

Mathews 4-H and Mathews Maritime Foundation to Build Boats for Jamestown 4-H Educational Center

Sailing is an exciting sport...whether for recreation or competition. When you sail, you are interacting with nature, applying the laws of physics, and exercising your mind and body. What could be better?

Virginia offers miles of coastal waterways perfect for sailing enthusiasts. 4-H youth, aged 9-18, throughout the eastern side of the state are surrounded by this wonderful opportunity. Jamestown 4-H Educational Center, which serves 22 counties offers fantastic educational programs including canoeing and kayaking classes as a regular part of the summer camp program, but because there are no boats, sailing classes can not be offered. Approximately 2,000 youth enjoy educational experiences at Jamestown 4-H Center every summer through 4-H junior camp programs. Jamestown also offers weekend specialty camps.

Mathews County 4-H and the Mathews Maritime Foundation are embarking on a sailboat building project that will make sailing classes available. By providing sailboats, Jamestown 4-H Educational Center will be able to offer sailing classes for summer 4-H Junior camps and Specialty Sailing Camps. It's an ambitious project with a tremendous outcome.

Six sailboats will be built from kits provided by the Mathews Maritime Foundation. Building will take place at their Gwynn's Island Boat Shop. Volunteers will help guide and supervise teams of youth aged 12-18 as they learn to handle the equipment and materials in the construction of the boats. Youth will learn teamwork and will develop a sense of belonging. The teams will strive for high quality as they solve problems and learn skills that they will be able to transfer or apply later in their lives.

The cost for this project is estimated to be approximately \$12,000. Funds will be used to purchase the boat kits and additional supplies needed to complete six sail boats. It sounds like a lot of money, but just \$10.00 from only 1,200 people will raise every penny that will be needed. Or organizations such as yacht or sailing clubs or other interested clubs or businesses may "Adopt a Boat" by raising \$2,000 from among their memberships. An adopted boat will carry the name of the supporting organization.

As boats are being completed, sailing teams will be organized: one for each sailboat. Completed sailboats will compete in a Sail-In Regatta which will deliver them to their final destination at Jamestown 4-H Educational Center. The winning sailboat crew and its builders will receive trophies. The festivities of the day will include a picnic luncheon for sailors, builders, families and friends.

Please support this great project. Please send your donation...what ever you can spare...to make this project come to life...or rather, to put wind in these sails.

Please contact Pete Hall of the Mathews Maritime Foundation at phall27@cox.net/725-4444 or Nancy Roche, 4-H Agent, Mathews County at nroche@vt.edu/725-7196 or send your donation to the Mathews Maritime Foundation, P.O. Box 1201, Mathews, VA 23109. If you'd like more information or if you'd like to schedule a presentation of this project to your organization, please call (804) 725-7196.