

A Caffeinated Chesapeake

You may have bought coffee at one of Chesapeake Bay Roasting Company's (CBRC) retail locations from Washington, DC to Ocean City, MD—Ahh Coffee!, the Boatyard Bar & Grill, and Chesapeake Gourmet among them—and not known about the Crofton, MD-based roasting company's efforts to preserve and improve the ecosystem of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. From the onset in 2002, the company's mission was to create high-quality coffees and connect them to environmental issues affecting the Bay. The ideas of being different and making a difference are the foundations of CBRC's brand.



Through its H2O Initiative, CBRC donates two percent of gross sales to support community organizations that are making a measurable impact on the health of the Bay. Founding partner Rick Erber explains that to date, the organizations who have benefitted from his company's outreach program and volunteer work are the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, South River Federation, Spa Creek Conservancy, and others. Erber notes that they are in the early stages of working with Earth Echo International (earthecho.org), the brainchild of Phillippe and Alexandra Cousteau (the grandchildren of Jacques Cousteau) in its Water Planet Challenge, which is all about environmental education. Erber says, "It's important to us that the money go back to the Chesapeake Bay watershed."

In addition to the H2O Initiative, CBRC is working hard to reduce its carbon footprint on a daily basis. Their "hybrid coffee roaster" has nearly 80-percent reduced emissions and an estimated 20-percent fuel reduction compared to traditional drum roasters. The company also purchases wind energy subsidies to power its roasting plant, which is 100 percent wind-powered. Did we mention that the coffee is good, too? Look for the sailboat on the label next time you buy coffee, and remember what it represents. cbrcoffee.com

Free Sailing and Affordable Kids Programs... Really?

If it sounds too good to be true, it just might be a program created by Annapolis Community Boating (ACB). The fledgling community program started with a group of sailors who wanted to give back and asked themselves the question: what would happen if we gave non-sailors a chance to get out on the water for free? Well, it worked. In its debut year in 2009, ACB took 450 people—all kinds of people from kids to grandparents, from soldiers to medical researchers—sailing in Annapolis for free.

ACB will begin FreeSail 2010 April 18 and run it on Sundays through September 26. After reserving a spot on a chosen date, participants meet a sailing instructor at Annapolis City Dock and run through a quick chalk talk before donning lifejackets and heading out on the water with an instructor to explore the harbor and glean some ideas on getting into sailing. Here's the catch: you can do FreeSail only once. All participants will be given a goodie bag, which includes a *SpinSheet* publication called *Start Sailing Now* with some ideas on next steps to learning more about sailing.

Among its affordable kids' programs, ACB is partnering with Annapolis Maritime Museum (AMM) to offer a couple of two-week-long day camps (starting June 24 and July 19) for maritime heritage and boating for youth aged 11 to 14. Kids will earn their Maryland Boater's Certifications while exploring Back Creek, Spa Creek, and the Severn River in kayaks, canoes, small motorboats, and sailboats. In addition to safe swimming lessons, basic boating, and navigation, campers will learn about lighthouse lore, Bay restoration efforts, and the history of boatbuilding (from local craftsmen) and native American and colonial lore. They may even learn about pirates.

To make a FreeSail Reservation and learn more about ACB, visit annapolisboating.org or e-mail info@annapolisboating.org. To learn more about Maritime Heritage and Boating Camp, visit amaritime.org.

Annapolis Community Boating took 450 people sailing for free in 2009. Visit annapolisboating.org to learn how you can register for a FreeSail session. Photo by Richard Chomitz