



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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Goats – Land-Clearing Dynamos

By Mary Miller



(2) After

(1) Before

The entire herd of 50 small to mid-size goats arrive in Northampton County from Maryland in a red livestock trailer – here to remove unwanted vegetation from a residential property. They are unloaded into a small temporary corral while electric fencing is set up around the land to be cleared: (1) the dense understory of invasive species, overgrown natives, and phragmites (if the land is low and wet). In 4 days, the herd will clear about 2 acres of unwanted vegetation, leaving (2) a woodland floor of pine shatters, a few woody stems, and bare earth.

Photos by David Handschur

The old adage about creating a successful business, “Find a need and fill it,” couldn’t better describe Mary Bowen’s firm, *Browsing Green Goats*. The Goat Lady, as her clients call her, will bring her herd wherever unwanted vegetation is a problem – homes, schools and other community facilities, commercial properties, Homeowners Associations, etc. The goats will eat anything, she says, which explains the electric fences.

“Anything” means rose bushes, flower beds, vegetable gardens, and low-hanging fruit. But as carefully as the owners’ landscaping needs to be protected, so do the goats. Any vegetation in the laurel family, e.g., rhododendrons or azaleas, would be fatal to the goats, so care is taken to avoid grazing near those varieties. Kudzu, multiflora rose, and phragmites are common unwanted plants on the Shore – English Ivy, not the goats’ first choice for lunch, will

See *Goats*, cont’d on p. 3

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To the CBES Community from the President

We are entering my favorite time of year: Fall. My perspective is heavily influenced by the fact that I farm for a living. The days are shorter, our chickens are laying fewer eggs, and we are harvesting kale and turnips again. The cooler weather is a sure sign that the next season is just around the corner. It is time to reflect on the year, what went right and what went wrong, and how we are going to change going forward.

At the risk of taking the analogy of my own lifestyle too far, I think participating in CBES is a lot like farming. We labor hard through the year planting the “seeds” of ideas so that our community can start thinking of solutions and plans to move forward. We try to understand how we can support making the Eastern Shore a “better” place.

What might go wrong in our community? What is going well? The list of our challenges runs the gamut from social inequity in education, income, and economic opportunity, to short-sighted politics, to the environmental challenges faced by our fragile peninsula. There are a lot of weeds coming up among those seeds.

It is increasingly common for discussions between those who disagree to be angry, unproductive, and accusatory, but we have real problems to solve and we need to find ways to do that together. Improving our schools takes a community effort. Attracting talented teachers, providing community support and funding, and finding enlightened and talented administrators are complicated and difficult tasks.

Understanding the issues facing our communities, then formulating public policy responses, is surprisingly difficult. Developing economic opportunities without sacrificing our fragile environment, providing children with the best education possible, responding to changes in our shorelines and the frequency of flooding tides – it is hard to figure out how best to proceed. Given what is at risk, we have to have meaningful discussions. That is hard. It takes resources. It takes community involvement. And it takes CBES to help make those discussions happen.

This is my plea today to you. CBES needs your support. First, we always need members; our membership is the source of our influence on the Eastern Shore. The more of our community we reach and involve, the more likely we are to have a “better” Eastern Shore for all. You make that happen by being a member and by helping us connect with your friends and family who could (and should) be members of CBES. So please keep your membership current and help us expand in any way you can.

The main purpose of this letter, though, is to ask you to help provide the additional resources to fund CBES work over the coming year. Even though most of our activities are staffed by volunteers, it takes resources to coordinate their efforts, maintain communication channels, and generally keep our organization viable.

Donna Bozza, our Executive Director, works hard to coordinate

CBES varied activities around the Shore. Unlike many organizations, we operate on a shoestring. No national organization backs us up. Entirely locally funded, our modest endowment and local grants provide only a small portion of our annual budget. Our biggest fundraising activity is the annual Between the Waters Bike Tour, which also brings much-needed tourism dollars to the Shore economy.

Your tax-deductible donations at the end of the year provide the bulk of the support for this organization. Would you consider investing in CBES again this year? Please include us as generously as you can. We know there are many demands on your resources – good causes abound – but I believe that CBES work is vitally important in order to protect and support this special place we call home. Thank you.

Arthur Upshur, President

RAFFLE to WIN

Between the Waters 2018
by Shore artist, Bethany Simpson

CBES thanks LEMON TREE GALLERY, Cape Charles, for showcasing this striking Coastal Folk Art painting at their 301 Mason Avenue studio (757-331-4327).



Folk Art painting at their 301 Mason Avenue studio (757-331-4327).

Raffle tickets cost \$20 or 3 for \$50, and are available at Lemon Tree or online at www.cbes.org. The drawing will take place on December 1, 2018.

Proceeds benefit CBES 26th Annual Between the Waters Bike Tour and its mission: *Pedal to Protect Virginia's Eastern Shore.*

lemon tree
Gallery and Studio

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Goats, cont'd from p. 1

get devoured when there's nothing else left. In less than a week, the property is cleared.

Efficiency – The Goat Work Ethic

The goats graze from top to bottom of the vegetation – eating half their body weight in a day. They eat for about 8 hours a day, and like all ruminants, spend about that much time chewing the cud. They sleep the remaining 8 hours. The little ones learn from the adults – on-the-job training. During digestion, the plant seeds are ground up, so the manure does not contain viable reseeding material. When one plot is finished and the goats need to be moved, Mary walks ahead, scatters food on the ground, and the herd falls into an orderly parade to the next fenced parcel. Five-year-old granddaughter Lily is already helping out on the job.

The Rest of the Story

A lovely placid doe called Joy is the matriarch of the herd. The owner's family has found her to be not only a good leader, but also a comforting presence during a time of family illness. The herd now also visits schools before exam weeks, and appears to be a calming distraction for the students. An informal study during a return visit to an Advanced Placement student body will look further into this effect.

On the Shore, it doesn't take long for wild vegetation to take over an area around a home or business and create an impenetrable mass. Land clearing by *Browsing Green Goats* involves no chemicals or machinery, and work is priced by the project, not by the time on-site. For instance, a heavy kudzu invasion will take the goats longer to digest, since the plant is protein-rich. Extensive preparation of each overgrown parcel includes staking, installing, and moving the hundreds of yards of electric fencing several times during a project. The herd is stabled in Sunderland, Maryland: www.browsinggreengoats.com 

The Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel Closure “Incident”

After a traffic jam that totaled 17 hours, caused by damage when over-height cargo on a tunnel contractor's tractor trailer ripped the tunnel ceiling, traffic started moving. A CBBT spokesman spoke of “extreme inconveniences” suffered by customers, then stated there would be no toll refunds from the CBBT. Stories circulated on the Shore for days afterward of missed flights, long-planned vacations in tatters, medical appointments missed, patients unable to receive time-sensitive medical procedures, families left waiting at the airport, truckers missing schedules, perishable cargo jeopardized, business meetings cancelled – to say nothing of elderly people in discomfort, hungry children, car systems failing, ill people in distress, angry drivers behaving badly, and CBBT employees working to maintain order during this “extreme inconvenience.”

The contractor, Chesapeake Tunnel Joint Venture, is made up of Dragados USA, New York, NY (Dragados, Madrid) and the Schiavone Construction Co. of Secaucus, NJ. Despite some legal bumps in the road for Schiavone, the two principals in the Joint Venture have a combined 136 years' experience building tunnels.

The tractor trailer itself met the tunnel height restriction as it came through the toll booth. What no one appeared to notice, in spite of that 136 years' experience, was that the machinery loaded onto the trailer at one of the islands was considerably higher than the cab of the truck. So, for want of a quick look at the cargo height, for lack of an employee with a tape measure or an engineer with a laser distance-measuring tool, the tunnel ceiling was torn up, the entire structure was shut down, and drivers and passengers were stranded for the better part of a day.

The Joint Venture was the low bidder for the Thimble Shoal project; it has since set up a toll reimbursement fund. Repairs will take 3 weeks. The driver has been charged with a misdemeanor. 

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Check out our Facebook page – www.facebook.com/CBES1988/ – to find out about events, share comments and photos with members and other Eastern Shore citizens, and let us know what you're thinking. Tell us if you like what we're doing, or if there are other issues we need to cover.

Culinary Workforce Training on the Eastern Shore

By Martina Coker

Governor Northam recently visited Cape Charles to celebrate the opening of 14 new businesses in that town in the past year, with ribbon cuttings at each one. That included several restaurants: The Northampton Hotel, The Cape Charles Brewery, Peach Beach Shaved Ice Shack, and Tim's Place. Several other restaurants have opened in the area in the past couple of years including Gerry's Ristorante and N2S Italian Family Restaurant on Lankford highway, The Local in Cheriton, and Rancho Relaxo in Exmore.

The increased number of eating establishments is a welcome development for those of us who enjoy eating out, but challenges exist for the owners of these establishments in terms of staff recruitment, retention, and training.

According to Thomas Johnson, Dean of Workforce Development Services at the Eastern Shore Community College (ESCC), the college works to train area students in the food service field. The largest class they run is the mandatory ServSafe® class. This is a food and beverage safety training and certification program administered by the National Restaurant Association. As of July 1, 2018, each food establishment serving hot foods (including temporary food establishments) is "required to have one employee with supervisory and management responsibility and the authority to direct and control food preparation and service who is a certified food protection manager, demonstrating proficiency of required knowledge and information through an accredited program." The ServSafe® program meets this requirement.

ESCC certified 86 people through this program last year. This includes not only restaurants with workers serving the public, but also other establishments that engage in food service, such as assisted living facilities like the Hermitage. ESCC has partnered with the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce and the Northampton Chamber of Commerce to increase awareness of this program.

Previous courses to provide more in-depth training have been tried at ESCC, and were suspended due to lack of interest. One course, "Functions of the Kitchen," involved book work completed at ESCC plus a practicum at Onancock's Blarney Stone Pub. Past partners in the program included The Island House, the Eastern Shore Yacht and Country Club, and The Oyster Farm. Dean Johnson has toured other Shore restaurants to determine their needs, and has not found much interest. He stated that it is most cost-effective for food service establishments to send students to ESCC for training rather than on-site training.

Mr. Johnson indicated that anyone interested in discussing training needs can contact him at 757-787-7979.

Restaurants and Schools Can Work Together

Jason Van Marter, of The Local in Cheriton, noted a need for well-trained workers at his restaurant. Jason has reached out to the Culinary Institute of Virginia (CIV) to assist with his training needs and hopes to be able to set up as an internship site. The education provided through CIV leads to an Associate Degree for students completing the program. Jason noted that he would like more in-depth training for his staff, beyond the basics provided by a certificate program. He identified a need for more trade-related skills, like preparation of stocks and sauces, equipment identification, knife skills, and service standards.

Northampton High School also trains students to work in the food services industry. The culinary arts teacher, Ana Kohler, came to the high school from The Hotel Cape Charles 4 years ago. The high school also provides the ServSafe® Certification in addition to more advanced kitchen trade skills. Almost all of Ms. Kohler's students are currently working in area restaurants. Students at the high school cater in-house events such as the National Educational Foundation Breakfast, Heritage nights, and Athletic Banquets. The students run the Buzz Worthy Bistro, a hands-on project that prepares and sells food to teachers and staff. This is a break-even effort, but provides the students with great experience.

Several people have expressed interest in donating to the Culinary Arts program. Ms. Kohler expressed gratitude for the administrative support that she receives, but noted that the educational system is set up to fund only items that can be utilized beyond one year such as uniforms, durable equipment, etc. Helpful donations would include food items, especially local foods such as oysters and locally grown food, as well as single-use items such as disposable cutlery, paper plates, gloves, etc. Ms. Kohler would love to start a garden at the high school where students could grow food to be used in their classes. She would welcome volunteers to help her with time or materials to make this a reality. As the need for more skilled kitchen staff increases, local educational resources have the opportunity to train students for these skilled local jobs.

Additional Community Help Opportunities

There is a new initiative by the Northampton Education Foundation to leverage community resources to meet the
See Culinary, cont'd on page 5

As the need for more skilled kitchen staff increases, local educational resources have the opportunity to train students for these skilled local jobs.

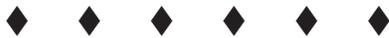
Citizen Participation

ShoreLine Staff

At the October 17 Accomack County Board of Supervisors meeting, Chairman Robert Crockett made a distinction with regard to public comments. Board member Donald Hart had asked to read comments he had received by email from Carlene Zach concerning the impact of the poultry industry. Chairman Crockett noted that “public comment period rules are clear – you have to be here, you have to sign up, and you have 4 minutes to make your comment. We’re going to allow the letter to made part of the Board record, but in future cases if anyone wants to submit a letter, it won’t be read by a Board member into the record.”

As with so many things, rules for BOS public comments differ between Accomack and Northampton Counties. While Accomack’s rules only address “speakers,” and are silent on any written comments, Northampton’s rules specifically state that “The Board may accept written comments in lieu of oral statements,” with the “discretion of the Chair whether to read the comments aloud or summarize. Comments will be entered into the record after consensus or majority vote of the Board.”

While speaking in person is obviously desirable, it is not always feasible. First, with a start time of 5:00 PM (as opposed to Northampton’s 7:00 PM start time), Accomack County is limiting “speakers” to retirees, the unemployed, and part-time workers. Second, some people are unable or reluctant to speak in public. The purpose of the Public Comment Period at each BOS meeting is for the Board to know what is on citizens’ minds, and what their concerns are. We would hope that the policy would be expansive, not restrictive, so that every citizen feels their voice is heard. 



Culinary, *cont'd from p. 4*

needs in the school system. This classroom support initiative pulls together school/teacher needs and community resources in one place. There are 3 components to this endeavor. First, “Fund-A-Project” is a crowdfunding site on which teachers can list their needs for a project and donors can make a monetary donation online. “Adopt-A-Classroom” allows donors to fund classrooms to keep teachers from having to use their own money to purchase supplies for our community’s children. “Bulletin Board Listings” allows a 2-way exchange of needed resources. Teachers can post their needs for specific supplies, such as the disposable cutlery or food items mentioned above, and community residents can post what they have to give – gently used clothing for students in need, or an offer of time and skills, culinary class supplies, or the gardening skills described by Ms. Kohler. All donations through these sites are tax-deductible. Explore these donation opportunities at www.ncedufoundation.com. 

Christiana Campbell’s Sweet Potato Muffins

Christiana Campbell was a successful tavern owner in 18th Century Williamsburg, Virginia. The business, which continues to bear her name, still welcomes guests and feeds them well, in the same historic location. Thomas Jefferson and George Washington were guests and patrons when Williamsburg was still the capitol of Virginia. Many recipes for the food served there today are the same ones, using the same local ingredients, that were served in 1750. Here’s one for the holidays, long on tradition and great taste – and still a favorite at Christiana Campbell’s Tavern.



- ½ cup butter
- 1 ¼ cups sugar
- 1 ¼ cups mashed sweet potatoes (1 medium), microwaved 4-5 minutes
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ cups flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp nutmeg
- 1 cup milk
- ½ cup chopped raisins
- ¼ cup chopped pecans or walnuts

Cream butter, sugar, and sweet potatoes until smooth. Add eggs and beat well. Sift flour, baking soda, salt, and spices. Add alternately with milk to butter mixture, mixing after each addition. Do not over-mix. Add chopped fruit and nuts. Fill well-greased or paper-lined muffin tins, about 2/3 full – regular size or mini-muffins. Top with dry cinnamon/sugar mixture. Bake at 400° for 15-20 minutes until done. Muffins freeze well.

Reprinted with permission: The Kitchen Hive <http://www.talkrealnow.com/category/revolution-cookbook/> 



Shockley Farm sweet potatoes

Keeping Track

Manure Storage

During the August meeting of the Accomack Board of Zoning Appeals, an application for setback variances to subdivide a poultry farm (see “Subdividing Poultry Farms,” page 7) included reference to a “future manure shed.” Aside from the site-specific issues (the proposed shed location is actually immediately adjacent to the beginning of a drainage ditch, and actually over the existing stormwater pipe, as well as being approximately 50 feet from the existing stormwater management pond), the question arises – if there’s no manure shed, how is the manure being handled currently? Although we’ve had assurances from the industry that the new operations will have roofed manure sheds, with 4-foot walls, to prevent any runoff from the site, this is evidently not true for some of the older operations.

For poultry farms, and for end users if not used within 14 days, poultry litter can be stored in 3 ways: temporary storage (“stockpiling”; with or without a ground liner); open, bunker-type storage; or permanent, roofed storage. Stockpiling is currently used much less frequently. Regardless of the method used, it must protect the litter from contact with precipitation. The primary reason is to prevent leaching or runoff of nitrogen into surface waters or groundwater. Minimum guidelines from the Department of Environmental Quality, through the Virginia Pollution Abatement (VPA) Regulation and General Permit for Poultry Waste Management, include:

- The litter must be covered with an impermeable barrier to protect it from precipitation and wind (a minimum of 6 mil thick plastic sheeting, held in place with weights or other anchoring system).
- The storage site must be located where stormwater cannot run onto or under the stored litter.
- The storage site should be separated from the seasonal high water table by 2 feet, or 1 foot with an impermeable barrier (at least 12 inches of compact clay, or at least 4 inches of reinforced concrete).
- If the litter is not stored under a roof, the storage site must be at least 100 feet from any surface water, intermittent drainage, or well.

- Storage facilities constructed after December 1, 2000, shall not be located within the 100-year floodplain.

Additional guidelines from the Virginia Cooperative Extension include:

- The storage site should be on high ground that is not subject to flooding.
- The storage site should be located at least 150 feet from any dwelling or production house.

Guidelines from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service state that the manure should be stored in a covered shed, and warn of potential problems, including manure piled outside of the shed, manure stacked too high against the walls, equipment or supplies inside the shed that are not easily movable, or obvious grading from the end of the shed to a drainage ditch or swale.



Northampton Board of Supervisors Holds Public Hearing on Comprehensive Plan Draft

On October 24, the Northampton Board of Supervisors held its own Public Hearing on the final Comprehensive Plan Draft amendments submitted by the Planning Commission. There were 26 comments presented to the Planning Commission at its Public Hearing – almost all of them opposing the Draft, its contents, the process, its lack of public participation in its creation, and suggesting changes.

Almost none of the changes presented to the Planning Commission were incorporated into the final Draft. The Draft still includes arbitrary, unsupported changes to land use districts, removal of protective overlays, consideration of high-density residential projects, and unmapped commercial development on Route 13. It still relied on old data and surveys and included vast residential density increases in the face of projected long-term population decline.

The Board has 90 days to take action on the draft – either approve all or some of it, amend and approve, or disapprove it. If it is disapproved, it must be sent back to the Planning Commission with a written statement of the reasons for disapproval. The Planning Commission then has 60 days to reconsider the draft and resubmit it with any changes to the Board.

2018 CBES Between the Waters Bike Tour

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Subdividing Poultry Farms

Since August, there have been two hearings before the Accomack Board of Zoning Appeals for properties with older chicken houses, seeking to subdivide the poultry operation from the rest of the parcel, and seeking variances from the 500-foot setbacks set forth in the 2016 Poultry Ordinance.

County staff opposed the 6 variances requested in the latest application, to divide a 72-acre parcel with 6 poultry houses in Hallwood, including a 242-foot variance from the existing dwelling on an adjacent property, a 268-foot variance from an unimproved subdivision, and a variance from landscaping requirements. As the staff stated, “the creation of a new lot requires conformance to the current poultry ordinance standards.” The staff opposed this request, since it “opens the County to receiving more of these types of applications to create lots that do not meet the County’s current standards for the location and placement of poultry houses.” The Zoning Board indicated they don’t follow precedents, but rule on each case on its merits. Nonetheless, although neither case presented a true hardship that prevented adjustment of the boundary lines, the Board approved both applications as submitted.

The Code of Virginia (§ 15.2-2309) notes that “a variance shall be granted if ... the strict application of the terms of the ordinance would unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property.” In both these cases, the boundary line in question was placed so as to maximize the remaining parcel size in cultivated land for the applicant; there was no hardship cited in either case.

It is disconcerting to see this; although some of the variances are unavoidable, since these parcels were carved out under the old ordinance, the main dividing boundary line has been drawn at the owner’s discretion, and could be moved. As the county staff noted for the second application, “the construction and placement of these 6 poultry houses was done as part of the entire parcel. The request to create a new lot that is solely confined to the poultry houses without meeting most of the current ordinance requirements [will] have ongoing effects and implications to other similarly developed lots in the County.”

PAID HELP WANTED

CBES Bike Tour Coordinator

Be a part of the oldest and largest bike tour on the Shore. The successful candidate for this job will be detail-orientated, with keen organizational skills, to handle the many moving parts of the Bike Tour process.

Event planning experience is a plus, as well as good people skills. Flexible hours throughout 2019. Contact info@cbes.org or 757-678-7157 for more information.



Celebrating 30 Years of ShoreLine 2000 - 2003

The Chesapeake Bay-Bridge Tunnel Board approved a commuter toll schedule; the stated motion rejected the notion that increased traffic would necessitate new tunnels. A 40% increase in new home construction was seen over 3 years in Northampton – a 90% increase in “dwellings for new residents” – excluding Cape Charles.

Delegate Bob Bloxom was stripped of his seniority committee positions by the Republican Caucus. In a Report to his constituents about not voting the “party line,” he wrote: “I have faithfully and honorably represented you. I would not have done anything differently.”

Design began on a 55-acre Northampton County government complex: 150-bed jail, courthouse, restaurant, Social Services building, retention ponds, 477-space parking lot, Sheriff’s Office, water/sewer system, and a 150-foot wind turbine. A 30-year, \$20-million-dollar bond issue meant a \$.04/\$100 tax increase.

The worst intersections on the Shore? The Food Lion/McDonalds entrance at Cape Charles, and the Royal Farms entrance at Nelsonia.

The Birding and Wildlife Trail opened, including public and private land in both counties. Winergy, a Long Island, NY, corporation, unconnected to the wind energy industry, announced plans to obtain permits for 271 wind turbines off the Shore’s coastline – and then sell the permits. The Bayview Citizens for Social Justice broke ground for the Bayview Rural Village near Cheriton – to provide low-income housing for the community. FEMA announced a program to raise houses in flood-prone areas on the Shore.

Northampton County faced redistricting issues as a result of a “preclearance” requirement by the US Dept. of Justice. The 1965 Voting Rights Act required the county to prove that new voting districts protected the rights of minority voters. After several plans were rejected, the county was finally able to have a delayed election 18 months late.

The Virginia Eastern Shore Land Trust was founded. Voluntary, permanent conservation easements were established on 5 farms, 1,025 acres, with 3 miles of Bay frontage. Several more were planned. Bay Creek announced a 2-year plan for a new marina complex at Kings Creek, a restaurant and 3 bars, yacht club, 100 boat slips, and high-end retail stores. Also, the original Bay Creek development announced a second golf course, a 220-room beachfront inn, tennis facilities, and a spa. 

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INFORM, ENGAGE, EMPOWER!

SHORELINE

Community Calendar - November 2018

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

CBES and Other Activities		Accomack County		Northampton County	
Nov 6	Election Day Polls open from 6 AM - 7 PM	Nov	Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting canceled	Nov	Board of Zoning Appeals TBA
Nov 7	VIMS Public Seminar 7:30 PM, Wachapreague	Nov 14	Board of Supervisors 5 PM, Sup. Chambers	Nov 5	Planning Commission (PC) 7 PM, Sup. Chambers
Nov 20	ES Ground Water Committee 10 AM, Accomac	Nov 14	Planning Commission (PC) 7 PM, Sup. Chambers	Nov 20	Board of Supervisors (BOS) 7 PM, Sup. Chambers
Nov 20	CBES Board Meeting 7:00 PM, Eastville	Nov 15	Wetlands Board 10 AM, Sup. Chambers	Nov 21	Wetlands Board TBA, Conference Room
		Nov 20	School Board 6:30 PM, Sup. Chambers	Nov 21	PC Work Session 7 PM, Sup. Chambers
		Nov 27	PC Work Session 7 PM, Sup. Chambers	Nov	BOS Work Session/ Adjourned Meeting Meeting canceled
				Nov 27	School Board 6:00 PM, Machipongo

For Memberships & Information: www.cbcs.org