

November 20th, 2023



WHERE HISTORY AND THE ENVIRONMENT MEET

Dear Bayshore Center at Bivalve Supporter;

2023 began a new phase for both the Bayshore Center at Bivalve (BCB) and the S/V *A.J. Meerwald*, as it was our first full sailing season since 2019. Thanks to the ongoing support of our donors, volunteers, and grant funders, our premier floating classroom completed a massive restoration in 2022. With the multi-year restoration behind us, this year focused on getting the boat filled and moving as much and in as many ports as possible. It was a very busy year full of new partnerships and reigniting long standing traditional programs and relationships. With a strong foundation and updated vessel, we believe 2024 has the opportunity to be our best year yet.

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

This year, **2,983 passengers sailed aboard AJ Meerwald** experiencing her history, connection with local waterways and the environment and her ongoing support of the oyster industry. Through the support of local municipalities and host organizations such as Atlantic Highlands Yacht Club and Independence Seaport Museum, she sailed from eight different ports, with a good deal of time in our home port, the Bayshore Center at Bivalve located in Port Norris, NJ. With a port schedule that came together late in the season for 2023, we hope to increase these numbers in 2024 with advance planning.



The Delaware Bay Museum had 1,473 visitors this year plus approximately 5,000 that visited during fundraising and community-based events.

The museum completed three special projects in 2023:

- **On the Shellpile Documentary**
- **Virtual Tour of the S/V *A.J. Meerwald***
- Update to the **hands-on education activities** replicating life aboard *A.J. Meerwald*, incorporating simple machines and navigation.



With your support, we were able to engage **1,557 youth in educational programs in 2023**. We were able to partner with 20 classes through the spring and fall field trip program with 719 youth who sailed aboard the Meerwald and 838 additional youth who came for land-based educational programming only. In the future we hope to increase both the number of educational programs offered and the number of youth impacted.



2023 was spent rebuilding past partnerships and “Going Sailing!” As we look forward to building for 2024, we have a strong foundation in place and with your support we will continue to expand educational programming aboard our “floating classroom” in addition to expanding land-based programming at BCB. We are half-way through the capital campaign for a new mainsail. We are looking for 15 additional donors willing to contribute \$1,000 each to achieve our goal. Contact our director if you would like to contribute.

This year’s annual appeal donations will go towards the following areas:

- Support of a new **Education Director** leading shipboard and land-based programming.
- Update of **AJM interior accommodations** for overnight passengers.
- Funds to begin the season ready to hire **seasonal crew and train volunteers**.

Thanks to your continued support and generosity, *S/V AJ Meerwald* spent the sailing season filled with youth on educational sailing excursions and adults on historic adventures under sail throughout the state of New Jersey, and her surrounding waterways. The Bayshore Center at Bivalve was bustling with many of our supporters for events, education presentations and an opportunity to enjoy the history and culture of the Southern NJ “Bayshore.”

Please continue your support as we build our programs, expand our volunteer base and prepare for a robust 2024.

On behalf of the Bayshore Center at Bivalve board and staff, thank you for your support.

Jessica Yorke

Jessica (Servis) Yorke
Executive Director



Please detach this portion of the letter and mail to the Bayshore Center at Bivalve in the enclosed envelope with your donation to the 2023 Annual Appeal.

First Name: _____ **Last Name:** _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Donation Amount:

\$5,000 \$1,000 \$500 \$100 \$50 Other: _____

Donations can also be made online at bayshorecenter.org or by calling the office (856) 785-2060