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■ (L to R) Alan Suydam, STEM interns Ethan Falsone and Karley White, and Bill Wright. Suydam built two scale models of the craft before construction began on the 20-foot skiff. Photo by Sally Reuther

## Reving Up a Traditional Wooden Skiff

The volunteers at the Patuxent Small Craft Guild (PSCG), a part of the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons, MD, are making good progress on their 20-foot crabbing skiff. While the craft will follow the lines of the venerable Smith Island Crab Scrape, their new construction involves far lighter materials to allow for modern electric propulsion. The idea for this particular configuration came together when the Guild held its annual planning meeting last year. Almost all of their projects involve vintage restorations or replications of traditional watercraft.

This marriage of a proven Chesapeake hull with modern propulsion is not as new as it might seem. Electric propulsion was considered the safest, cleanest, quietest, and most economic mode of powering launches at the end of the 19th century when compared with early internal combustion engines.

Aided by a pair of scale models provided by Guild member Alan Suydam, construction began in earnest after the holidays. Okoume marine plywood replaced solid planks for sides, decks, and bottom. Frames are now in place along a longitudinal strong back fixed to the deck and the boat is being built in the customary upside down manner. The laminated keel and stringer pieces have been fitted and epoxied in place. Over the next few weeks, chines, side panels, and the bottom will find their fit on the struc-

tural skeleton. Each new piece is weighed and recorded to keep track of the overall weight. Each piece is epoxied and fastened for strength.

The Guild's electric motor is coming from joint venture partner Annapolis Hybrid Marine (AHM) and will be a Thoosa 7000-HT along with a 48-volt DC battery system. AHM has taken on the role of technical advisor for the project, assisting with selection of battery placement and prop sizing. AHM recently visited the Solomons boat shop and arranged a field trip to Sparrows Point, Baltimore for discussions with Millers Island Propeller, INC. about prop size. PSCG member Bill Wright is financing the project and plans to have the boat in the water in the spring. The new craft is named *Carol Jeanne* after his wife of 52 years.

Interested parties can stop by the museum boat shop any Tuesday or Saturday when the construction crew is at work. Visit [calvertmarinemuseum.com](http://calvertmarinemuseum.com) for more info. For a video of the radio-controlled model skiff in action, check out [proptalk.com/cmm-skiff](http://proptalk.com/cmm-skiff)

*Submitted by the Patuxent Small Craft Guild*

## Eastern Shore Crab Boat Engineering Competition

On Saturday April 23, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, the U.S. Army, and Kelvin Educational will sponsor the first annual Eastern Shore Crab Boat Engineering Competition for students in grades nine to 12, hosted by the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) in Cambridge, MD.

This event was inspired by the Cargo Ship Engineering Challenge that was held for a number of years at the Baltimore Inner Harbor. Teachers expressed an interest in holding a similar challenge on the Eastern Shore so that their students could compete in a hands-on STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) competition.

This event was situated in the context of something to which Maryland students could relate: crabbing. It provides a great opportunity to increase interest in STEM at local schools while requiring students to apply their math and science knowledge to design a solution like a real engineer. Teams will be judged on their boat design proposals, a written report showing calculations and discussing environmental impacts of crabbing, their boat's performance, and their response to judges' questions at the event.

Local media will be in attendance at UMCES to cover the competition, which will run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Teams of four to 10 students must register by March 18. Registration for this event is free, and all participants will receive lunch and a tee shirt. Find more information at [umes.edu](http://umes.edu). To register, contact Dr. Tyler Love at [tslove@umes.edu](mailto:tslove@umes.edu).



■ In a previous competition, Matt Cathel (left) and Jimmy Simons of Stephen Decatur High School in Berlin, MD, work together to build a model cargo ship. This year, students will be building a crab boat.