Fran Cossaboon
Leo Crispi
Michael Crowley
Margaret & Larry Van Meter
William & Barbara Grim
Charles Danter
Karen DeRosa
Ralph DiPalma
Gary & Claudia King
Bob Dupre
Sue Dupre
Robert Connor
Daniel Fenton
Jeanne Garrison
James Gerard
Kate Gibbons
Shane Godshall

Dawn Goslin
Larry Gossin
Arthur Gottwald
Emma Hackley
John Hancock
Joe Hochreiter
Mike Horan
Nick Horvath
George & Lois Carr
Leilani Kane
Ward Keever
Kook Hee Kim
Robert King
Anthony Klock
Jim Kneubuehl
Meredith Koenig
Pete Leshner
Becky Lewis
Nancy Linden
Scott Eves & Mary Pat
McCann
Andrew Lyter
Laura Malmquist
Robert Kling
Rocco Masci
Linda McBride
Al Mortensen

Elke Michaelis
Robert Marceluk
Grace Pehlert
Rita Pettit
Helen Reinhart
Michael Rheem
Gail Robinson
Gordon Robinson
Robert Morrisroe
Lynn Schoch
Justin Scott
Ray Skelly
Janet Somers
Brian Somers
Blake Stanyon
Wm Michael Stein
Steven Stolar
Ben Stowman
Richard Taylor
Charles & Sharon
Tomlinson
Clarissa Toney
Gail Tweed
Scott Lundquist
Anne Workman
Sul "Erik" Yang



Financial Review

In 2024, BCB had its first full year of programming both in its home port of Bivalve and throughout the state with a full itinerary of sailing programs.

By reestablishing strong relationships with ports in New Jersey to bring its educational programs to both students and adults, BCB saw a 57% increase in Program Revenue in 2024.

Thanks to its supporters and funders, BCB also had success meeting its fundraising goals allowing the Organization to continue to teach and bring appreciation of the human impact on New Jersey's aquatic environment.

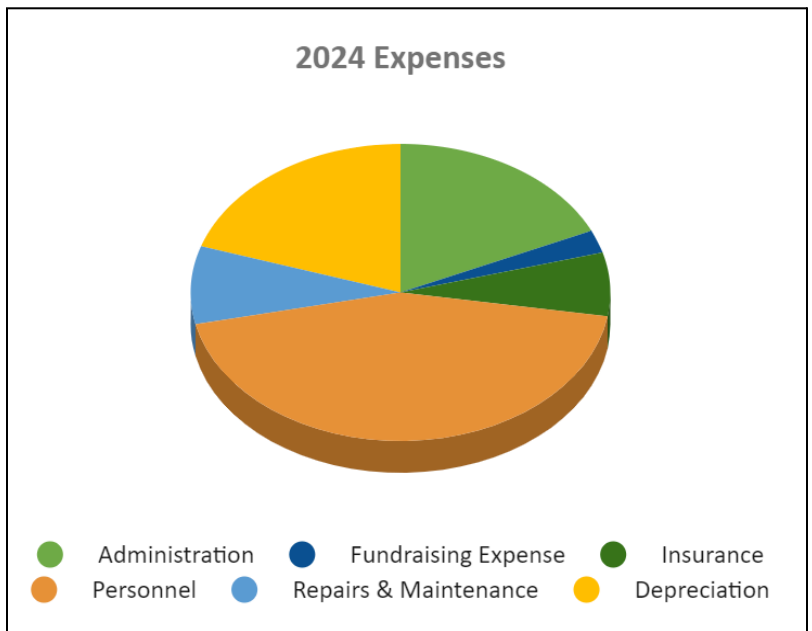
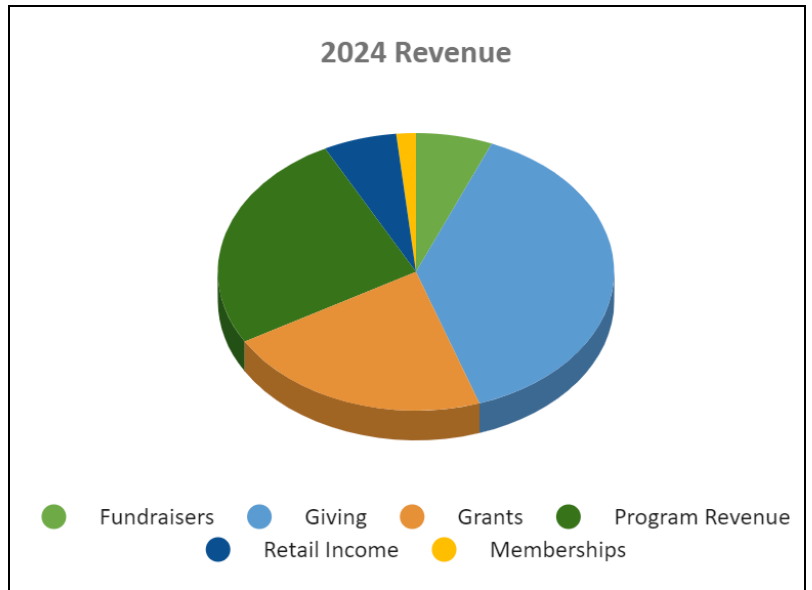
-Candace A. Faunce, CFO

Grants

BCB received an operating support grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State. This grant helps support staff-time, museum operations and overhead, and community events.

BCB received project grant funds from the NJ Historic Trust for a project that includes an underwater piling study of the facility and wharves (Nov 24), replacing the geothermal HVAC unit at BCB (Jan 25), a new propeller to enhance maneuverability (Oct 25) including haul out.

New Jersey Arts and Culture Renewal Fund at the Princeton Area Community Foundation (education); State Council on the Arts/Department of State and the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners through the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission (AJM virtual tour); Hyde & Watson for AJM project of Night- Watchman system and head upgrade.



Board of Directors, Staff, Crew

Board of Directors

John Gandy, President
Nils Herdelin, Secretary
Mike Rothman, Treasurer
Anthony Klock, Volunteer Chair

Eliza Braunstein, Partnerships Chair
Kathryn Michel
David Acree
William Sheridan
Patrick (Pete) Slavin

Staff & Crew

Executive Director
Jessica Yorke

Delaware Bay Museum

Rachel Dolhanczyk, Museum Curator & Grants Manager
Museum Intern, Eli Bisco-Werner

Museum Advisors

Dr. Michael Chiarappa, Historian-in-Residence and Research Professor of
Chesapeake Regional Studies, Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland
Pete Leshner, Historian and Ambassador-at-Large, Chesapeake Bay Maritime
Museum, St. Michaels, Maryland

Program

Steve Wilchensky, Director of Education
Bethany Snyder, Education Coordinator
Tristan Metz, Education Intern, Stockton University

Operations

Candy Faunce, Chief Financial Officer
Teri Watson, Office & Retail Operations Manager
Diane Stevenson, Bookkeeper
Scott Eves, Facilities Manager

Schooner *A. J. Meerwald*

Fern Hoffmann, Captain
Bridget McCutchen, First Mate
Ken Haney, Engineer
Troy Ingram, Third Mate/ Bosun
Rebecca "Becca" Kurtz, AJM Education Coordinator
Jared Gawrys, Deckhand & Merchandise Sales
Lu Dahl, Deckhand

