CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EASTERN SHORE

SHORELINE™

A Journal of Natural Resources, Public Affairs and Culture on the Eastern Shore of Virginia

Volume 28 *June 2015* *Number 6*

Bay Acts Differ Between Counties

By Hali Plourde-Rogers

Pollution – mainly sediment, nitrogen and phosphorus – impairs water quality in the Commonwealth and on the Eastern Shore. Plants form buffers along the shoreline and provide valuable biological and ecological processes, such as filtering pollution before it reaches the waterways and stabilizing creek banks. When lands are improperly developed and plant communities are removed or damaged, they can no longer protect against pollution or flooding and erosion. Pollution degrades the water quality and negatively impacts economic engines like aquaculture and fisheries that rely on clean water. Flooding and erosion put our homes and communities at risk.

In response to concern over pollution-degraded waters, The Commonwealth of Virginia (the Commonwealth) enacted the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (the Bay Act) in 1988 to improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and in state waters. The Bay Act declares, "Healthy state and local economies and a healthy Chesapeake Bay are integrally related; balanced economic development and water quality protection are not mutually exclusive." The purpose of the Bay Act, according to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) website, is to allow development while minimizing the negative effects on water quality.

According to DEQ, the Bay Act recognizes local government authority over land use decisions and expands local government authority to manage water quality in relation to local land use. The Bay Act tasks counties, towns and cities with implementation by mandating localities within Tidewater (including Accomack and Northampton counties) to develop programs defining and protecting Chesapeake Preservation Areas. Chesapeake Preservation Areas are lands critical to water quality protection and "if improperly developed may result in substantial damage…" (Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act of 1988).

While the Bay Act hands authority down to the local level, it also creates a Board that provides support, guidance and oversight to localities as well as program reviews to ensure compliance. The Board has authority to require corrective action and establish criteria for determining the extent of preservation areas and for granting, denying, or modifying requests to rezone, subdivide, or use and develop land in the protection areas. However, this does not mean that every locality within Tidewater has an equally strong ordinance. Water quality protection can be stronger or less effective based on political lines in the sand. Such differences create a fragile network of protection.

Localities use their comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances to comply. Bay Act protections in county zoning ordinances take the form of overlay districts. Any parcel zoned Chesapeake/Atlantic Preservation District in Northampton County or Chesapeake Bay Preservation Overlay District in Accomack County will also lie within another zoning district, such as residential or agricultural. When one zoning district overlays another, the more stringent restrictions apply. These overlay districts address all aspects of development within the preservation areas. Accomack and Northampton counties have significantly different preservation overlay ordinances* and on-the-ground practices. These differences are clear within the sections on encroachments into and mitigation of the buffer.

See **"Bay Act,"** *Cont'd on page 2*

"Bay Act" *Cont'd from p. 1*

Resource Protection Areas.

The overlay districts include Resource Protection Areas (RPA) and Resource Management Areas (RMA). The RMA covers all land that is not designated as RPA. RPA lands are areas considered critical to water quality. In both counties the Resource Protection Areas (RPA) include:

- Tidal wetlands;
- Non-tidal wetlands connected by surface flow, contiguous to tidal wetlands or water bodies with perennial flow;
- Tidal shores; and
- 100-foot vegetated buffer located adjacent to and landward of the components above and along both sides of any water bodies with perennial flow.

However, Northampton County's ordinance casts a wider net and also includes:

- Water bodies with perennial flow,
- Beaches, and
- Coastal primary sand dunes, including beaches.

In practice, including these additional categories may create a larger critical protected area because the required 100-foot buffer is "adjacent to and landward of" the listed components.

100-foot Buffer.

Each county ordinance mandates a 100-foot vegetated buffer along all features included in the RPA (such as tidal wetlands and streams). The buffer is generally measured from the top of the bank or where vegetation changes from wetland to non-wetland. The ordinances are similar. They both require a buffer be "established where it does not exist" and that the buffer achieve a "75% reduction of sediments and a 40% reduction of nutrients."

Accomack's ordinance states the buffer must be "retained if present" and Northampton's says, "maintained if present." "Retained" means to keep or continue, while "maintain" means to keep without change or in good condition through repair. You can certainly "retain" something without "maintaining" it. This one word discrepancy could result in a difference in the quality of the buffer between the two counties depending on enforcement and interpretation.

Encroachment into the Buffer.

Both counties allow for encroachments into the 100-foot buffer. Landowners may manage the buffer for sight lines, vistas and paths. There are statewide exemptions for both agriculture and silviculture using best management practices (BMPs). Additional allowed encroachments include water dependent facilities, roads/driveways, and redevelopment or development allowed by waiver, exemption, or exception. In practice, encroachments may look like active agricultural fields that come within 25-50 feet of a creek bank, development that requires partial clearing of buffer areas, or timbering within 50 feet of a creek.

Mitigation and Replanting.

Northampton's ordinance mandates the use of Best Management Practices and/or mitigation planting to mitigate encroachments. The ordinance states, "establishment or reestablishment of the buffer will be required for any encroachment into the buffer for any reason." While mitigation and replanting is required under various subsections throughout both county ordinances, the Accomack ordinance does not contain any language as strong. In fact, mitigation requirements are generally stronger in Northampton County.

Mitigation and replanting is mandatory in both counties when a water quality impact assessment (WQIA) is required. WQIAs are required in instances of land disturbance. Land disturbance is defined by Accomack County as "any activity causing a land change which may result in soil erosion from water or wind and the movement of sediments into state waters or onto other lands…" (Chesapeake Bay Preservation Overlay District, 2009). There are two levels of WQIA in each county. Accomack uses a 10,000 square foot land disturbance cutoff between minor and major water quality assessments and Northampton uses a 5,000 square foot cutoff. Both divide the buffer into landward and waterward 50 feet. The major difference here is Northampton's cutoff will result in more major WQIAs, which means more mitigation and replanting in the buffer.

Differences [in local Bay Act ordinances] result in different on-the-ground practices and enforcement.

In addition, the required mitigation differs between the two counties. Accomack's ordinance requires more replacement for smaller trees than Northampton County. However, Northampton's ordinance is stronger when larger trees or areas are cleared. Larger trees provide more bank stabilization because of their extensive root systems. Therefore, more trees must be planted to equal the stabilization effect when one large tree is removed. Accomack uses a flat two to one replacement rate for all trees no matter the size cleared. Northampton County gives exact mitigation and replanting rates and requirements for buffer encroachments in detailed tables under section (L)(3) of the Chesapeake/Atlantic Preservation District (2009). Northampton used the exact replacement rates recommended in the statewide *Riparian Buffers Modification & Mitigation Guidance Manual* (2003) to write their ordinance. Replacement rates vary depending on the size of the tree removed or the area cleared. For example, a tree with a caliper (diameter measured 12 inches above the ground) less than 2.5 inches is replaced at a one to one ratio. However, a tree with a caliper greater than 2.5 inches is replaced at one tree per every 4 inches of caliper. This replacement rate takes into account the need for larger root mass to stabilize the bank and replace that which is lost from a large tree.

See **"Bay Act,"** *Cont'd on page 3*

SHORELINE is published monthly by Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore and is distributed to members, public officials, and friends.

How to reach CBES
P.O. Box 882, Eastville, VA 23347
(757) 678-7157
info@cbes.org • www.cbes.org

Printed on Sustainably Produced Paper

Better Not Bigger

Promotes Smart Growth

A review by Jack Ordeman

The recommendation of Tom Horton, who praised Eben Fodor's *Better Not Bigger* in his presentation at the CBES Annual Meeting several years ago, prompted us to purchase this little manual for the CBES library, where it is now available for loan to any CBES member.

Fodor asks several questions of the reader: How much more farmland and open space do you want to be developed? How much more of your local natural resources do you want consumed? How much higher do you want your taxes to go? How much air and water pollution would you prefer? How much more traffic congestion would you like in your community? The manner in which the questions are posed might well suggest that support of simplistic negative responses is all we can expect from the author. In point of fact, he gives us much more.

Based on extensive experience as a "public interest community planning consultant" – his term for his occupation – Fodor outlines the tactics and techniques that have been employed by developers whose motivations are for profit only with little concern for the well-being of the community, and he explains what some communities have done to be successful in growth management. Among the issues Fodor discusses are: impact fees, greenbelts, open space requirements, downzoning, construction moratoria, design review, economic incentives, conservation tax incentives, easement purchase and adequate public facility requirements. Most of these issues are controversial and may even be challenged as unlawful, but Fodor tells where they have been implemented and explains how they work. He anticipates objections to the positions he takes on development issues, and he employs statistics and uses charts and diagrams effectively to prove the validity of his conclusions.

Of particular interest, and central to the purpose of *Better Not Bigger,* is Fodor's list of the Common Growth Myths:

- Myth 1: Growth provides needed tax revenue.
- Myth 2: We have to grow to provide jobs for people in the community.
- Myth 3: We must stimulate and subsidize business growth to have good jobs.
- Myth 4: If we try to limit growth, housing prices will shoot up.
- Myth 5: Environmental protection hurts the economy. We must be willing to sacrifice local environmental quality for jobs and economic prosperity.
- Myth 6: Growth is inevitable. Growth management doesn't work and therefore we have no choice but to continue growing. You can't put a fence around our town.
- Myth 7: If you don't like growth, you're a "NIMBY" (not in my back yard) or an "ANTI" (against everything).
- Myth 8: Most people don't really support growth management or environmental protection.
- Myth 9: We have to "grow or die." Growth makes the economy strong and creates better-paying jobs.
- Myth 10: Vacant and undeveloped land is just going to waste.
- Myth 11: A person's visual preference is no basis for objecting to development.
- Myth 12: Environmentalists are just another special interest. There is no such thing as public interest.

Fodor takes these myths, one by one, and refutes their *seeming* logic with common sense, actual logic, data and anecdotal support. He presents illustrations about the costs to taxpayers of new developments, and he goes on to offer examples of policies and practices that have proven effective in preventing irresponsible development and sprawl. He proves that citizens can combat unmanaged growth through local grassroots organizations, by writing letters to the editor and by becoming active in the planning process – activities that are currently being employed to good effect on the Eastern Shore.

There is a fundamental paradox in the issue of growth, which Fodor calls a Catch 22: The better you make your community, the more people will want to live there, until it is no better than any other community. "The main message of the Catch 22 of Growth," Fodor writes, "is to emphasize the importance of controlling growth locally. Local efforts to provide jobs, make housing available, or improve the quality of life in a community are likely to have short-lived success unless they are also accompanied by growth controls." That's Fodor's message, and it's sound advice from a man who knows whereof he speaks.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

"Bay Act," *Cont'd from p. 2*

Conclusion.

These variations result in different on-the-ground practices and enforcement. Accomack's ordinance is designed to be more flexible, allowing for political will and lack of resources to negatively impact water quality. In fact, under Accomack's ordinance, a property-owner or developer may not be required to mitigate at all even if they clear the buffer. However, Northampton County's ordinance is more straightforward and specific. It requires exact and consistent mitigation, bolstering clean water within the county. Overall, Northampton County has a more comprehensive ordinance that supports clean water. The Bay Act was written to allow for this type of local differences. However, more regional and statewide cooperation on standards would better protect water quality, economic engines that depend on clean water, and the health of both our communities and our natural resources.

**This article compares the current zoning codes of Accomack and Northampton counties and not any proposed revisions.*

Rural Legends – Rural Facts

By Martina Coker and Mary Miller

Urban Legends are notorious for their inexplicable content and the speed with which they're spread: alligators in the sewers, Elvis sightings and free airline tickets at the end of a maze of internet links.

Northampton County is currently experiencing its own "*Rural* Legend" outbreak. From statements by political candidates, to speeches and discussion at civic organization meetings, to personal reports submitted as "data" to county government, to the county's own website, incomplete and inconsistent information is being presented as reliable fact. Conversations starting with "I heard that...," spread the stories around the county faster than chickenpox used to spread through the third grade. Some examples:

Legend 1: The county's population is plummeting – people are leaving the county in droves.

Fact: Like many rural Virginia counties, Northampton's population *is* declining. But the devil's in the details. Latest figures from the Weldon Cooper Center at the University of Virginia state that between the 2010 Census and the end of 2014 the county lost 182 persons or 1.4% of its population – a 177 person decline through what is paradoxically termed "natural increase" (more deaths than births) and a net total decline of only 5 persons through "net migration" (more people moving out than into the county). Unlike many other rural counties, **the aging population decline in Northampton is increasingly being replaced by new residents moving into the county.**

Legend 2: The county's workforce is disappearing as jobs disappear.

Fact: According to the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), from 2011 to 2015 the county **workforce *increased* by 1939**, (from 4445 to 6358). In addition to the workforce numbers, according to the IRS, **self-employed business owners increased by 142**, (from 851 to 993). These figures include only owner-operated, income producing firms identified by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

Legend 3: "...the labor force in Northampton County is regional..." – almost half the county workforce, 4202 people, commute to jobs out of the county (quote from the county website's Economic Development page).

Fact: Employment on and off the Shore has always been regional. Current May, 2015, VEC data indicate that **2250 workers (35.4% of the workforce) commute out of Northampton**. Of those, 1266 Northampton residents work in Accomack, many at the chicken processing plants and Wallops; 284 workers commute to Newport News, perhaps taking advantage of recent hiring at the shipyard; and many professionals, business people and others, about 700, commute to the cities of Hampton Roads. According to current data, about **1400 workers commute *into* Northampton** County to fill the available jobs.

Authors' Note. *The out-commute figure on the county website is from a VEC Community Profile, and a printed note of caution accompanies this figure, since a new collection and analysis protocol by the Census Bureau makes comparisons with VEC figures sometimes unreliable. Further research indicates that the new Federal analysis contains synthetic data which conflicts with the actual VEC worker commuting numbers. An employment link that worked on the county web page leads to four-year-old information.*

Legend 4: Businesses continue to close all over the county.

Fact: The reality is that the entire country experienced a recession which hit rural areas particularly hard, and several businesses in Northampton closed. Despite this widespread economic reality, Northampton County has had businesses opening, expanding and surviving. The April, 2015, VEC Community Profile indicates: **31 new businesses in 2012, 42 new businesses in 2013 and 30 new businesses in the first 9 months of 2014 – over 100 new businesses registered.**

Legend 5: Properties keep losing value in the county.

Fact: Property values in parts of the county increased at an unsustainable rate during the mid-2000's, as houses and lots were bought and quickly resold. The real estate bubble burst in 2007 resulting in the inevitable deflation of those speculative values. It's taken years for home and land appraisals to level off at pre-speculation values. However, at the Board of Supervisors' meeting in April, **builders reported increased building activity** and protested the firing of county Building Inspection employees. The industry relies on timely inspections to maintain the progress and coordination of the building projects. Zoning Administrator Melissa Kellam has stated that the **value of building permits is increasing**, showing a shift from renovation to the building of new homes. There are over 5000 approved but undeveloped lots in the county to accommodate those new homes. **Bay Creek has reported $12 million in home construction contracts for 2015**, and building activity is up in several other areas of the county.

Legend 6: Some rezoning opponents want a Special Use Permit for everything.

Fact: Residents opposing the proposed rezoning and who also support Special Use Permits are almost always referring to non-conforming uses, particularly commercial uses in residential neighborhoods. **Homeowners feel they have the right to know and comment on the impacts of non-residential uses in their neighborhoods.** The current Zoning Ordinance does not require Special Use Permits for most commercial uses in Commercial or Business zoning districts.

Legend 7: "I heard the bank across from Food Lion wanted to build on their property but can't because it's zoned Agricultural."

Fact: Those parcels are **zoned Town Edge-Commercial General**. Almost all commercial uses would be allowed there by-right.

See **"Rural Legends,"** *Cont'd on page 5*

Local Juneteenth Celebration

Marks 150th Anniversary of Emancipation Day

Assembled by Sarah Morgan

While many Americans are still at a loss to explain what "Juneteenth" means, in the Aftrican-American communities of Texas and many other states, it is a celebration of increasing importance. Juneteenth, also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day, is the oldest known celebration commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States.

While the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect on January 1, 1863, the freedom promised in the law applied only to slaves in Confederate states. Citizens of Northern and border states were still slave-owning until the passage of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution in 1865. The word Juneteenth is a portmanteau combining "June" and "nineteenth," and has come to represent "a day on which honor and respect is paid for the sufferings of slavery."

Even though news of the emancipation of slaves in the Southern states spread quickly, especially through the southern border states, Texas remained isolated for much of the war. It was not until after Lee's surrender in April, 1865, that Union General Gordon Granger landed at Galveston, Texas, to announcew the end of the war and secure Texas. Among the proclamations he read to the people of Texas was General Order #3:

> *"The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former master and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor. The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages…."*

The reaction to this news quickly went from shock to jubilation. Even with nowhere to go, many now-freed slaves felt that leaving the plantation would be their initial step to real freedom The original celebration is said to have occurred on June 19, 1865, in Galveston, as a result of this belated declaration of freedom for former slaves.

In the years that followed, recounting the memories of that great day in June, 1865, and its festivities served as a motivation for Juneteenth celebrations, which often included brightly-colored clothing and a wide range of activities such as rodeos (it did start in Texas, after all), fishing, barbecuing and baseball. The event also focused on education and self-improvement, too, so guest speakers were included and elders were invited to tell stories of the past.

The local annual Juneteenth Festival has been taking place for over fifteen years, largely due to the efforts of longtime Northampton NAACP leader Jane Cabarrus and the Juneteenth Coalition. They are joined this year by sponsors Optima Family Care, PNC Bank, Sickle Cell Association, Inc, Accomack County Parks & Recreation, and the Eastern Shore Community Services Network.

Local Juneteenth celebrations have been taking place for several years, and have a "community fair" atmosphere with food booths, music, speakers and games. The event will be held Saturday, June 20, at the Eastern Shore Community College in Melfa. The Walk for Sickle Cell starts at 8:30 AM, with other activities beginning at 10 AM. Participants are advised to bring lawn chairs and blankets. Musical offerings include the Shore's own Black Elvis, Snowflake, Dot Giddens, and The New Heavenly Wings over Jordan. In addition, attendees will be treated to performances by the FTC Praise Dancers and the Anointed Angel Praise Dancers.

There will be games, FYI booths, and lots of food available for purchase. General admission is free, but please pre-register for the Walk for Sickle Cell at (757) 442-2139. For additional information, email janecabarrus@aol.com. For FYI booth space, please contact Barbara Boggs (757) 787-3900.

Join your friends and neighbors for a great day of games, music, food, fun, and fellowship. Plan to attend for a good time and a brief recognition of that day in 1865, when Texas slaves learned of their freedom and celebrated in spontaneous jubilation.

And BLACK ELVIS will be there!

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

"Rural Legends," *Cont'd from p. 4*

Legend 8: "I heard a developer wanted to build about 20 homes over on seaside but couldn't because it's zoned Agricultural."

Fact: While most of seaside is currently zoned Agricultural, **there are multiple undeveloped subdivisions platted, some villages and hamlets, and many other platted residential building lots, with no further rezoning needed.** There are many platted parcels east of Route 13, many of which are available for development.

Legends are almost always easier to believe – while the facts take some effort to search out. As more and more citizens are being informed, particularly about rezoning changes, and as the effects of the improving national and state economies start to impact Northampton County, the facts, rather than the legends, will become harder to ignore.

Exec Director's Corner

CBES celebrates past, looks to future

By Donna Bozza, Executive Director

When planning a gathering, whether a family picnic or an organization's annual meeting, you never know how it will turn out. Will Aunt Frieda renew the family feud? Will the dynamics of the meeting make for good interaction? At the end of the day, was the event well-received or a snore-fest?

From the energy in the room at the event and the feedback we continue to receive, it's fair to say the April 28 CBES and Virginia Eastern Shorekeeper Annual Meeting was a success. Ninety-five attendees filled the Sinatra Room at Little Italy Restaurant in Nassawadox as we returned to a more social-networking mode for our meetings. New and familiar faces joined us, including Accomack County Supervisors, the Northampton BOS Chair, Delegate Rob Bloxom and a variety of community leaders.

It was a fruitful interplay of presentations, starting with Shorekeeper Executive Director Jay Ford. Jay expertly launched the event with a rousing declaration: "The waters of the Eastern Shore now have a voice."

As to the CBES portion of the meeting, the night took the grassroots group's journey from an accomplished past, to a challenging present, to a future unfolding with renewed purpose. For only the second time, the Suzanne Wescoat Award was awarded – this time to H. Spencer Murray for his work as a Supervisor, a member of both the Northampton County School Board and the Community Services Board and in the formation of the new Northampton Emergency Services Foundation. Named for CBES founding president, Suzanne's legacy melded that evening with the many who started and sustained CBES through the years, including Jane Cabarrus, Bill Neal, and Vic Schmidt to name just a few. It was a vivid reminder that since its inception, CBES has been firmly rooted in the truth that Economic Success, Natural Resource Preservation and Social Responsibility are interrelated, and all are necessary for a healthy, successful community – a better Eastern Shore. (Please see Murray's remarks about the founding vision of CBES on page 8.)

Putting that into practice for two decades was recently-retired Executive Director Denard Spady. He was recognized by CBES President Arthur Upshur, who thanked Denard for his sometimes thankless roles as the conscience of CBES, historian and parliamentarian, "who provided thoughtful balance and honesty to our organization."

"You often described yourself to others as an 'assistant' to the president of CBES rather than an executive director," said Arthur. "But I want everyone to know that he was a master of leadership – by asking the right questions, by modeling the right behaviors, by leading his presidents gently forward while firmly standing out of the spotlight."

In true Denard-fashion, he quickly took the spotlight off himself and turned it toward several past CBES presidents he served with: Gordon Putnam, Norm Nasson, and Jack Ordeman. "Without their work and energy," he told the crowd, "I honestly don't think CBES would have made it into the 21st century."

Focusing on CBES present circumstances, Arthur gave the membership a candid assessment of its financial challenges with the reality that "the needs of the Shore are not being met by cutting CBES expenses." He shared the reason for the Board's brave decision to create a fulltime CBES. "I think the recent zoning proposals in Northampton highlighted again how much our local government needs citizen involvement and how important CBES role is in researching, informing, and organizing that involvement," Upshur said, adding that CBES work in Accomack had barely begun.

Noting that even in today's era of extreme politics, there was a need to "seek honest and balanced debate," and that resource-restrained local newspapers could no longer be counted on to play that role. "If not CBES, who provides the counterweight needed to balance the broader community's needs and concerns, against those that stand to gain from less balanced rules and policies."

Arthur thanked the many who have contributed to CBES in its recent efforts to buy time as we work on stabilizing the organization with grants, increased membership and fundraisers. The CBES building in Eastville is for sale, he stated, "to focus all our assets more firmly on our mission activities rather than structures. CBES goal to raise $41,000 was amazingly reduced to $12,500 – in under two months, a great confirmation of CBES value to the community," said Arthur. Additional help, big or small, was respectfully requested.

Annual Meeting 2015 was my first rodeo, and I'd like to thank all who attended and those who shared their thoughts and feedback. It's gratifying that many of you share with CBES and Shorekeeper a respect for our past and a firm commitment to work for the Shore's future.

Author's Note. *Space limitations here cannot do justice to a superb presentation by our keynote speaker Virginia Tourism Corporation's Bobbie Walker, "**Green is the New Gold** – Ecotourism on the Shore, Protecting & Priming our Economic Engine." Watch the video on* cbes.org *and explore why "Successful tourism programs are an authentic reflection of the community."* Go to www.cbes.org/events.html

CBES would also like to thank Capeville artist Marty Burgess for his generous donation of "High Tide Hunt," *an exquisite oil painting that was given as this year's Suzanne Wescoat Award. You can find Marty's work on Facebook or by appointment 757-331-1139.*

New members join CBES Board

ShoreLine Staff Report

The CBES membership elected two new Board members at its Annual Meeting in late April.

Martina Coker.

Martina Coker moved to the Eastern Shore with her husband and two cats in 2006. She has been active in local public affairs, serving on the Northampton County Planning Commission for five years and on an *ad hoc* County Emergency Services Task Force. She also serves as an officer of her Homeowner's Association.

Coker has a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from The State University of New York at Brockport and a Masters in Public Administration from the State University of New York at Albany. Her professional experience in Health Administration includes quality management, program management, clinical management and direct patient care.

She cherishes the sense of community and natural beauty of the Eastern Shore. Her interests include kayaking, paddle-boarding, reading, knitting, golf, camping, spending time with her grandchildren and making the Shore a better place to live. "I believe that the best reason to join the CBES Board is to provide [members] *or* [citizens] with factual information about the issues that may affect their lives on the Eastern Shore," she says. Coker is expected to contribute work to the production of *ShoreLine*.

Meriwether Payne.

While born and raised in Norfolk, Meriwether Payne considers herself extremely lucky that her parents loved the Shore enough to purchase a farm in Accomack County when she was three. "I was able to spend many weekends and time in the summer over here as a child," she says.

Payne earned a Biology degree from Randolph Macon Woman's College and spent 12 years in garden center retail in the Norfolk-Virginia Beach area. In 1992, she was able to make a permanent move to the family farm in Locustville and be a part of starting a successful wholesale nursery, The Ivy Farm.

In 2007, after nearly 30 years in the horticulture industry, Payne moved on to work at several interesting jobs – "the coolest was working as a Shorebird Technician on the barrier islands, collecting data on nesting Plovers and Oyster-catchers" – before she earned her "6-pack" Captains license and started a charter service based in Wachapreague, Seaside Ecotours, LLC. "I love being able to 'work' out in the Virginia Coast Reserve and share the Shore's pristine beauty and nature with the folks I carry on my boat. I feel that CBES helps with my goal of helping to preserve our nature for our future generations."

Why should someone join CBES? Payne replies, "My experience as a CBES member has been nothing but positive – I care about preserving the natural beauty of the Shore in economically viable ways, and I love the info I get from the newsletter, *ShoreLine*. I've always enjoyed getting together with fun, like-minded folks for the annual Between the Waters Bike Tour that celebrates both our natural and cultural beauty."

The New Board.

This year's Annual Meeting saw the retirement of four Board members – Lynn Badger, Graham Driscoll, former president Nancy Holcomb and Barbara Johnsen – and the re-election of several members. All members serve a two-year term. Officers are scheduled to be elected from among the Board members at the May meeting of the Board.

2015 CBES Board of Directors

(Term)

Martina Coker (15 – 17)
Eleanor Gordon (14 – 16)
Gene Hampton (14 – 16)
Jack Humphreys (14 – 16)
Charles Kellam (15 – 17)
Josh Lattimore (15 – 17)
Bo Lusk (14 – 16)
Susan Mastyl (15 – 17)
Jack Ordeman (14 – 16)
Meriweather Payne (15 – 17)
Mike Peirson (15 – 17)
Sally Richardson (15 – 17)
Arthur Upshur (14 – 16)
Margaret VanClief (15 – 17)

Farewell to the Pig Roast

By Denard Spady

This year marks the first since 1988 that has not seen a CBES Pig Roast. In the late 1980s, the event began as a "thank you" to all those who had worked so hard to establish CBES. Local public officials were invited, all the work was done by volunteers, the event was well-received – and it grew in popularity.

At its peak, the Pig Roast boasted as many as 600 to 700 attendees. For many years in the 80s and 90s, it was the place to be on Memorial Day weekend. For college students home for the summer it was the first party of the season. For other young adults it was the place to be – to be seen and to meet others. For CBES, it became a reasonably good money-maker, yielding as much as $6500 in profit.

As the event moved into the early 2000s, it evolved. The young adult attendees of the 90s married and had families – and for many of them the Pig Roast became the place to take their young families. Kiddie attendance skyrocketed. Parents and children (of all ages!) delighted in the Hay Ride, the Hula Hoop Contest, and the wonderful live music.

But adult attendance lagged. Volunteer help became more difficult to find, which has also been the case for many other organizations. Caterers came on the scene, with differing results. Competition from other events became a real challenge. Several changes in approach, including a date change last year, did not result in renewed attendance. Although the event never lost money, its profits waned. Many on the CBES Board of Directors became disillusioned with the event – too much work for too little profit.

Finally, in this year of CBES evolution, with Board changes and staff changes, it was decided to recognize reality and let the event die. Longtime supporters of the event may be nostalgic about fun times at the Wescoats' packing shed, which was dolled up for the occasion with hay bales and strings of lights.

More recent attendees, who don't remember the Pig Roast at its best, may celebrate its passing. Some of us – Jeff Walker, Roger Buyrn, Felton Sessoms, Robin

See **"Pig Roast,"** *Cont'd on page 8*

The Founding Vision of CBES

At the recent CBES Annual Meeting, Spencer Murray received the Suzanne Wescoat Award, an occasional award by CBES to recognize contributions to the Eastern Shore community by an elected or appointed official. The first recipient of the Wescoat Award was Robin Rich-Coates of the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District.

Murray's remarks paid tribute to Wescoat, the founding president of Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore:

> "First and foremost, her vision was that CBES must be inclusive – all voices heard and with a seat at the table. She knew she could not make everyone happy, but with her warm, welcoming smile, she knew that she could make them feel valued. CBES was to vision a better Eastern Shore for all citizens of Northampton and Accomack."

Murray worked with Suzanne in the early days of CBES and spoke of the development of the organization's fundamental principles:

> "We agreed that CBES must have a ***"pro"*** agenda, but that is made difficult when there is so much on the agenda believed to drive not a better Eastern Shore but is indeed a threat to a better Eastern Shore. We have what we need for a better Eastern Shore – the preservation of a unique place that has kept many here for generations and brought many others. We agreed that it was time to stop looking for some outside force to "save" us. In fact, the relentless pursuit of what we did not have at the possible expense of what we have was a threat to a better Eastern Shore. This is ongoing even now."

Suzanne Wescoat's vision for CBES

- All must be provided a seat at the table.
- The CBES agenda must include and support "pro" advocacy through research, dialogue and information.
- To be better, we must not destroy what we already have, but build upon it.
- A community joined together in a spirit of self-help is the most effective way to continually create a better Eastern Shore for all.

N.B. At this writing, it has become known to *ShoreLine* that Spencer Murray is a candidate for the Northampton Board of Supervisors in the November election. The decision to make the Suzanne Wescoat Award to Murray was made before his candidacy was known to CBES. The award was not intended in any way as an endorsement of Murray's candidacy – only as an acknowledgment of his past contributions to the community. It continues to be the policy of the CBES Board of Directors not to support or oppose any candidate for office.

WILLIAM & MARY
VIMS
VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE
SCHOOL OF MARINE SCIENCE

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science Eastern Shore Laboratory will hold their public seminar series on the first Wednesday of the month. We hope you will be able to join us.

"The Role of Science in Society's Environmental Concerns"

Dr. Richard Snyder

Director, Eastern Shore Laboratory

Virginia Institute of Marine Science

At the interface of science and society, the use of scientific information in polarized political situations threatens scientific credibility and ultimately the value of science to society. This presentation will examine the nature of scientific information, the public's reactions to environmental issues, and why scientists must be careful to safeguard scientific credibility within the discourse that impacts actions on environmental issues.

Wednesday, June 3, 2015

7:30 PM

Virginia Institute of Marine Science

Wachapreague, Virginia

The seminar is free and open to everyone. Seating capacity is 60 people and space is available on a first come-first serve basis. Coffee and light refreshments will be provided. For further information call VIMS at 787-5816.

"Pig Roast," *Cont'd from p. 7*

Hickman, Bill Neal, Lacy Dick, Margaret Trail, Phyllis Tyndall, Norm Nasson, me and many others – who had to spend so many hours in preparation and cleanup – may be more sanguine about discontinuing the event, if not exactly pleased about its passing. But for all of us at CBES, the Pig Roast represented the best in community events – friends and neighbors coming together to create a gathering that they enjoyed and that has defined CBES for many residents and visitors to the Shore.

Keeping Track

Educate to Compete. The "Northampton County Competitive Assessment" report, which the Board of Supervisors commissioned from Investment Consulting Associates and received ten months ago, states that "The county should concentrate on workforce development starting with K-12 education focus through advanced adult education," and "Having a qualified workforce to fill available jobs is key since the labor force pool in Northampton County is small."

A major theme running through the "Competitive Assessment" report is the fact that the availability of workers who have acquired the necessary skills, knowledge and work ethic to meet employers' requirements will be essential to raise the community's economic status. The report makes numerous recommendations for initiatives and investments that would be beneficial to Northampton County, but none is more important than education. And yet, none of the report's recommendations about education programs have been implemented.

The report makes no recommendations about changes in zoning regulations, which have been the principal concern of the Supervisors and their staff. The consultants advised the Supervisors to concentrate on workforce development – education for good jobs. It's sound advice. The Supervisors commissioned it, we paid for it, they should now accept it and act upon it. The full text of the "Northampton County Competitive Assessment is available on the CBES website. It makes interesting reading. Go to: www.cbes.org/meeting-info--studies.html

Order or Disorder. There's an art to running a meeting smoothly – courtesy and fairness mixed with the leader's stability and composure. Whether it's an elected body, a civic organization, a fire company auxiliary or a Boy Scout troop, the same courtesy and fairness, both to the participants and to the public, is the mark of an organized chairman.

Lack of order at public meetings serves to weaken the confidence of the attending public in the government process. When the public is allowed to speak from their seats, when a speaker is allowed repeated trips to the microphone, when the Chair neglects the "order and decorum" of the meeting – these things undermine confidence in the process.

Troubling, too, can be a lack of good process among Board members themselves – particularly the over-used attempt to stop debate on a motion by a member calling out, "Call for the question." To close debate, a member should wait to be recognized and then move for a vote to shut down debate and move to call for the Question.

Meetings of the Northampton Board of Supervisors are governed by the Code of Virginia, the *Virginia County Supervisor's Manual* published by the Virginia Association of Counties and *Robert's Rules of Order for Small Organizations*. *Robert's Rules for Small Organizations* is often used for organizations of 12 or fewer members. These rules are less formal than those for larger organizations and require no seconds to motions. However, meetings still need to be orderly and fair. Debate and sometimes disputes are a part of democratic process. Dealing fairly with contention and disagreement is the responsibility of the Chairman.

Selling Oysters in Oyster. In May an applicant stood in front of the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission and several county staff members, and said he couldn't sell oysters in Oyster. Strange as it sounds, he was half right. On the one hand, by-right seafood sales in a Waterfront Village list clam, crab and fish – but not oysters. Unfortunate oversight, but easily fixed. On the other hand, the zoning ordinance permits "other retail establishments" in a Waterfront Village, selling oysters included, either by-right or with a Minor Special Use permit, depending on size.

What a golden opportunity for the Board, the Planning Commission or the county staff to explain to the man that he could set up a 2,500 square foot oyster business the next morning – and that the county would immediately start the process to add the word "oyster" to the permitted uses. What a business-friendly moment that could have been.

But the man's comments were met with silence by the county, and the absurd assumption that no oyster could be sold in Oyster became another "Rural Legend." *(See article, "Rural Legends – Rural Facts" page 4.)*

Detach and return to CBES, PO Box 882, Eastville, VA 23347 • Join online at www.cbes.org

CBES Membership 2015 ❑New ❑Renewal

For Office Use

I would like to receive *ShoreLine* by email: ❑Yes ❑No

Name_____ Phone _____

Address _____ email _____

City _____State _____Zip _____ - _____

My volunteer interests are: _____

Enclosed is $_____ for the following:

* _____ Regular Membership (includes *ShoreLine*) $ 25

* _____ Life Membership (includes *ShoreLine*) $ 500

* _____ Optional additional tax-deductible contribution of $ _____

* _____ *ShoreLine* subscription without CBES membership $ 25

For our membership records, please tell us how many there are in your home 16 years or older: _____

Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore
P. O. Box 882
Eastville, VA 23347-0882

Address Service Requested

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW!

Nonprofit Organization
U. S. Postage Paid
Eastville, VA
Permit No. 8

SHORELINE

Community Calendar - May 2015

Note: Please verify times and places prior to attending meetings.

CBES and Other Activities

June 3	**VIMS Public Seminar** 7:30 PM, Wachapreague
June 8	**CBES Exec. Committee** 5 PM, CBES Office
June 11	**Shorekeeper Meeting** 3 PM, Barrier Islands Center, Machipongo
June 16	**ES Groundwater Summit** 6:30 - 8 PM, Metompkin ES Parksley
June 16	**CBES Board Meeting** 7 PM, Eastville
June 18	**UVA Seminar Series** 7 PM, Oyster

Accomack County

June 3	**Board of Zoning Appeals** 10 AM, Sup. Chambers
June 10	**Planning Commission** 7 PM, BOS Chambers
June 16	**School Board** 7 PM, BOS Chambers
June 17	**Board of Supervisors** 6 PM, BOS Chambers
June 18	**Wetlands Board** 10 AM, Sup. Chambers

Northampton County

June 1	**Board of Zoning Appeals** 1 PM, Conference Room
June 2	**Planning Commission** 7 PM, Sup. Chambers
June 9	**Board of Supervisors** 7 PM, Sup. Chambers
June 16	**Public Service Authority** 7 PM, Conference Room
June 17	**Wetlands Board** TBA, Conference Room
June 23	**School Board** 5:30 PM, Sup. Chambers
June 23	**BOS Work Session** 7 PM, Sup. Chambers

www.cbes.org