



CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EASTERN SHORE

# SHORELINE

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

TM

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## Walkable Communities, Workforce Housing... ... Good Planning Concepts – How Are They Working?

By Mary Miller

“New Urbanism,” a planning term from the 1990s, reintroduced the concepts of walkable communities, mixed-use housing in neighborhoods, and the hope that Americans would enjoy a healthier lifestyle and reduce reliance on automobile transportation. In the post-war years, sprawl and suburban growth had covered the fields and forests around urban areas. Small towns, villages, and cities had been decimated, emptied of commercial vitality, and left with deteriorating infrastructure and housing. And neighborhoods had disappeared.

### “New Urbanism” to the Rescue?

Although studies, surveys, and research projects indicated that people wanted neighborhoods, tree-lined streets, and housing more convenient to shopping, how to get them proved problematic. Older communities already had sidewalks to walk on and mixed-use housing, but they needed capital investment to upgrade neighborhoods and lure people back into town. Newly rebuilt city centers and smaller suburban enclaves using the new concepts began to be designed – and capital investments increased.

But after investments had been made in both new and older projects, it became clear that many of these communities were going to be affordable for mostly higher-income households. Walkable neighborhoods, clusters of shops and restaurants, and newly renovated residential units

became almost a “luxury good,” as noted in a 2016 report in the Urban Land Institute, and studied by other planning professionals.<sup>1</sup>

### Walkability – a Community Asset Within Reach

Planners early in the last century almost always included sidewalks or walkways in designing small towns springing up across the country. Rural areas were served by these towns, and walking was the way to get around. Walkability was a necessary asset, not a “luxury good.”

A rural solution has already been implemented on the Shore – multi-use trails – for walkers, cyclists, and sometimes equestrians. They have proved to be both a recreational asset and a tourism attraction.

### But Where Is the “Workforce Housing?”

“Missing middle” is a new term now widely used in the housing industry to describe mid-density housing types that bridge the gap between traditional single-family homes and apartment buildings.<sup>2</sup> These include once-common duplexes, small cottage and bungalow communities, mobile home parks, live-work units, accessory dwelling units, and residential-over-commercial-use buildings. Although they all could provide housing affordable to a community’s workforce, there appears to be no legal way to ensure reasonable price points or occupancy restrictions to limit sales and use of these units to the local workforce.

“Affordable housing,” however, does have a legal definition and enforceable qualifications for occupancy. Per the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): “Affordable housing is generally defined as housing for which the occupant is paying no more than 30% of gross income for housing costs, including utilities.”

Often built and maintained with at least some government funds, by low-cost housing developers, or by faith-based or philanthropic organizations, these are occupancy-restricted, either by the HUD definition of income, or by age or disability. Units are usually subsidized, with sliding rental scales based on household size and income, and with eligibility requirements. As government money for construction has become more

*See Walkable, cont’d on p. 3*

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## Talking About Politics ...

Opinion by Arthur Upshur, CBES President

I read a story recently about the percentages of people in the United States who believe that the “opposing” side in politics is so dangerous to our democracy and way of life that radical actions are justified to stop them. The fascinating thing is, it is a high percentage of both sides of the political spectrum who now feel that way. It is a scary statistic for our society. It previews what many historians are warning us are the conditions for civil strife and violent reactions to each political change.

But we still need to make progress with political leadership. Our country needs to make changes, invest in new things, become a better and “more perfect” union. Civility and respect for each other is a critical part of what binds us together into communities. How often we ignore that in political discourse today. As many of you already realize, I love discussing politics. I can learn from each conversation. But having those conversations today is hard. There is so much anger and fear about the “other” side, and our “facts” are often at odds. Many people don’t even try to have a conversation about politics. How can

we stop being so polarized if we have stopped discussing divergent views?

What has gone wrong? I have some simple philosophies of life: one is that “bad” people are exceedingly rare. I believe almost everyone is trying to do the right thing, trying to help, trying to make this world a better place for their families, neighbors, and friends. When people do things that hurt others, I believe it is almost always because they are convinced that the positives of their actions outweigh the negatives. What helps that rationalization is when they have convinced themselves that those they are hurting are “bad” and that harmful actions against them actually are “good” because they are combatting “evil.” In other words, they are still trying to do good things even when their actions harm others.

Am I naive? I do not think so. I believe some people are misguided. I fear their bad decisions and bad actions cause a lot of harm. But I also know that the “harm” from those actions is rarely their goal. I believe that they are good people trying to do the right thing. When I talk politics, I work hard to weave through all the horrible accusations against the other side and focus on the positive goals that form their beliefs. Only when we understand our shared positive goals can we discuss policies or actions that might attain them.

It is a critical difference. As long as I assume that your goal is to create the harm resulting from your actions, I am going to talk right past you, accusing you of false motivations. If you think the goal of the Left is to destroy the country with unlimited immigration, or the goal of the Right is white supremacy and racism, it is unlikely that the left and the right can have any worthwhile discussion about immigration. The result is often that we do nothing – because we are

shouting accusations at each other, focusing on how we can combat the evil that we are convinced is the goal of the “other” side.

This is my plea: Assume that everyone is trying to do the right thing as they see it – that their goals are positive, not negative. Take everything you read or hear with a grain of salt. And if a commentator or politician tries to convince you that the opposing side is evil, it’s probably time to stop paying attention. Much political dialogue today seems focused on keeping people angry, outraged, or fearful. But are you really learning anything useful by listening to them, or for that matter, voting for them? In conversations with others, don’t assume you know the other side’s goals. Personal attacks are not useful parts of the discussion. It is amazing how quickly the temperature of our conversations drop when no one is interested in attacking. And when we listen to each other, we can make progress together. Open communication is at least a start.



### CORRECTION:

#### 28<sup>th</sup> CBES Between the Waters Bike Tour

The *ShoreLine* Edit Board regrets the omission of Sponsors Laurie and Walter Jones from the list published in last month’s issue. It is through the generosity of the Joneses and other sponsors that CBES is able to continue the decades-long opportunity for local and visiting cyclists and their friends and families to experience the Shore’s beauty as well as its friendly residents.

Thank you, Laurie and Walter, for your support.

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# Master Plan Issued for Coastal Resilience

By Sue Mastyl

On December 7, Rear Admiral Ann C. Phillips (U.S. Navy, Ret.), Special Assistant to the Governor for Coastal Adaptation and Protection, announced the finalization of the Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan (<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/crmp/plan>), “an integral document that charts the course to adapt and protect Virginia’s Coast.”

With 70% of the state’s population living in coastal areas, this is a critical issue. Sea-level rise, changing precipitation patterns, and more intense storm events are contributing to increased intensity and frequency of flooding, with greater risk to coastal communities.

Phase One of the Master Plan focuses on the current and projected impacts of tidal and storm-surge flooding. The Technical Study included in the Plan projected that, between 2020 and 2080 –

- Residents living in homes exposed to major coastal flooding will increase from 360,000 to 943,000 (an increase of 160%).
- Buildings exposed to an extreme coastal flood will increase from 140,000 to 340,000 (an increase of almost 150%).
- Annualized flood damages will increase from \$0.4 to \$5.1 billion (up 1,300%).
- Miles of roadways exposed to chronic coastal flooding will increase from 500 to almost 2,800 miles (an increase of almost 460%).
- Approximately 170,000 acres (89%) of existing tidal wetlands and 3,800 acres (38%) of existing dunes and beaches may be effectively converted to open water.

Phase Two of the Master Plan, slated for completion in 2024, will expand on assessments of rainfall and riverine hazards, data collection, project planning and prioritization, and engagement with under-resourced communities.

The Plan also includes a database of more than 500 capacity-building initiatives (information, skills, and tools to assist regions and localities) and existing adaptation projects that are planned, under design, or in progress ([https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/9e32e928ed304fa98518b71905e43085/page/page\\_13/](https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/9e32e928ed304fa98518b71905e43085/page/page_13/)). Almost 50 Eastern Shore projects are identified. Funding for these projects may come from the Virginia Community Flood Preparedness Fund or other sources; the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program has developed a funding source database, matching projects with potential federal, state, local, and other funding opportunities. The Master Plan will be updated every 5 years.

The Eastern Shore projects identified include dredging projects; shoreline management and protection; stormwater

## Walkable, *cont’d from p. 1*

scarce, private individuals, especially in the entertainment industry, have stepped up to provide funding, particularly in urban area housing.

“Workforce housing,” on the other hand, has no official definition, no widely recognized description, no requirements for funding, maintaining, or restricting residency to a local workforce. Often, local workers do not meet the criteria for “affordable housing” and don’t qualify for housing subsidies – so they must find market-rate housing.

## The “Missing Middle” Housing

What’s missing in the workforce housing picture is development and housing industry interest in building lower-priced, unsubsidized housing units, especially in communities where new, high-end homes and condos are a more profitable enterprise. Local governments across the country know they need mid-level-priced housing, but have few tools to leverage construction, create occupancy criteria, or ensure long-term affordability of less costly – but unsubsidized – units.

Both Accomack and Northampton counties, and most Towns, permit a variety of housing types in residential districts that could accommodate lower-cost workforce housing units – duplexes, accessory dwelling units, cottage communities, etc. But with increasing tourism interest, many of these higher-density units are now, and probably will continue to be, used as short-term vacation rentals. Without a workable, legal “workforce housing” description, and until there is some development industry investment interest, and local governments are able to motivate construction and control cost and occupancy, the reality of reasonably priced “workforce housing” might continue to be elusive. 

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/2017/09/28/why-walkability-not-luxury>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/2020/08/12/missing-middle-key-housing-america>

**Ed. note:** *Northampton County Supervisors have sent the following directive to the county Planning Commission: “... propose that we carve out zoning code review as it relates to workforce housing and request that the Planning Commission begin working immediately on housing, including mobile homes, mobile home parks, higher density in appropriate areas, mixed uses in Town Edge, and other suggestions as they deem necessary.”*

management; data collection and modelling on climate change variables (including real estate values, groundwater modelling, impacts to agriculture, and updates to existing tools and models); education and outreach; land acquisition; and specific protections for Saxis Island, Tangier Island, and Wachapreague. 

# Federal and State Programs Will Help to Fund Broadband

By Sue Mastyl

Two recent developments at the federal and state level will help to close the remaining gaps for broadband coverage here on the Shore.



## Federal Infrastructure Bill

On November 15, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was signed into law by President Biden. The bill includes \$65 billion, to expand and improve the infrastructure for broadband, and make it more affordable. This will include \$42.5 billion to be distributed to the states. Each will receive a minimum of \$100 million; the states will need to demonstrate their need to the Department of Commerce in the next 6 months. The funds will be distributed to the states in 2023. For Virginia, it appears that these funds will be allocated through the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI).

Some of the requirements of the bill include:

- Broadband definitions have been updated. “Unserved” is defined as anyone with download/upload speed of 25 Mbps/3 Mbps or less; “underserved” is anyone with a speed of 100/25 or less. The funding for the states will go to services with speeds of at least 100/20.
- Projects must be underway within 4 years.
- All internet service providers (ISPs) must develop a “broadband label” (similar to a nutrition label), with clear information on what’s offered and the pricing. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will be implementing this within a year, including a public comment period when the rule is drafted.
- There will be a semi-annual reporting requirement for any ISP that receives state or federal funds.
- The Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) program has been extended, and renamed the Affordable Connectivity Program. This will be administered by the FCC, with a total of \$14.2 billion. The requirements have changed from 150% to 200% of the poverty line, but the benefit has been decreased from \$50 to \$30 per month. Although there is a move to make this a permanent program, the bill did not do this.

Although there is a recognition that both the Virginia and federal maps of broadband coverage are inaccurate, nothing in the bill addresses this. Some states, such as Georgia, have developed more detailed, more accurate maps. Once all of the 5 FCC members have been confirmed this month, they may be able to address this.

## State VATI Grants

On September 14, the Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority (ESVBA) submitted an application to VATI for \$12.3 million to provide coverage to an additional

14,000 homes and businesses. Despite challenges from both Neubeam/Declaration Networks and Charter/Spectrum (see December 2021 *ShoreLine*), the full amount was awarded on December 13. The ESVBA award was part of the \$700 million announced by Governor Northam to achieve 90% coverage across the state, with the goal of full coverage by 2024.

With the likelihood that the federal infrastructure funds will be managed at the state level by VATI, and anticipating repeated challenges from Spectrum and Neubeam, ESVBA discussed plans for completing the shorewide expansion at their December 2 Board meeting. The \$12.3 million from the VATI grant, along with \$3.3 million in matching funds from the counties, will be used to build out 250 of the remaining 600 miles over the next 2 years; the remaining 350 miles would require an additional \$15 million, financed through loans, grants, or a combination. 🐦

## Rail Trail News

ShoreLine Staff



An announcement at a recent Accomack-Northampton Transportation District Commission meeting detailed preliminary plans to set up a 501(c)3 organization that will own and maintain the 50-mile stretch of the rail trail between Cape Charles and Hallwood. A proposed board

will include 2 supervisors from each county, 1 member from the Eastern Shore Rail Trail Working Group, and 4 members from The Nature Conservancy, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and/or the Virginia Department of Transportation, and the community at-large. There will be 2 paid positions, an executive director and a secretary/treasurer. The new organization will be a working group that will help with grants, town meetings, and work with consultants on the final design details of the trail.

Governor Northam has also announced a 2-year, \$245 million budget proposal to support outdoor recreation and fund multi-use trails, including the Eastern Shore Rail Trail. Most of the funding, \$233 million, is designated for trails, but some will go to state parks, and some to the newly created Office of Outdoor Recreation, which will have funding to support 2 full-time employees. The new agency will coordinate outdoor recreation efforts across multiple state agencies. More information will be available regarding the allocation of funds after meetings scheduled for January 12. 🐦

# Ready, Set, Charge!

Submitted by Glen Anders

This is the third in a series of articles I've written about electric cars. The first addressed what it is like to own one; the second dealt with long trips. Here I address the issue of charging. My car is a Tesla Model Y, but because all electric cars use the same basic method for charging, what follows is applicable to most all makes and models.

Three levels of charging are available for electric cars. Level 1 charging uses a 110-volt outlet and results in 4 miles of range per hour. Level 2 charging requires a 220-volt outlet and puts 16 to 32 miles of range per hour into the car. Level 3 chargers, also called "superchargers or fastchargers," are located in larger cities as well as along interstate highways. The precise rate of charging varies according to the amount of charge already in the car, but generally superchargers can charge the car from 20% to 80% in about 30 minutes.

An overnight Level 1 charge using a typical 110-volt household outlet with a mobile connector that comes with the vehicle yields only 60 miles of range. That's enough for a quick errand or two, but not a good option for driving over 50 miles per day.

The next step up is Level 2 charging. Level 2 home charging needs a 220-volt outlet as well as an adapter that connects the mobile connector to the outlet. Dedicated Level 2 chargers are also available from the car's manufacturer or from third parties like Juice Box, EVOCharge, and others. They are installed in your garage or by your driveway and cost around \$600, not including installation. The advantage of a dedicated charger is that it is self-contained and doesn't require the use of the mobile connector. Dedicated Level 2 chargers can be found in many parking lots, hotels, and workplaces and are available for anyone to use. Some communities or power companies provide Level 2 chargers for citizens to use without cost; however, a Cape Charles councilman told me that public chargers weren't a high priority for the town at this moment.

Level 3 charging is clearly the fastest way to charge a car, but these superchargers are not available or convenient for everyone to use on a regular basis. The Eastern Shore of Virginia does not have any public Level 3 chargers. There is 1 in Salisbury; there are 3 in Norfolk/Virginia Beach.

The most convenient and least costly way to charge an electric car is to do it at home. This is 1 of the biggest advantages to having an electric car. After getting home from a trip, you plug the car in and that's it. The car is fully charged in the morning before you leave again. However,

there is a problem when you don't have a garage or a driveway to be able to install a charger.

I recently spoke to a resident of Cape Charles who wanted to install a charger next to the curb in front of her house. The town had no objections, but VDOT would not allow it. The reasons for VDOT's objections are unclear, but clearly our municipalities need to find alternative ways for electric vehicle owners to charge their cars if they're unable to do so where they live. For example, Seattle allows residents to run charger cables over public sidewalks so long as they provide an approved portable "ADA" ramp over the cable. Virginia Clean Cities ([vacleancities.org](http://vacleancities.org)) has several reports that address the need to find ways to enable people without driveways to charge their cars on public streets. Their report, *Statewide Electric Vehicle Charging Report* ([https://vacleancities.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Statewide-Electric-Vehicle-Charging-Report\\_Final.pdf](https://vacleancities.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Statewide-Electric-Vehicle-Charging-Report_Final.pdf)), discusses some possible solutions to this problem.

Another solution to this problem is to mount chargers on power poles along public streets. Several Massachusetts towns have such a program, where chargers are mounted on poles above the street and a phone app lowers the charging cables to the ground. The local power company worked with the charger manufacturer to provide 16 charging stations.

Electric vehicles are our future, and the ability to conveniently charge at home will soon be the norm, not the exception. Governments at all levels need to work on creative solutions that will make this future a reality.



Setups like this Melrose, Massachusetts, pole-mounted charging station can help in situations where residential chargers are not possible.

Photo: Voltrek LLC

## RECYCLING CORNER

### Update on TerraCycle Programs

In the September 2021 *ShoreLine*, we provided information about TerraCycle® ([www.terracycle.com](http://www.terracycle.com)) recycling programs for participating brands. We learned recently about a settlement reached in November from a lawsuit filed by The Last Beach Cleanup (LBC) against TerraCycle and 8 consumer brands (Coca-Cola, Procter & Gamble, Late July Snacks, Gerber, L’Oreal, Tom’s of Maine, Clorox, and Materne) based on “unlawful and deceptive recycling claims.” The companies have agreed to change their product labels, and TerraCycle has agreed to implement a supply-chain certification program.

The lawsuit was based on research by Beyond Plastics and LBC showing that “long-distance mail-back programs for plastic products and packaging have significant environmental impacts that outweigh the meager benefits of downcycling the plastic products into picnic tables or park benches.”

A documentary, “The Recycling Myth” (<https://a-o-buero.de/the-recycling-myth/>), showed packaging collected by the UK TerraCycle program ending up at a waste handler in Bulgaria, destined to be burned. According to TerraCycle CEO Tom Szaky, that recycling was sent to Bulgaria by mistake, and was returned to the UK for recycling.

Often, the agreements between TerraCycle and the brands cover a limited amount of waste, so that consumers trying to sign up are put on a waiting list. Under the settlement, TerraCycle and the brands agreed to tell consumers if there is a limit, such as adding a disclaimer saying “Limited Availability.” Products also will not be labeled as “100% recyclable.” TerraCycle CEO Tom Szaky said it was already planning to hire an auditor to verify what happens to the waste it collects. A summary report will be provided by January 2023.

Drop-off at REI and Subaru locations will continue.

Sources:

Holder D. TerraCycle partners including Coca-Cola, P&G to change recycling labels after settling lawsuit. *The Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 15, 2021. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/terracycle-partners-including-coca-cola-p-g-to-change-recycling-labels-after-settling-lawsuit-11637005586>

Plastic Pollution Coalition. TerraCycle and 8 consumer product companies settle lawsuit based on “unlawful and deceptive recycling claims.” Nov. 15, 2021. <https://www.plasticpollutioncoalition.org/blog/2021/11/15/terracycle-eight-consumer-product-companies-settle-lawsuit->

**ShoreLine comment:** *This case illustrates how complicated the recycling issue is, even with the best intentions. We will continue to provide our members with the latest information on what can (and cannot) be recycled. As always, “reduce” and “reuse” remain our best options.*

## The Night Sky

By George Mapp

The night sky must have been deeply puzzling to our ancestors. In the 18th century, ships sailed back and forth across the Atlantic knowing only their latitude. They knew that measuring the angle of the north star above the horizon equaled latitude. But they had no way to find longitude, making ocean voyages perilous.

Frustrated by catastrophic losses of ships and crews, England established a Board of Longitude in 1714 to solve the “longitude problem.” The Board offered a large cash prize to anyone who could find a practical solution. They fully expected the problem to be solved by astronomers; however, it was eventually solved by a carpenter-turned-clockmaker, who designed a clock reliable at sea to within a few seconds over a period of months. Longitude can be found by the difference in time between local noon, determined by the sun, and noon at Greenwich, England – from an accurate clock. Since the earth turns through 360 degrees each day, 15 degrees per hour, that time difference can easily be converted into longitude.

Dava Sobel wrote the story of the quest for longitude, and later the story of a group of women at Harvard Observatory who ushered in the era of modern astronomy between the years 1877 to 1952. They worked with thousands of photographs taken through telescopes to map the sky in exquisite detail, and to classify stars according to their brightness and color, or spectra. The photographs were time exposures, which could pick up stars invisible to the eye. The work was meticulous and exhausting.

The Eastern Shore is one of the best places in the country for stargazing, as we have less ambient lighting than surrounding areas. Now recognized as “light pollution,” it has also been found to be a problem for wildlife. Natural cycles of nesting and breeding can be thrown off when light levels increase. This can be a problem if it impacts food availability at crucial times.

NASA sponsors an international citizen-science program to assess light levels at night. Volunteers take measurements on a few scheduled nights each month and submit them to a NASA database. The data are used to create a map of light levels and to observe change over time. Measurements can be naked-eye observations or can be made using high-tech sensors and smartphone apps. For more information, go to <https://www.globeatnight.org/>. 

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McAlpin H. Women astronomers shine in ‘the glass universe.’ NPR, Dec. 4, 2016. <https://www.npr.org/2016/12/04/503068093/women-astronomers-shine-in-the-glass-universe>

Night Sky Network. How can you help curb light pollution? Nov. 1, 2018. [https://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/news-display.cfm?News\\_ID=745](https://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/news-display.cfm?News_ID=745).

Sobel D. Longitude: The True Story of a Lone Genius Who Solved the Greatest Scientific Problem of His Time. Walker & Co., 1995. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Longitude\\_\(book\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Longitude_(book))

# Gene Hampton

January 3, 1934 - October 6, 2021

Gene Hampton was a longtime CBES Board and *ShoreLine* Edit Board member; he was also a vital contributor to *ShoreLine* both in the editing process and as each issue's final proofreader for over 20 years. His expertise as a hydrogeologist was invaluable in parsing out the data and concepts concerning the Shore's groundwater and the potential dangers that threaten it.

Jim McGowan, one-time Director of Planning at the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission, knew Gene for years through the Eastern Shore of Virginia Ground Water Committee. He commented that "Gene brought a rigorous scientific ethic to the committee's work and helped guide its decision-making."

Gene was a superb home-gardener. Not only did he plant and harvest spring, summer, and fall crops, he and his wife, Pat, cultivated apple and pear trees, blueberry bushes, grapes, and grew huge fig bushes. Many *ShoreLine* meetings included dividing up the excess bounty of the Hamptons' garden and orchard. Their flower gardens and small ponds were meticulously cared-for; the couple delighted in propagating native species such as the American Beautyberry. Ever-generous, Pat and Gene shared cuttings and "volunteer" plants of various types with friends, often accompanied by growing instructions specific to Shore soils and locations.

One surprising fact that emerged through talking with Gene and Pat's nephew, Max, was that Gene was a skillful fly fisherman. Apparently, wherever he lived, Gene found out the best locations to practice his craft.

In *ShoreLine* edit meetings, Gene noted all changes, additions, and deletions so that his final proofing of each issue would be accurate. He focused on anything having to do with water or statistics, sometimes catching errors in mathematics or logic that had been overlooked.

In short, Gene made a success of living on the Shore. He reveled in his home environment, but also contributed his time and talents to civic organizations, beach clean-ups, and the like. He is sorely missed. 



A family photo of Gene and Pat Hampton during their "off-Shore" life. Photo courtesy of Max Merlich

## The Changing Rural Workplace

By Mary Miller

The pandemic changed everything. Not just health and health care, family and community interactions, and our patterns of daily life, but also workforce models. Layoffs, business closures, quarantines, and mass resignations all helped to redesign the workplace. Entrepreneurship skyrocketed as former employees started their own small product and service businesses – in both rural and urban areas. One of the biggest changes of all has been remote working – the rise of people working at home both for their own businesses, and as long-distance employees of established businesses.



Although rural counties everywhere are ageing noticeably over the past 20 years, losing population as deaths outnumber births and with little in-migration,<sup>1</sup> the rural counties with lots of outdoor recreation have started to attract distance workers. A recent Gallup Poll showed a preference for living in attractive, outdoor recreation-oriented rural areas, *if* there were jobs available in their fields. And now there are – where broadband is accessible. Employees are now able to relocate to those desirable rural areas and work from home, and mitigate rural population loss.

In Virginia, some rural Chesapeake Bay counties have seen enough of an increase in distance workers to identify them as a significant employment sector. According to Hamilton Lombard, of the Demographic Research Group at the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at UVA, Northampton County ranks #4 in the state for remote workers, at 8.7% of its workforce working from home. And 3 counties on the Western Shore are included in the top 10.

For more information and analysis of changing rural demographics in VA: <https://cardinalnews.org/2021/11/16/the-numbers-we-ought-to-be-paying-attention-to/>.

<sup>1</sup> American Community Survey and 2020 US Census 

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# JOIN US!

## The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Unity Day Celebration



The Northampton and Accomack Chapters of the NAACP, Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore, and Northampton Public Schools are partnering to affirm Dr. King's living legacy: the nonviolent pursuit of freedom, justice, and equal opportunity for all. The Celebration will bring together all segments of our community, including community leaders, educators, students, parents and grandparents, seniors, area church groups, and community organizations.

Traditionally held during a community breakfast at Northampton High School, again this year the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Unity Day Celebration will be virtual due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, and will be held in 2 parts.

Part I of the Celebration will be held via Zoom call on Friday, January 14. The focus will be on the youth of our community, with students, their parents and grandparents, educators, and community leaders.

Students will compete in the MLK poster contest, and present a variety of other special talents, including music and dance.

Part II will be held on Monday, January 17, and will be broadcast live on WESR 103.3 FM. Our panel of diverse speakers will address issues for all ages and ethnicities on and off the Shore. Several community awards will also be announced. Additional information will be announced on WESR and *Shore Daily News*.

For additional details for both events, contact Jane Cabarrus at [janecabarrus@aol.com](mailto:janecabarrus@aol.com) or by phone at 757-442-2139, or CBES Donna Bozza at [info@cbes.org](mailto:info@cbes.org).

Details will also be available at [www.cbes.org](http://www.cbes.org).

Donations may be sent to MLK Unity Day Celebration, P.O. Box 333, Nassawadox, VA 23413.