

CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EASTERN SHORE **SHORELINE**

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Community on the Eastern Shore of Virginia*

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Rise in Poultry Houses Discussed at Board of Supervisors Meeting

ShoreLine Staff Report

At the Accomack Board of Supervisors meeting on August 17, concern about the size and number of the poultry houses under review in the county was raised during the public comment period and was discussed among the supervisors, although not part of the agenda.

Lori Graham, whose property adjoins the farm where 24 new poultry houses are slated to be built, said that she is a supporter of agriculture – “I used to make a living as a dairy farm manager, and I have friends with poultry operations” – but this is a “game changer,” in her words. “Wicomico County is considering a 13-house operation as a ‘mega-farm.’ If 24 houses is our baseline, where do we go from here?” she asked. “This could

well be a life-changing event for me,” she added.

Sue Mastyl of Harborton pointed out that the county had approved the new zoning ordinance in February as “phase 1, to get some restrictions, especially setbacks, in place before these applications were approved. After that, phase 2 would address the more complicated issues of health and the environment, including surface waters and groundwater.” However, this work is on hold until the VIMS mass balance study is completed. (See pg. 6) “Unfortunately,” she noted, “most of these houses will be built or at least permitted by then.” She also referenced the Board’s January

See Poultry, cont’d on p. 4



Much More Than Birds! Eastern Shore Birding & Wildlife Festival

Submitted by
Festival Staff

You don’t need to be a bird nerd to have a spectacular wildlife experience right here on the Eastern Shore this fall. The 24th Annual Eastern Shore Birding and Wildlife Festival provides the perfect opportunity to experience the peak of fall bird migration and the wonders of wildlife in our pristine coastal environment.

Because of its unique location surrounded by the Chesapeake Bay to the west and the Atlantic Ocean to the east, the southern tip of the Delmarva Peninsula provides a natural “funnel” effect for migrating hawks, warblers and other songbirds in the fall.

See Birding Festival, cont’d on p. 6



Two of five new poultry houses being constructed on Hopeton Road (route 316) just north of Parksley.

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Moving Into Town...

...where everybody knows your name

An editorial by Mary Miller

Virginia has 190 incorporated towns. The Eastern Shore has 10% of them. Accomack holds the state record with 14 towns, and Northampton is tied for third place with 6. Belle Haven, split neatly in half, is claimed by both counties. The towns range in population from the largest in each county, Chincoteague and Exmore, to the smallest, Keller and Eastville.

Why So Many Towns?

The Eastern Shore has one of the longest settlement histories in the state, and formation of the towns reflects its 400 years of history – of industry, courts, commerce, governance and transportation. County seats in each county were established and grew into towns with courts, jails and government offices. The stagecoach from Wilmington, DE to Eastville stopped in Belle Haven. The 17th century charter town of Onancock and the land patent

area of Wachapreague grew and flourished on bay and ocean waterfronts.

And then the Pennsylvania Railroad came. Planned towns like Parksley and Cape Charles were incorporated and quickly flourished. Smaller towns like Cheriton and



Small towns may lack large budgets but replace that deficit with the DIY mentality of earlier generations.

Melfa became commercial centers on the rail line. And almost every town needed a bank, a general mercantile store, a pharmacy, a restaurant, and an inn or hotel. By the early 20th century, the Shore had more towns than most other areas of Virginia. And each town wanted its own government –and each government wanted its own budget, its own leaders and its own set of rules.

Shore Counties Fit Right into America's Rural Tradition

The American rural landscape is home to more than 27,000 small towns and villages, thousands with fewer than 1,000 residents. What they lack in resources, small towns gain in natural advantages. Interdependence often develops naturally within small populations and governance can be simple and straightforward. Small towns translate into more self-reli-

ance – doing with less up front and taking more ownership of their place in a larger community. Planners and national agencies working in rural America (i.e. EPA, USDA, Local Government Institute, etc.) have concluded that in many cases, for small towns, resilience may be a better strategy than growth – the ability to know how to use available resources for the community's well-being.

Smaller jurisdictions typically lack large budgets and resources, so many replace that deficit with the DIY mentality of earlier generations. Projects can grow at a slow but frugal pace, fueled by the “communities of interest” so evident in small towns. Elected officials are neighbors, fellow church members and community volunteers – often wearing

three or more hats. Towns' residents are best able to make decisions about what they want, what they actually need, what they can afford, and how to pay for it.

Should Rural Towns Extend Their Boundaries?

Northampton County, especially, has seen its towns expand and grow.

- **Cape Charles** expanded to more than double its size in support of a large planned golf community. Infrastructure was expanded, services were extended, more revenue was needed and the Town continues to contend with its growing pains. But recently, its commercial district has flourished and diversified, its housing stock has been rehabilitated and it has become popular with tourists.

See Moving, cont'd on p. 3

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Editorial Board

Donna Bozza	Gene Hampton
Sue Mastyl	Mary Miller
John T. Ordeman	Arthur Upshur

Editorial Advisor Emeritus

F. Victor Schmidt

Staff Writers

Hali Plourde-Rogers Dr. Mike Peirson

Production Editor and Design

Sarah Morgan, *Savoy Studio*

How to reach CBES

P.O. Box 882, Eastville, VA 23347

(757) 678-7157

info@cbes.org • www.cbes.org

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Moving, cont'd from p. 2

- **Exmore** expanded its boundaries to include major highway development. Existing infrastructure was strained, and serving development growth became a major concern. But the Town made hard decisions, installed new leadership, and is working with USDA to provide the in-town infrastructure its citizens and businesses need – and can afford.
- **Cheriton** has had not one, but two boundary adjustments. Neither one has resulted in increased commercial or residential growth. The Town had little infrastructure to provide to its expanded areas, and little tax revenue to pay for more services.
- **Eastville** has tried for over a decade to expand its boundaries to the extent of its water lines. The water infrastructure service dates from the mid-20th century, extends to diverse neighborhoods around the Town, and is solely the Town's responsibility. The county has consistently declined to agree to extend the Town's boundaries – until now. The Board of Supervisors recently voted to send the matter to Public Hearing.

When towns expand and include the residential areas around them, inclusion follows, and new voices emerge.

So Moving into Town ...

...might happen for many of us who have long thought of ourselves as being part of the Eastville community. There's Eastville Station, formerly a busy stop on the Pennsylvania Railroad. There are streetlights there, installed by a Street Light Committee formed decades ago by residents. Now the last remaining Committee member continues to fund the street lights for her entire neighborhood. Soon her street, and its lights, might be part of Eastville. Two mobile home parks at either end of town will be included in the new town limits, both served by Town water, and both providing low-cost housing for residents. And there is the historic Bethel AME Church community, also on the town water line – many of its members signed letters asking to be included in Eastville, after the county's last counter-offer had removed their neighborhood from the proposed Town boundaries. It will now be included.

The New/Old Tradition...

"Small town America is on the verge of a Renaissance," says Ann Daigle, an urban planner in rural Louisiana, writing in *Public Square Journal* in February, 2016. Building and expanding community in a small town tends to be a "shared project," and since change affects everyone, residents can take charge personally and see visible results. When towns expand and include the residential areas around them, inclusion follows, and new voices emerge. The new voices might be people who have resided in the

area for years, but haven't been included in the "town." Sometimes they're newcomers, and sometimes they're the neighbors who've always been active in the fire companies, recreational activities and local churches. Their participation as new residents can energize the newly expanded town.

...of American Self-reliance

As rural areas are abandoned by providers of goods and services, large chain stores, hospitals, banks, etc., the roles of rural towns and their citizens may be returning to a past tradition – self-reliance. Town residents can plan for the community facilities and services they need, and how to afford them. Instead of "top down" management of communities by a larger jurisdiction, priorities can be established by the towns – a new fire station or a waste water package plant, a playground, community recreation field or a town office renovation, a downtown parking lot or more sidewalks, promoting and marketing the town's unique features or focusing on specific local needs.

The larger jurisdictions, the counties, can be freed up for their major, state-mandated responsibilities – overall public health and safety, planning and budgeting for growth, improving and maintaining the school system, protecting resources, solid waste management, the court system, and dealing with VDOT and other state and federal agencies. The counties are responsible for those essential services we all need, and we all are taxed by the county to pay for them – whether we live on farms, in subdivisions or in towns. The towns are learning to rely on themselves for the other day-to-day services their residents need.



Historic houses and unique features make small towns attractive to visitors, residents and prospective residents alike.

Poultry, cont'd from p. 1

13 work session, during which Rich Morrison, Planning Director for the County, noted that the ordinance has no limit on the total number of houses in any one location. At that session, the Board chose to leave the ordinance as is, since any changes would have required going back to the Planning Commission.

Ms. Mastyl urged the Board to “consider asking the Planning Commission to re-examine these issues now, while there is still time to address these issues.”

Supervisor Donald Hart, whose district includes the location for the

24 poultry houses, as well as several other sites for new poultry houses, said he “didn’t think there would be that many” houses in one location, and that he is “very concerned” about these issues.


He made a motion for the Planning Commission to take another look, to see if “there should be some limitation on the number of houses.” With much discussion regarding procedural issues, and a lack of support from the other supervisors, he amended the motion to have staff report to the Board at the next meeting; the motion was passed unanimously.

As has been pointed out previously, the number of applications for poultry houses in Accomack County has mushroomed over the last year.

298 and Counting

In 2014, applications were approved for a total of 21 poultry houses, with one additional house pending. In 2015, 67 poultry houses were approved, with pending applications for an addition 12 houses. So far in 2016, applications for 43 houses have been approved, and applications are pending for an additional 154 poultry houses.

If all the pending applications are approved, this will add 298 poultry houses in less than three years. Before this surge, the number of active poultry houses was estimated at 308.

Consequently, the number of poultry houses will double and, since the new houses are larger and many are on lands that have not been previously used for poultry farming, the impact to the environment and the community will be much greater. 

PEDAL TO PROTECT THE SHORE



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24th Between the Waters Bike Tour Saturday, October 22, 2016

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Northampton County Education Foundation Continues Tutoring Program

During the last academic year, Northampton High School’s basketball coach, Wayne Bell, required tutoring for all his players after school and before practice. All 26 players remained eligible to play – all season! To support this effort in the coming year, as well as other special extra-curricular events such as field trips, speakers, clubs, and arts programs, please contact Andy Teeling, Northampton County Education Foundation, at 757-710-8893, or email him at aeteeling@verizon.net.

Sponsor-a-Road Pilot Project

Submitted by Alan Silverman for WasteWatchers of the Eastern Shore of Virginia

WasteWatchers, The Eastern Shore of Virginia's Keep America Beautiful affiliate, has worked for several years to promote volunteer litter-removal through the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT's) Adopt-a-Highway (AaH) program. The present system of litter removal includes:

- Formal road adoptions by groups and individuals under Adopt-a-Highway
- Sheriff's Work Crew: a program which enables offenders to get a day off their jail sentences for each day spent de-littering
- Probationers sentenced to community service: a Department of Public Works (DPW) staffer assigns the probationers and monitors the work.
- "Lone Rangers": volunteers who pick up trash, generally along roads near their homes.
- The litter vacuum cleaner operated by the Accomack Department of Public Works.
- VDOT contractors who mow and de-litter Routes 13, 175, and a few other roads.

These efforts are not coordinated and are insufficient – too many roads remain littered. Several states, but not Virginia, encourage the sponsorship of roadway cleanup. The sponsor – a business, civic group, or individual – pays a contractor who removes litter from the sponsored roadway segment. Sponsorships are acknowledged by road signs. Writing a check to a sponsorship program provides businesses the opportunity to mitigate directly any litter caused by their products, or less directly, their customers.

WasteWatchers has worked on this problem for several years with local VDOT management and VDOT staff in Richmond, with the result that a pilot project for sponsored litter removal is being initiated on the Eastern Shore. We need litter removal on the byways of our Shore, but the sponsors will probably want recognition road signs on Rt. 13 and Rt. 175. Under an innovative notion that is consistent with applicable regulations, sponsorship funds will be applied to where the litter is, and the recognition will be where the traffic is.

VDOT will retain control over certain standards and regulations but is not a party to the actual contract for litter removal. WasteWatchers has no expertise in contracting and contracts management, but already had an agreement in place with the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) to promote recycling and litter reduction. With the full support of its Board, A-NPDC conducted a procurement and vendor selection process and became the counterparty to a contract with an experienced nationwide litter removal company with the improbably long name "Adopt-a-Highway Litter Removal Services




Sponsors of road segment litter removal services will be recognized along busy roads by road signs such as this, regardless of the location of the sponsored road segment.

of America." WasteWatchers has a supporting role to A-NPDC with regard to this contract.

This service provider already has contracts in our area; trained supervisory and labor staff are in place just to our north. The project will begin in northern Accomack and expand southward, eventually encompassing the entire Eastern Shore. Once enough sponsorships are booked, local labor will be hired and trained.

A starting list of over 50 chronically littered road segments in Accomack County was created by the Accomack Department of Public Works. Volunteers Bill Nelson, a mapmaker, and Jill Wilt, who is skilled with Accomack and Excel, used road-segment data tools for the contractor's marketing and scheduling. Chambers of Commerce and others are working to identify potential sponsors for the contractor, who is now marketing the program to entities with which it has relationships elsewhere. We expect to have the locations for the first acknowledgment signs approved by VDOT and to see the signs in place soon.

Wastewatchers plans to adjust the cleanup list quarterly to optimize the results, and will audit the performance of the contractor using a Keep America Beautiful tool we have used here for three years to monitor sample segments of the roads in both counties. We will coordinate with existing programs to avoid duplication of effort, and we hope to be able to show improvements without using tax dollars. The real estate and tourism industries should benefit from the cleaner environment, and roads will be less hazardous because drainage ditches should have less clogging by litter, which will reduce standing water and flooding.

Entities and individuals interested in sponsoring specific roads or adding to a general pool of funds should contact Paige Woods (paige@adoptahighway.net) for details. 

Riverside Announces Northampton County Health Services


By *ShoreLine* Staff

In a letter to state Senator Frank Wagner, Virginia Beach, Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital Vice President/Administrator John Peterman made known Riverside's plans for future health services facilities in Northampton County. County Board of Supervisors (BOS) Chair Spencer Murray received a copy of the letter.

In their Certificate of Public Need application to the Virginia Department of Health, Riverside Health Services provided assurance that it would continue to provide services along the lines of an urgent care center "closer to residents of the lower Eastern Shore." However, Riverside's current description of that urgent care is a primary care doctor's office in Nassawadox which will be open for longer hours.

However, this is not the accepted definition of urgent care. Professional organizations state criteria for an urgent care facility: accepts walk-in patients during business hours, is open seven days a week, has on-site diagnostic equipment including x-ray and phlebotomy, and is able to treat a broad spectrum of illnesses and injuries and perform minor medical procedures. Ambulances cannot transport patients to either primary care or urgent care facilities under any circumstances – they must transport only to an Emergency Care facility.

Peterman's letter goes on to say that the potential of adding radiological services at the future Nassawadox office is being evaluated. He voiced concern that Saturday hours at primary care offices in Cape Charles and Nassawadox might prove unsuccessful and be discontinued. He concluded with the statement that an additional Emergency Department provider on the Shore would jeopardize the "financial viability of [Riverside's] existing services, including our new hospital."


Northampton Board of Supervisors Chair Murray has stated repeatedly that the county does not have a primary care problem – it is well served by current providers. The need is for Emergency Services. When the hospital relocates, ambulances will need to carry many Northampton patients an additional 18 miles to Onley or across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel to a Sentara hospital. Turn-around times for the ambulances are projected to be at least an hour. In a public statement on August 9, Murray stated that the county would work with any provider who would establish Emergency Services in Northampton. 

Mass Balance Study Delayed

To Focus on Effects of Poultry Increases


A Mass Balance Study, focusing on the nutrient capacity and other poultry issues for Accomack and Northampton Counties, is being conducted by Dr. Mark Reiter and Dr. Richard A. Snyder of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science.

This study is part of the Delmarva Land and Litter Challenge. Due in part to the number of stakeholders, the Delmarva report has been delayed until the fall.

Once the Delmarva Mass Balance Study is completed, the VIMS study can proceed. The Accomack County Board of Supervisors has said that these data will be used as part of their examination of the health and environmental effects of the increase in the number and size of poultry houses in the county. 

Birding Festival, cont'd from p. 1

The Shore is a serious HOT SPOT for birders. However, the opportunity for spotting rare birds is only part of what the Festival offers. This festival is a chance for all outdoor enthusiasts to get out and immerse themselves in nature – with expert guides to handle all the logistics. There are opportunities for photography, beach walking, shelling, island hopping, butterflies, dragonflies, historic gardens, nighttime owl prowls, tram tours and more.

Sit back and enjoy a boat trip to the barrier islands, or get in a kayak and do some paddling to remote wetlands. Visit sites not ordinarily accessible to the public and learn from the experienced nature guides and wildlife experts who lead the trips. With over 95 boat trips, kayak tours, hikes, garden tours, workshops, exhibits, family fun events, and a keynote presentation by Emily Jo (EJ) Williams, former Migratory Bird Chief for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, you are sure to find something to pique your interest! 

Birding Festival Headquarters:

Sunset Beach Resort, 32246 Lankford Hwy, Cape Charles

**Trips/tours take place throughout the Eastern Shore
from Kiptopeke to Chincoteague.**

Dates:

Thurs-Sun, October 6-9

www.esvabirdingfestival.com


State Increases AFD Land Values in Northampton County

ShoreLine Staff Report

The State Land Evaluation and Advisory Council (SLEAC) “was created in 1973 with the mandate to estimate the use value of eligible land for each jurisdiction participating in the use value taxation program.” Northampton’s Ag-Forestal Districts (AFDs) are eligible lands. A complex formula for the SLEAC use-value includes local reports of crop values, pre-harvest costs, harvest costs, fixed costs, agricultural use vs. forested land, baseline data from the most recent USDA Agricultural Census, flood risk and other variables.

The 2016 assessment model is based on data ending in 2014. The result is an increased SLEAC land assessment for most AFD parcels, even though county farmland real estate assessments generally decreased.

At the invitation of the Virginia Farm Bureau, a presentation by Virginia Tech Extension professionals explaining Virginia’s Use-value Assessment Program was made in Eastville on March 16, 2016.

County AFDs will continue to receive tax relief based on the new SLEAC assessments, in return for a 10-year commitment to continue agricultural or forestal operations. To access the March presentation, go to: [http://www.usevalue.agecon.vt.edu/myweb3/Presentations/Northampton_usevalue%20process%20\(Mar%2016%202016\)_Fnl.pdf](http://www.usevalue.agecon.vt.edu/myweb3/Presentations/Northampton_usevalue%20process%20(Mar%2016%202016)_Fnl.pdf) 

We’re looking for a few good pens – and the people to operate them. Your mission: writing articles for *ShoreLine*, monthly or occasionally. Liberal benefits, no salary. Please contact Sarah Morgan at savoystudio@gmail.com for more information.

In Memory of Giles Upshur Jr.

We are saddened by the passing of Giles Upshur, Jr. in Onancock on July 26, 2016, at age 92. Giles’ legacy answered the question once posed by Martin Luther King, Jr.: “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’”


Not only did he serve his country in his professional life but upon returning to the Shore, his retirement was dedicated to making the Eastern Shore a better place for so many of its citizens.

From one of the oldest Shore families, Giles grew up and graduated from high school in Eastville and enrolled at Virginia Military Institute (VMI) during World War II, choosing the Navy as his branch of service. His naval career spanned all the major conflicts of his era.

The Shore was always in Giles’ heart, so not long after he retired as a Captain in the Navy in 1971, he returned to serve the community. He accepted the newly created job of Executive Director of the Eastern Shore Community Services Board (ESCSB). During the 13 years he served on the ESCSB board, he helped Dr. Belle Fears found both Eastern Shore Rural Health and the Association for Retarded Citizens.

His commitment to community included being a long serving vestry member at Christ Church in Eastville, as well as an active board member of the Historical Society and Hospice, later volunteering extensively at the Northampton-Accomack Memorial Hospital.

He was a member of the Northampton County Planning Commission, a steady and respected leader during the tumultuous times when the county was ill-prepared for its early real estate booms.

Giles’ values aligned with CBES mission; he was an early supporter, and his support never waned. CBES is deeply grateful that the Upshur family has designated CBES as an organization where memorial gifts can be made. To donate to CBES in memory of Giles, checks can be made to CBES, P.O. Box 882, Eastville, VA 23347. Contributions can also be made online at www.cbes.org. 



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SHORELINE

Community Calendar - September 2016

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

CBES and Other Activities

- Sept 7** **VIMS Public Seminar**
7:30 PM, Wachapreague
- Sept 8** **Shorekeeper Meeting***
3 PM, Barrier Islands Center
- Sept 13** **CBES Exec. Committee**
5 PM, CBES Office
- Sept 20** **CBES Board Meeting**
7:00 PM, Eastville
- Sept 20** **ES Groundwater Committee**
10 AM, Accomac

Accomack County

- Sept 7** **Board of Zoning Appeals**
10 AM, Sup. Chambers
- Sept 14** **Planning Commission**
7 PM, BOS Chambers
- Sept 15** **Wetlands Board**
10 AM, Sup. Chambers
- Sept 20** **School Board**
7 PM, BOS Chambers
- Sept 21** **Board of Supervisors**
5 PM, BOS Chambers

Northampton County

- Sept 6** **Board of Zoning Appeals**
Time TBA, Conference Room
- Sept 6** **Planning Commission**
7 PM, Sup. Chambers
- Sept 13** **Board of Supervisors**
7 PM, Sup. Chambers
- Sept 21** **Wetlands Board**
TBA, Conference Room
- Sept 26** **BOS Work Session**
5 PM, Sup. Chambers
- Sept 27** **School Board**
5:30 PM, Sup. Chambers

** Alternating between the ES Chamber of
Commerce and the Barrier Islands Center*

www.cbes.org