

SERC Trains MD Envirothon Team for International Competition

For three intense days in July, SERC scientists and state Envirothon officials worked with a team of high school students who represented Maryland in the International Envirothon competition held this year in



Team members Joyce Schick, Barry Lauder, Amy Griger, Scott DeBruyne, Steve Hollyer and Frank Rogers on top of SERC's instrument tower.

Mississippi. This past June, the Harford County team of students, Amy Griger, Barry Lauder, Frank Rogers, and Scott DeBruyne, competed with teams from other counties in the state and won the Maryland title.

What exactly is an Envirothon? It's a competitive, problem-solving, natural resources event for high school students to educate them about the environment. These young adults are trained and tested in the natural resource areas of aquatics, soils, forestry, wildlife, and a new environmental issue that changes every year. This

year's issue is urban non-point source pollution.

The Maryland Envirothon Program is yearlong. Each team, formed by five students and an alternate in the 9-12 grades, receives extensive training in the five natural resource areas. County Envirothons are held in the spring to determine a winning team for each county. These winning county teams advance to the state level. Here, their knowledge is challenged in a competition that emphasizes hands-on involvement with the environment.

The State level competition lasts three days and involves full group participation in tours,



Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend with MD Envirothon Training Team. Pictured from l. to r.: Scott DeBruyne, SERC director Ross Simons, SERC scientist Pat Megonigal, Amy Griger, Bill Schmidt, Lt. Gov. Townsend, Susan Davis, Barry Lauder, Nathalia Hardy and Craig Zinter.

by A. Mark Haddon

campfires, night hikes, and other activities in addition to training and testing. As part of their evaluation, each team is given an environmental problem or situation and is expected to create and present a 10-minute oral presentation to a number of judges.

SERC's training team of scientists included Wayne Coats, Pat Megonigal, Tom Jordan, Bert Drake, Jess Parker, and Dennis Whigham. Scientists took one to two hours presenting current information on their research. The Maryland Team was able to spend time canoeing in tidal wetlands, walking through forests, climbing meteorological towers, and taking plankton samples from SERC's research vessel out in the Chesapeake Bay. Other intensive training was done in the Reed Center classroom. The students gave a 20-minute presentation on environmental best management practices to the entire SERC staff and answered questions about certain natural resource issues.

The three days at SERC were culminated with a visit to the State House to see the Lt. Governor and a 3-hour dinner cruise aboard the

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Spotlight on Volunteers

by Cathleen Drew

Have you ever wondered how a facility like SERC, with almost 3000 acres and quite a variety of research and education programs, manages to accomplish so much? One of the secrets behind the success at SERC is the contribution of its volunteers. In this issue, I would like to highlight two of our newest education volunteers.

Cindy Siegfried and Ray Arnold began volunteering for SERC in the spring of 2001 and are two of our volunteers that actually lead more than one type of program. Besides their weekly commitment to work with students in the Estuary Chesapeake Program, they also regularly lead our very popular Muddy Creek Canoe Trips for school groups and for the public.

Cindy Siegfried is a retired Maryland schoolteacher who has been enjoying volunteer work for the past 30 years. In addition to SERC, Cindy also

volunteers at Down's Park in Pasadena, MD working with their adopted owl program. She is a great lover of nature and very knowledgeable about birds. During the spring and summer, she kept us up to date on the activities of the osprey family that had built a nest on the floating dock moored just past the Estuary Chesapeake beach. She perfected her birding skills while volunteering on the Eastern Shore of Maryland at Horseheads Wetlands Sanctuary for ten years prior to joining us here at SERC. Cindy's joy in working with children and her skills as a teacher are obvious as she handles everything from fish identification to picking up crabs to tending to a splinter. In the spare time she has left, she operates her own business doing antique restoration of chair caning and seat weaving. One of the reasons she loves to volunteer is because she can pick and choose what she can do, and she has a life-long love of the Chesapeake Bay.

Ray Arnold retired in 1998 after 35 years of working in the computer field, the past 25 years with the Customs Service. At the time of his retirement, he was in charge of 35,000 PCs and 600 networks. He has always been interested in volunteering and has

always done some during his lifetime. One of his past volunteer experiences has been working with the John Gardner Wooden Boat Building School as a carpenter (he built his own kayak which he paddles in area waters). He has also volunteered with the literary council to teach people to read and has been



SERC volunteer Cindy Siegfried

involved with the Boys Club of Greater Washington.

Like Cindy, Ray works with the Estuary Chesapeake Program and also guides canoe trips. Since canoe trips are scheduled for random times, we can be extremely busy with up to two canoe trips every day, while at other times we will have one every three weeks. This spring and summer had some of the busiest times on record with Ray leading at least one, and sometimes as many as three, canoe trips a week. During July and August when we had some of our hottest weather (those ubiquitous code orange

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SERC volunteer Ray Arnold

Indian River Lagoon, part of the Indian River Lagoon Species Inventory.

Notes from the CrabLab:

Tuck Hines, Midge Kramer and Rob Andrews were at the Smithsonian Marine Station, Fort Pierce, Florida, April 23-27, doing field work. Tuck, Rob, and Midge were sampling blue crab populations.

Tuck Hines recently visited aquaculture facilities in Japan to learn how Japanese fishery biologists raise juvenile crabs to enhance their fishery for swimming

crabs, especially *Portunus trituberculatus*. This species has many similarities to blue crabs (*Callinectes sapidus*). The issue of stock enhancement as a technique for fishery management is very controversial, with many arguments both for and against enhancement. Stock enhancement (rearing larval crabs for release as juveniles) has been proposed recently for the declining blue crab population in Chesapeake Bay. The Japanese system provides a model for evaluating this approach for a species with a similar life history. The project involves

collaborative research between SERC blue crab ecologists and aquaculture researchers at the University of Maryland's Center for Marine Biotechnology. •

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Governor's yacht with trainers, parents and SERC scientists. We sent them off to Mississippi with full support.

For more information about the Maryland Envirothon or the Canon International Envirothon visit the following web sites: State - www.mda.state.md.us/enviro/enviro1.htm International - www.envirothon.org/ •

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days), Ray would willingly lead one trip after another, teaching eager youngsters about the ecology of the wetlands and sharing information about our research. It was a pleasure to watch him interact with a wide age group and be able to impart information to an inquisitive eight year old as well as discuss ecology with a seasoned veteran.

As an education specialist here at SERC, I have a deep respect and gratitude for all of our volunteers and am extremely pleased that we have such capable people. •

Neighborhood Nestwatch is Launched!



Senator Paul Sarbanes hosted the Neighborhood Nestwatch launch at the United States Capitol on July 11th. Over 100 nestwatchers and Senate staffers were present for the kick-off and premier of the Nestwatch Video. Pictured here (left to right) on the U.S. Capitol steps are Pete Marra, James DeLorbe, Jane Ashley, Ed Wayson, Victoria Jenkins (The Mills Corporation) and Ross Simons.