

# THE STAR

1789-2009  
DEMOCRAT

## News

### Fitzgerald shoreline dedicated

[Print Page](#)

By CHRIS POLK Staff Writer

Published: Tuesday, April 21, 2009 6:48 AM CDT

ST. MICHAELS Family, friends gathered to celebrate the life of the late young environmentalist Kennedy Fitzgerald and resolve to preserve the Chesapeake Bay Saturday afternoon in the bright waterfront sunshine on Navy Point.

Kennedy Fitzgerald was a 20-year-old hunter, swimmer, boater, fisherman, student at the University of Maryland, and employee at the Oxford Lab, St. Michaels Marina and Environmental Concern. He was an Eagle Scout who made his mark at the Pickering Creek Environmental Center.

In his spare time, he used every moment he could to be outdoors, exploring the Bay and its back tributaries in a 13-foot Boston Whaler.

When Fitzgerald, his younger sister Maggie Fitzgerald and girlfriend Christine Maier perished in a fire at the family's home on the Miles River in 2007, those in the Mid-Shore community and beyond were stunned and shaken by the loss.

After the tragedy, donations made in Kennedy Fitzgerald's memory came pouring into the Chesapeake Bay Foundation from many sources.

Now the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum and Environmental Concern have joined forces with the Fitzgerald family to honor Kennedy Fitzgerald and his work.

A section of Navy Point's shoreline, the home of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, will be converted from bulkhead to a living marsh, what family and friends feel is a fitting memorial to the young outdoorsman.

"My son Kennedy was a child of this Eastern Shore, of its beauty and splendor," said Fitzgerald's father, Matt Fitzgerald, to a large crowd of family and friends who had assembled at the site on Saturday.

After talking about his son's love of the outdoors and water, Matt Fitzgerald took the opportunity to transcend his family's and the community's tragedy.

"But let us be clear," he said. "Today is not about Kennedy. It is about something much larger and more important than his brief but magical life among us."

Matt Fitzgerald spoke of the current crisis in the health of the Chesapeake, the need for each individual to modify their lifestyles and the work that must be done to reverse current trends. He called for a commitment from those who were present.

"And let us make this commitment not for Kennedy or even ourselves, but rather for Kennedy's great-great-great-great nephew," he said. "That 100 years from now, a boy of this Eastern Shore can so too enjoy the splendor and the magnificence of this Bay my son Kennedy knew so well."

After the dedication of the Kennedy M. Fitzgerald Living Shoreline, family and friends visited and reminisced about his life. Some floated flowers in the water in his memory at the site.

Construction and engineering for the project is being done by Kennedy Fitzgerald's former employer, Environmental Concern.

The living marsh will provide a gentle slope that will prevent erosion by absorbing wave action, create habitat for shoreline plants and animals, and contribute, in a small way, in some Bay water cleansing as the tides move through the site.

Family and friends are planning to return again at 1 p.m. Sunday, June 14, to begin the real work of planting grasses. The entire Eastern Shore community is invited to come and help.

Funding for the living shoreline has been provided by many individual donations, as well as from the Chesapeake Bay Trust, the Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Waterfowl Festival, Inc.

More funding is still needed. Contributions may be sent to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, Inc., Navy Point, Box 636, St. Michaels, Maryland 21663. Please designate Kennedy M. Fitzgerald Living Shoreline with the donation.



PHOTO BY CHRIS POLK

Margaret Enloe of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, third from left, gives a description of the restoration that will take place in the living shoreline memorial to Kennedy Fitzgerald on the waterfront Saturday at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum.

Copyright © 2009 - The Star-Democrat

[\[x\] Close Window](#)