

CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EASTERN SHORE

SHORELINE

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

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Number 4

The Rest of the Story
(See page 1)

The Last Election
(See page 2)

Northampton County Board of Supervisors Retreat
(See page 4)

Who's Minding the Store?
(See page 5)

No Stranger to the Shore
(See page 6)

Tourism is Big Business on the Shore
(See page 7)

CBES Letter to the Northampton Board of Supervisors
(See page 9)

Community Calendar
(See page 10)

2014 CBES/Shorekeeper Annual Meeting
Nandua High School, Onley
April 15 at 7 PM

The Rest of the Story...a few more details

By Mary Miller

Paul Harvey, a mid-20th Century reporter and radio commentator, would often end his broadcasts with a secondary feature full of details left out of a main storyline – “**The Rest of the Story.**” The Northampton County Development Department’s proposed Zoning Code revisions presentation on March 11, 2014, left more than a few speakers stating that “the devil’s in the details,” as they commented during the Public Hearing. But which details were the speakers wondering about?

The Staff presentation included many charts and numbers that were filled with details selected by Staff. “**The Rest of the Story**” below includes some of the details left out of the presentation.

- **County rezoning:** remove Chesapeake Bay Protection Act safeguards from the seaside and replace it with a county Conservation District comprised of a 100-foot strip along the waterfront.
 - “**The Rest of the Story**”: a mapped Conservation District, like any other District on the Zoning Map, can be altered, reduced, given variances or removed entirely by a majority vote of the Board of Supervisors.
- **County rezoning:** Special Use Permits are “time consuming, expensive” and create uncertainty for the applicant; most are being removed.
 - “**The Rest of the Story**”: Permits requiring notice to residential property owners help protect property values and shield owners from adverse impacts of non-residential uses, e.g., a research facility, campground, waste water facility, commercial, institutional or other high impact uses in Residential districts.
- **County rezoning:** Only 0.7% of county land is zoned Commercial/Industrial.
 - “**The Rest of the Story**”: county planning documents indicate that there are nearly 700 acres of undeveloped Industrial and Commercial parcels in the county – most parcels in Cape Charles and Exmore have infrastructure in place – these parcels were not included in county figures.
- **County rezoning:** remove Mobile Home Park District – currently a planned neighborhood created through a floating district – which has guidelines and uses already established
 - “**The Rest of the Story**”: applicants will now need both a rezoning process and a Planned Unit Development site plan to create a mobile home park.
- **County rezoning:** removes Waterfront Village/Hamlet designations.
 - “**The Rest of the Story**”: abandon the Vision Statements of Willis Wharf and Oyster, which are included in the county’s Comprehensive Plan, and remove water-dependent use protections for the working waterfronts required by the aquaculture industry.
- **County rezoning:** increases residential density by right.
 - “**The Rest of the Story**”: removes the Affordable Housing Density bonus and eliminate any low cost housing requirement in exchange for increased density.
- **County rezoning:** projected buildout – proposed zoning would more than double the number of dwelling units – with a projected population increase of 42%.
 - “**The Rest of the Story**”: allows new rezonings to Planned Unit Development (PUD) Districts with no limits on density, lot size or structures, and no requirement for

See “**The Rest of the Story,**” Cont’d on page 3

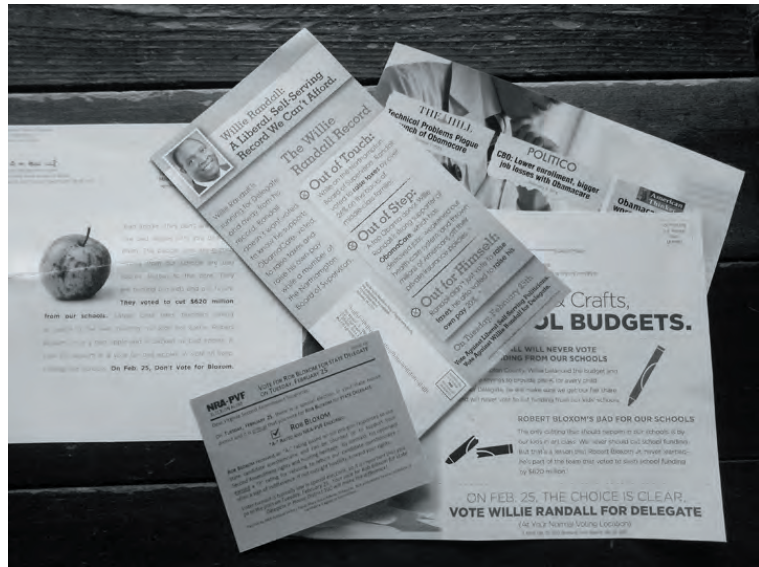
The Last Election – Bellwether or Anomaly?

In the recent special election for Delegate, Rob Bloxom won the right to take the seat formerly held by Lynwood Lewis to represent the Shore in the Virginia legislature. We are hopeful, given his comments afterwards, that Bloxom will continue the traditions of his father's service with an objective of civility in politics and a clear understanding of the value of compromise in crafting thoughtful and balanced legislation.

However, we could not help but be struck with how odd the tone of his campaign turned out to be. We received almost exclusively mail and TV ads that focused, not on the positive stands of the candidate, but rather on the disaster a win by his opponent would represent.

We received flyers that skirted along focusing on the race of the candidates. We received many pieces that were unfair and distorted the positions of the other candidate. We received warnings from the NRA that a vote for Willie Randall would take away our gun rights. The evidence presented? That he did not fill out their survey and therefore must be anti-gun.

We received warnings from the Sierra Club that Bloxom would devastate our environment. The evidence? Again,



apparently Bloxom did not fill out *their* survey. But what really was going on was a battle strictly along party lines funded by the parties and political groups from “off” the Shore.

The funding record shows a part of that story. Nearly 85% of this election was funded by political parties and largely “outside” political groups. In contrast, during the last election, the incumbent, who spent the lion’s share of the funds, was largely funded by individual support. We are hoping this was a one-time event for our Shore, partially connected to the timing of a special election, which made things difficult for candidates to get the word out. It certainly gave CBES little to no time to organize any help for Shore residents to meet and know their positions. But we think we need to be careful as to whether this is a new trend for our local politicians.

Let’s hope not. We are certainly looking forward to working with Bloxom in his new role, and your CBES will continue to work hard in the next election to improve the quality of the discourse.

2009 Delegate Race
Lewis / Scalley (for comparison)

Lewis spent \$203,923 or \$24.00/vote; 24% of money was from political sources (Democratic Party, PACs, other elected officials).

Scalley spent \$53,531 or \$11.62/vote; 43% of money from political sources (Republican Party, PACs, other elected officials)

2014 Delegate race
Bloxom / Randall

Bloxom contributions \$154,774 or \$22.72/vote: 85% of money from political sources (Republican Party, PACs, other elected officials).

Single largest non-“political” contributor was Cherrystone Aqua Farms, Norfolk: \$3,000.

Randall contributions \$183,390 or \$40.98/vote: 84% of money from political sources (Democratic Party, PACs, other elected officials).

Single largest non-“political” contributor was Sonjia S. Smith (home-maker), Charlottesville: \$10,000.

All data from Virginia Public Access Project online information website.

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SAVE THE DATE!

The 2014 CBES Pig Roast will be held on June 7. Further details will be made available in the next issue of ShoreLine. See you there!

open space – impossible to project numbers of increased dwelling units or population—with no county proffer policy, only the general tax base will be available to fund the increased services required by PUDs

- **County rezoning.g:** Agricultural District increased by 4,742 acres.
 - **“The Rest of the Story”:** any Agricultural District land, including waterfront, may be rezoned to PUDs, with unknown residential density, or to commercial or industrial uses.
- **County rezoning:** 28% of county acres protected in AFDs.
 - **“The Rest of the Story”:** the Board of Supervisors has made it clear that current AFDs will not be renewed, nor will new ones be created. If this policy continues, in less than a decade, over 38,000 more farm acres will be available for development.
- **County rezoning:** Family Day Home use (day care for up to 12 children) is proposed by right in all Districts.
 - **“The Rest of the Story”:** a Children’s Residential Facility, a custodial residential group home for the maintenance and protection of an unlimited number of residents up to 21 years of age, are also proposed by right in all Residential and Agricultural Districts.
- **County rezoning:** Reduced setbacks for Commercial and Industrial Uses with perimeter screening.
 - **“The Rest of the Story”:** an Industrial Use may be set back 25’ from a residential property line, with a single line of trees and shrubs as perimeter screening – Intensive Farming open waste sites have a 200-foot setback, with the same single line perimeter screening.
- **County rezoning:** example of Industrial District Uses allowed – prison, dredge disposal site.
 - **“The Rest of the Story”:** prisons and other industrial uses (waste sites, wastewater treatment plants) don’t need Industrial District zoning – they are allowed in Agricultural Districts.
- **County rezoning:** cites lack of affordable housing as the #2 item in 2011 Community Needs Assessment.
 - **“The Rest of the Story”:** new zoning would prohibit single wide mobile homes in residential districts and remove the Mobile Home District from the zoning code because the Director of Economic Development regards these structures as “not a good economic solution.”
- **County rezoning:** provides for home occupations.
 - **“The Rest of the Story”:** new zoning puts more county restrictions on a Home Occupation like a small owner-operated beauty shop or accounting service than there are county restrictions on the owner of a house in a residential district who is allowed, by right, to turn that house into a dance hall or game arcade, or turn a next door lot into a biomass conversion facility or paintball course.

The Public’s Concerns

The public comments objecting to changes in the Zoning Ordinance appeared to focus mainly on four concepts:

The public interest and public trust had been poorly served by the manner in which the proposed rezoning process has proceeded. Public input opportunities were poorly promoted, explanations for proposed changes were few and vague, and

insufficient justifications for specific changes were provided. The fact that the Comprehensive Plan update by the Planning Commission is concurrent with the rewriting of the zoning code by another group appeared to concern many of the speakers and also was one of the major concerns of the more than 400 people who had signed a petition presented to the Board.

Many resident homeowners and both resident and non-resident property owners voiced uncertainty, concern and opposition to the changes, especially the unknown effects on their properties. On the other hand, a petition was submitted opposing the restriction of domestic animal husbandry on 3 acre residential parcels. Of particular concern were high-impact, non-residential uses and the reduced setbacks proposed in and around most residential neighborhoods. General uneasiness was expressed both for property value maintenance and for quality of life issues. As the Rev. Debbie Bryant of Shorter’s Chapel in Bridgetown stated, “...whether you are black, white, or purple, you don’t want to live next to a biomass.” In addition, questions went unanswered about planning for funding the future services required for the unknown increased density in unrestricted Planned Unit Developments.

The lack of adequate provision for low-cost work force housing, and especially affordable housing, as required by the Virginia Code, was a frequent comment. The prohibition of single-wide mobile homes, either as a primary or accessory dwelling in residential neighborhoods, elimination of increased density in return for inclusion of affordable housing during rezonings, and the elimination of a Mobile Home Park District were cited as barriers to low-cost housing. Comments expressed hope that permitting higher density would increase low-cost housing; the now-disbanded Community Housing Community was advised by many builders that low-cost housing was just not profitable.

The concern voiced by the greatest number of speakers was the elimination of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act from the seaside of the county. The arbitrary removal of protections for the millions of dollars in public and private investment to safeguard seaside water quality, and the lack of scientific or other studies to justify or support removal of protection for a natural resource critical to a thriving sustainable, job producing aquaculture industry, was questioned by many. A double blow to the aquaculture industry was voiced by others who had helped create Willis Wharf and Oyster Village Vision documents for the county’s Comprehensive Plan – that protection of working waterfronts would be compromised by non-water dependent uses vying for the same limited waterfront. A surprise to many was the admission by county Staff that no effort had been made to study effects on seaside water quality by increased uses and densities, or to assemble scientific data which might project the impacts of proposed changes on one of the county’s oldest industries.

The Public Hearings are closed; no further spoken comments will be accepted. Written comments submitted and requested by the writer to be read into the public record were not read publicly. They appear on the county website under “Minutes.” Written comments, either mailed or emailed, will continue to be accepted and added to the public record (email: pstith@co.northampton.va.us, or mail: Board of Supervisors, PO Box 66, Eastville, VA 23347). The Planning Commission is to provide its recommendation to the Board at the end of May and will consider written comments submitted until their work session on May 14.



Northampton's Supervisor's Retreat

February 22, 2014

It was the first time in two years that the Board had met specifically to review the Strategic Plan adopted in 2012. All five Supervisors were present, along with the County Administrator. The Plan has four goals: Education, Economic Development, Infrastructure and Health Care—and each goal has two to four objectives with various strategies for each. The Board members agreed that the goals would remain the same.

What follows is our attempt to review the comments in the public record and give our readers excerpts in order to provide some insight into the current thinking of the Northampton Board of Supervisors on critical issues of the County's future. Comments included problems to be faced, possible solutions and much discussion of various Supervisors' opinions and perceptions of county issues. Comments and conclusions are excerpted from an audio recording of the meeting. Some comments are attributed for clarification of the discussion.

Education

- ✓ Behavior and work ethics of the students take up a lot of teacher's time
- ✓ There are teachers coming and going
- ✓ County population down (*Editor's note: down 2.4% since 2010 Census, projected to continue decreasing to below 12,000 by 2040 – Weldon Cooper, UVA*)
- ✓ "We have no control over the graduation rate – we just fund [the schools]."
- ✓ County purchased a 5-acre parcel for the high school and nothing's been done with it – \$79,000 boiler purchased 3 months ago and not installed yet – School Board has dragged its feet on capital improvement projects and needs to be held accountable for funds provided for specific improvements – school garage does "oil changes" but school buses "go elsewhere for repairs" – no one makes students take care of the facility (high school), e.g., wearing cleats on the gym floor, etc.
- ✓ **Middle School:** the current School Board Administration Building could be converted into a Middle School, and administration offices could be moved into the old Middle School (where county administration offices were temporarily located) – the former Middle School gym, cafeteria and auditorium could be used by Middle School students – and the Tech Center building could be converted to an EMS facility (votes pending).
- ✓ **High School:** County Administrator: "If you want a new High School, you'll have to raise the tax rate."

Economic Development

- ✓ **Zoning Ordinance** – Plan states that Zoning Code will be reviewed for compliance with the updated Comprehensive Plan
 - Chairman Lemond: "We're rewriting the Zoning Ordinance."
 - Mr. Hogg: "If we change zoning before Comp Plan revisions, we'll have to change zoning again?" Answer: "Yes"
- ✓ Plan states: Develop an industrial park by June, 2017
- ✓ Without infrastructure, it's hard to develop industrial parks
- ✓ Commercial development along Rt. 13, "takes a bite out of available [ground] water."
- ✓ If Cheriton expands, the county loses control of water use – potential for a 3 ½ mile stretch of commercial development (along Rt. 13).
- ✓ Comments about a Technology Zone and a Tourism Zone – no forward movement yet on either.

✓ Tourism:

- Mr. Hogg: "Beach access makes a tourism destination – can we work with state for access to some beachfront in southern part of county?"
- County Administrator: Those protected properties were purchased with the intent of no development.
- Mr. Trala: "What's here for tourists?"
- Mr. Bennett: Only a "small select group benefits" from tourism – not good paying jobs – will not support tourism.
- Chairman Lemond: Tourism is to bring people here to spend money, then leave. Tourism is not "to make jobs" ... "I don't know where the county would be without tourism."
- County Administrator: There could be more seasonal residents, "like Ocean City." "It's not quite tourism," but there would be more jobs for caretakers, landscapers (*Editor's note: Ocean City, MD online data indicate there are 2,495 owner-occupied homes, 2,915 non-owner-occupied homes and 25,841 rental condos.*)

Infrastructure:

✓ Broadband

- Mr. Hubbard: The county needs to help service providers.
- County Administrator: The county Broadband Authority has helped Eastern Shore Communications (a privately owned service provider) "be where they are today."
- Mr. Hubbard: Did the county use the Authority's check to help? "It's not doing much good for people – they can't get service."
- County Administrator: The providers are not interested in providing residential service now – there's not enough concentration of users – the county has sponsored information meetings to try and get providers to offer residential service – there has not been much response.
- Providers are a business – they need start-up money – they have service available where a concentration of users exists – Chincoteague, Onancock/Onley, Cape Charles.
- People in specific areas need to band together and ask for service; if there are enough requests, providers might respond

✓ Wastewater-sewer service

- Chairman Lemond: "Is the Board in favor of sewer service at the Cape Charles light?"
- Responses: Mr. Hubbard: "Cape Charles and the Nassawadox/hospital facility"; Mr. Trala: "continue the project"; Mr.

Who's minding the store?

By Dave Kabler


David Kabler is a realtor, local businessman and is a former Northampton County Planning Commissioner.

The reasoning behind the proposed revision of our zoning ordinance, we are told, is to pave the way to economic development. In that light, prompt disclosure of the County's actual efforts towards promoting economic development will be appreciated by her concerned citizens. We have recently hired a \$100k per year Economic Development Director to direct us towards prosperity and it behooves us to know what he has been doing these last 12 months to sell our place to the business world.

The Northampton County Board of Supervisors charged him with the task of revising and simplifying our zoning ordinance. That ordinance he has drafted with the aid of considerable staff, albeit lacking certain studies that could validate the work. The point of "simplifying" the ordinance for the benefit of economic development begs many questions: What are our Goals? What is our Business Plan for marketing and selling the Shore to industry and business? What is our Marketing Budget, our Inventory of real estate assets, our Infrastructure assets, i.e. labor, training, materials, transportation, etc? What Marketing Aids such as brochures and pamphlets have been developed? What Trade Organizations are targeted? What Presentations will we host at places where decision makers gather? What Advertising and Publicity will we generate?

A good business plan includes a vision statement and the Three P's: Product, Pricing, and Promotion. There is plenty of "product" zoned for business for sale, yet there appears to be no "promotion." Our Development Director should build a partnership with the Shore's real estate agents, our best sales people, who are on the front lines of economic development. Put the product up prominently on a shelf, advertise its availability to your customers, and go out and drum up business.

We hope that Mr. McSwain has not been sidetracked for zoning work. How many contacts has he generated, how many visits has he hosted and how many prospects have turned us down because of our so-called "preservationist" zoning? The County needs to entertain some "paying" customers and find out what their needs are before we attempt to fix something that we are not even sure needs fixing. The Supervisors need to supervise our star salesman to make some sales!

Let's get down to brass tacks and let Mr. McSwain do what he does best. As well, our Planning Commission, and the public, ought to be privy to what our business plan is and how it is being fulfilled. I, for one, would like to see it in black and white or, better yet, in full color. 

Renew your CBES membership or **ShoreLine** subscription today! Check your mailing label; if you see a "13" following your name, you need to renew!

Save the Date

CBES/Shorekeeper Annual Meeting

CBES and the Virginia Eastern Shorekeeper announce plans for the joint annual meeting of the two organizations:

Tuesday, April 15 at 7:00 PM

Nandua High School Auditorium, Onley

Each organization will report to its membership about its activities and plans for the future. CBES will elect directors for the 2014-2016 term.

The meeting will introduce Jill Bieri, the new Director of the Virginia Coast Reserve, to the audience and will feature a presentation by Bruce Underwood of the NASA Wallops Flight Facility discussing NASA's activities on the Shore, and its impact on the local community, economy and environment. Questions from the audience will be encouraged. The evening will close with a reception featuring homemade desserts, coffee and soft drinks. The meeting is free and open to the public!

"Retreat," Cont'd from p. 4

Hogg: "Nassawadox first, then the Cape Charles light area; Mr. Bennett: "the Cape Charles light area;

o Chairman Lemond: "Does the Board want to continue the PSA?"

o Responses: Mr. Trala: "Yes"; Mr. Hogg: "Yes, if the hospital is a priority"; Chairman Lemond: "Yes, if the PSA gives us options in addition to using the Cape Charles water system"; Mr. Hubbard: "Yes. Is it viable to turn over the county systems (Bayview, the County Complex) to the PSA?"

o County Administrator: "Turn over the County [Public Works] Staff to the PSA."

✓ **Healthcare**

o Mr. Hubbard: "It's not up to us to us" to provide health care infrastructure.

o Chairman Lemond: Hospital: Riverside is losing clients to Sentara. It's time to start to rebuild bridges to Riverside. The county needs to meet with them to discuss waste water system in Nassawadox.


o County Administrator: The county may need Special Tax Districts for EMS (Emergency Medical) support – similar to Accomack County.

✓ **Fire companies:**

o County pays \$30,000/year to each company.

o County Administrator: More formal agreements are needed between the county and the companies... timely reports required, grant funds spending reports... two companies, Cheriton and Eastville, have an "attitude problem." The county recourse for non-compliance with reporting would be to withhold funding.

✓ **AFDs (Agricultural-Forestal Districts):**

o Consensus: there is no tax base to support continuing the program. 

No Stranger to the Shore

By Bert Schmidt, CEO of WHRO Public Media

On September 7, 2012, listeners on the Eastern Shore turned on their radios and heard something as clear as a bell: NPR programming, symphonies, call-in talk shows, operas, jazz, and the entire public radio schedules of WHRO and WHRV-FM.

It took years of hard work, the support of generous donors and more than a million dollars, but WHRO was determined to respond to the many requests from residents of the Shore for better access to the public radio programming that only a few could get, and almost no one could hear clearly.

Today, the Shore can tune into three public radio stations: WHRX 90.1 FM (Accomack County) and WHRE 91.9 FM (Northampton County) carry WHRV's programming – the NPR news and public affairs shows, jazz, eclectic music, blues and bluegrass. And for fans of classical music, there's WHRF 98.3FM (Belle Haven), which carries the WHRO schedule of symphonies, operas, concertos and more. For many on the Shore, this was their first exposure to the wide variety of radio programming that WHRO and WHRV provide every day.

But WHRO is no stranger to the Eastern Shore. In fact, many people may not know that our relationship goes back to the 1980s.

A fact that is even less well known: WHRO began more than fifty years as the first instructional television station (ITV) in Virginia. We were incorporated in 1961 by two public school systems – Norfolk and Hampton – as member/owners of the Hampton Roads Educational Television Association (HRETA.)

Schools would use the new technology of television to provide distance learning opportunities, and so they created **W Home Room One**. As the potential for educational television became apparent, more school systems joined HRETA – and in the early 1980s, Northampton County became a member/owner. Accomack County followed suit later.

It's much more than a paper relationship: HRETA members play a significant role in guiding WHRO. They elect the governing Board of Directors. Their Superintendents and designated school board members meet with WHRO staff regularly to discuss specific issues and needs, and work together toward creative solutions. And HRETA members realize substantial economic benefit each year because of the educational services WHRO provides.

These are but a few:

- WHRO coordinates an annual regional group purchase of **Discovery Education streaming**, featuring 5,000+ Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) correlated video titles segmented into nearly 50,000 shorter clips that can be searched

in a variety of ways. Nearly 10 million assets were viewed statewide this past year, including almost 16,600 views from Accomack and Northampton County.

- WHRO now offers **eMediaVA**, a free one-stop shop for high quality digital content for Virginia's K-12 teachers and students. Featuring content from leading educational, cultural

and scientific organizations – such as PBS, NASA, the Smithsonian Museums, as well as many local Virginia institutions – offering more than 38,000 learning objects (more being added weekly), all correlated to the Virginia SOLs and available at no cost to every public, private and home school teacher and student across the Commonwealth.

- **WHRO Education Professional Development** brings teachers the highest quality online technology integration

training through our Teacherline online training service. It's a 21st century teaching and learning tool that helps teachers strengthen students' academic skills and meet Virginia's SOLs. Teachers can take courses online and get recertification or graduate credit through James Madison University.

- **WHRO Education Online Courses Service** has developed online student courses including: Algebra I; Algebra II/Trig;

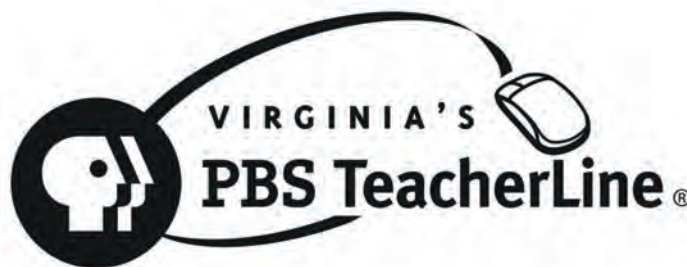
Astronomy; Biology; Chemistry; Earth Science; English 9, 10, 11, and 12; Financial Literacy; Geometry; Health/PE 9 and 10; Oceanography; Physics; U.S. History; U.S./Virginia Government; World Geography; and World History I and II – and a seven-week Online Teaching Methodology course.

- **Virtual Virginia Advanced**

Placement School offers more than 50 online honors and foreign language courses to students across the Commonwealth. Statewide, students took over 6,500 courses this past year, including 75 from the Shore.

- **NovaNET** is a comprehensive, online courseware system consisting of more than 150 courses correlated to the Virginia Standards of Learning. WHRO coordinates the annual group purchase, including five licenses for Accomack Public Schools.

- **The PBS KIDS GO! Writers Contest**, open to K-5 students who write and illustrate their own stories, was recently aligned to the Virginia SOLs. Local winners receive cash awards and their families are invited to attend a special reception in their honor where they're videotaped in the WHRO television studio reading their entry. A special television program and accompanying web site featuring the



Tourism is Big Business on the Shore

By Kerry Allison, Executive Director of the ES Tourism Commission



The Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission (ESVATC) was established in 2006 as a separate entity (outside the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce) to market the Eastern Shore of Virginia as a regional travel destination. Its funding is derived largely from taxes that visitors pay when they stay at area hotels and B&Bs, and its major funding partners are Northampton and Accomack counties plus the towns of Cape Charles and Onancock.

The ESVATC runs the Southern Gateway Welcome Center, produces and distributes an annual visitor guide across Virginia, manages a regional travel website, encourages media and travel writers to tell the Shore's stories, and collaborates with public and private tourism partners across the Shore.

Two previous executive directors, Donna Bozza and Dave Shulte, along with the Tourism Commission board, have built this fledgling tourism marketing organization into what it is today. I've taken the helm of an organization that has accomplished much in the last five years. Some of the highlights are:

- Nearly half a million visitors have stopped at the Welcome Center since it opened in 2010, where staff and volunteers give them ideas and information about where to stay, eat, shop and play.
- Visits to the ESVATC's website (www.esvatourism.org) increased 148% from 2011 to 2013. This website is the Eastern Shore of Virginia's most comprehensive source of information and calendar of events.
- County tax revenues (Northampton and Accomack combined) for overnight stays have grown 20% since 2008.
- The ESVATC Visitor Guide distribution has increased 88% since 2013 and 150,000 copies are now distributed to 147 points throughout Virginia, including 59 Certified Welcome Centers.

These key metrics are positive – some dramatically so. Keep in mind that this growth has occurred during a period of very challenging times in the broader U.S. economy.

Tourism is big business. It is highly competitive, and tourism marketing organizations like ESVATC must market the destination effectively but they must also nurture product development – helping the business community develop rich, compelling consumer experiences across the market. We are fortunate to have a major strategic partner – the Virginia Tourism Corporation – to help with this critical effort. VTC's new tourism development specialist, Bobbie Walker, has just moved to the Eastern Shore.

Over 80% of travelers use the internet when making travel choices, so destinations must be easily found when a consumer is exploring places to visit. Marketing in today's world means deepening your "digital footprint." This means that it is important to concentrate on efforts that affect search engine ranking, being written about by key digital influencers and travel bloggers, hav-

ing a strong presence on the top travel websites and leveraging social media to talk to your consumers informally.

A small organization like ESVATC with limited resources and staff must prioritize carefully. The following are some of the near-term efforts:

Business Development

The April 8 Tourism Summit will help existing and potential tourism business partners more fully realize the potential of the tourism economy. For instance, the Wallop's Island rocket launches will become a major regional, national and international tourist attraction, with shorewide impact -- if we capitalize on the potential in a methodical and sustained way. The Cape Charles Yacht Center will reach a new market: more yacht owners and crews who will discover the Eastern Shore of Virginia for the first time.

Increased Digital Presence

Eighty percent of travelers (some sources say it's closer to 90%) use the internet when planning a trip, so we are expanding the Shore's online presence. For the first time, Trip Advisor, the world's top travel website, now recognizes the ESVA as a regional vacation destination – similar to Napa Valley, California. The ESVATC is working with Trip Advisor, Google Travel, and the Virginia Tourism Corporation to deepen the Shore's online presence. A new responsive website, which translates from desktop to smart phone seamlessly, is on the to-do list too – it's a must have these days

Wallops Island Rocket Launch Website

A new microsite will demonstrate the proximity of the entire Shore to Wallops Island and encourage visitors to stay, play and shop south all the way to Cape Charles during rocket launch events. Chincoteague increasingly "fills up" when rocket launches occur. This is, as yet, an unrealized opportunity for the entire Virginia Eastern Shore. A Maryland website is already taking advantage of Wallops Island rocket launches to drive space tourists north all the way to Ocean City, which is 55 miles away.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Artisan Trail

The Artisans Center of Virginia is leading the development of an Artisan Trail on the Shore, which will showcase some of the Shore's most interesting assets. Maps and a website will lead consumers off Route 13 into the Shore's nooks and crannies to discover artists and craftspeople at their homes and studios, music, theater and all other creative endeavors. The Artisan Trail will also surface all the ancillary services visitors need, like lodging, shops, and restaurants.

Virginia Tourism Corporation Partnership

ESVATC's partnership with Virginia Tourism Corporation, the statewide tourism agency, helps the Shore align and integrate tourism development efforts across the region. The Tourism Commission is not funded by the VTC but works in concert with them. VTC brings a rich range of resources to the table and helps local partners shape their tourism-related businesses effectively.



“No Stranger to the Shore,” Cont’d from p. 6

winners reading their stories is created and aired. Accomack students submitted 12 entries.

The Bottom Line

Each year, WHRO provides all of its member/owners a comprehensive Impact Statement, describing these and other specific educational initiatives in greater detail, with real dollar savings attached. Accomack invests about \$14,000 annually in WHRO, and receives savings and value of more than \$400,000. Northampton’s annual investment of almost \$5,000 results in a return in savings and value of over \$390,000. Beyond the actual dollar amounts, the value of these services to the Shore’s school children and their teachers is evident from a reading of the Impact Statements, which can be accessed at <http://education.whro.org/regional-services/who-we-are/impact>.

So while you’re enjoying our radio signals loud and clear, don’t think of us as newcomers to the Shore. Think of us not only as entertaining and engaging our listeners, but also as a long-time partner that’s been helping your teachers educate the Shore’s most valuable resource – your students – for years.



VIMS

Public Seminar Series
Wednesday, April 2, 2013
7:30 PM

Virginia Institute of Marine Science
Wachapreague, Virginia

“Investigations of summer flounder behavior from the Flounder Capital of the World”

Karen Capossela
Fisheries Biologist
Maryland Department of Natural Resources

The seminar is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.

Marsh Grass Planting for Living Shoreline Demonstration Project

Thursday, May 1

Workshop: 11:30 AM - 2 PM

Volunteer Planting: 2:30 - 5:30 PM

Friday, May 2

Volunteer Planting: 2:30 - 5:30 PM

If you are interested, contact Jen Dalke, volunteer program manager, at jdalke@tnc.org or 434-951-0572 (w) or 540-335-1302 (c). Please state if you are planning to attend the workshop and/or if you plan to volunteer one or both days.

Meet the Candidates for the Cape Charles Election

Tuesday, April 29 at 7 PM

Palace Theatre, Cape Charles

Moderated by Wayne Bell

The town of Cape Charles will hold an election for the office of Mayor and several seats on the Town Council on May 6. The public and press are invited to attend.

Sponsored by CBES

2014 ESVA Household Hazardous Waste Collection

The only local option for Accomack and Northampton County residents to properly dispose of their household hazardous waste

Why participate? Household products containing toxic chemicals like pesticides, solvents, cleaning products, and weed killers can be a threat to people and the environment if improperly discarded. Never throw these materials into the trash, as the toxic chemicals may harm sanitation workers or result in fires in collection vehicles. It is also not safe to pour them into a sink, ditch, or storm drain, as they can end up in the environment, polluting the air, water, or soil.

Collections begin at 10:00 AM and close promptly at 2:00 PM and will take place rain or shine. Residents of either county can participate at any of the three sites. Up to 50 pounds can be discarded; additional waste will cost \$1/lb.

Saturday, May 10

• In Northern Accomack:

Makemie Park Convenience Center
9312 Neal Parker Road, Temperanceville

• In Central Accomack

Fisher’s Corner Convenience Center
26213 Parksley Road, Parksley

• In Northampton

Birdsnest Convenience Center
9005 Birdsnest Drive, Birdsnest

What to bring:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Garden chemicals | Wood stain |
| Poisons | Paint thinner |
| Repellents | Paint remover |
| Degreasers | Driveway sealers |
| Fuel: gas, kerosene | Epoxy |
| Fungicides | Rodent poison |
| Wood preservatives | Asbestos |
| Other hazardous waste | |

What NOT to bring:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Commercial waste | Radioactive waste |
| Industrial waste | Medicines |
| Car batteries | PCBs |
| Tires | Smoke detectors |
| Motor oil | Freon |
| Ammunition | Propane tanks |
| Flares | Medical waste |
| Explosives | Biological waste |
| Empty containers of any kind | |

For additional information, please contact the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission at 757-787-2936 or www.a-npdc.org

Open Letter to Board of Supervisors, Northampton County

Presented at Public Hearing on March 11, 2014

We request that this letter become part of the public record of this Hearing.

Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore would like to state clearly our opposition to the Northampton Board of Supervisors' new zoning ordinance proposal. As we pointed out in a recent editorial in our *ShoreLine* publication, we all agree wholeheartedly with the need to make changes to the ordinance. It is supremely disappointing that the Board, to date, has chosen not to follow established county procedure for revising the entire county zoning ordinance. We continue to believe that the public has not been adequately included in the process and that the exclusion of the Planning Commission in the process is wrong. The basis for our zoning is established in the goals, and especially in the strategies, of the adopted Comprehensive Plan and the required Future Land Use Map.

The current Northampton County Comprehensive Plan was formulated following workshops and many community meetings to solicit public input and direction, and then two separate public hearings were held. Every five years, the Comprehensive Plan must be reviewed to assure that the plan still reflects the communities' needs and desires in present-day conditions. This process began some time ago and many of us attended the preliminary input meetings. Apparently, that process has been abandoned in a rush to push through new zoning. The Board of Supervisors has a legal obligation to consider revisions to the Comprehensive Plan, but only after those revisions have been submitted to them by the Planning Commission. This process has not yet been completed.

We are aware that the Code does not require Comprehensive Plan revisions in advance of zoning changes. However, we are also aware that the Code does require "reasonable consideration" be given to several specific factors affecting the locality before zoning changes are proposed. We do not believe that this has been done. We cannot support the wholesale rewriting of the county's Zoning Code before the Comprehensive Plan review

process, including extensive input from the public, has been completed and used to lead the zoning deliberative process.

Thank you again for your consideration of our organization's position on this issue.

Sincerely,
Arthur L. Upshur
President, Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore

§ 15.2-2284. Matters to be considered in drawing and applying zoning ordinances and districts.

Zoning ordinances and districts shall be drawn and applied with reasonable consideration for the existing use and character of property, the comprehensive plan, the suitability of property for various uses, the trends of growth or change, the current and future requirements of the community as to land for various purposes as determined by population and economic studies and other studies, the transportation requirements of the community, the requirements for airports, housing, schools, parks, playgrounds, recreation areas and other public services, the conservation of natural resources, the preservation of flood plains, the protection of life and property from impounding structure failures, the preservation of agricultural and forestal land, the conservation of properties and their values and the encouragement of the most appropriate use of land throughout the locality.

INKJET RECYCLING

Please bring your used inkjet cartridges to the CBES office in Eastville; after office hours, there is a drop box just outside the front door. The environment will be better off and CBES will get a little cash out of it.

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

CBES Membership 2014

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*) \$ 20
- * _____ Life Membership (includes *ShoreLine*) \$ 200
- * _____ Optional Additional Contribution of \$ _____
- * _____ *ShoreLine* subscription without CBES membership \$ 20
- * _____ Gift subscription to *ShoreLine* for a friend (*write name and address on reverse*) \$ 20

For our membership records, 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

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**RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP NOW!**

SHORELINE

Community Calendar - April 2014

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

CBES and Other Activities		Northampton County		Accomack County	
Apr 2	VIMS Public Seminar 7:30 PM, Wachapreague	Apr 1	Planning Commission 7 PM, Sup. Chambers	Apr 2	Board of Zoning Appeals 10 AM, Sup. Chambers
Apr 8	CBES Exec. Committee 5 PM, CBES Office	Apr 7	Board of Zoning Appeals 1 PM, Conference Room	Apr 9	Planning Commission 7 PM, BOS Chambers
Apr 10	Shorekeeper Meeting 1 PM, ES Chamber of Commerce, Melfa	Apr 8	Board of Supervisors 7 PM, Sup. Chambers	Apr 10	School Board 7 PM, BOS Chambers
Apr 15	ES Groundwater Committee 10 AM, Accomac	Apr 16	Wetlands Board TBA, Conference Room	Apr 16	Board of Supervisors 6 PM, BOS Chambers
Apr 15	CBES Annual Meeting 7 PM, Nandua HS, Onley	Apr 24	School Board 5:30 PM, Sup. Chambers	Apr 17	Wetlands Board 10 AM, Sup. Chambers
Apr 24	UVA Seminar Series 7 PM, Oyster	Apr 24	BOS Work Session 7 PM, Sup. Chambers		
Apr 29	Candidate Forum 7 PM, Cape Charles				

www.cbes.org