

CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EASTERN SHORE **SHORELINE**

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Culture on the Eastern Shore of Virginia*

TM

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New Chapter for Virginia Organizing

By Sue Mastyl

For the past year, members of the Eastern Shore community have been working to form a local chapter of Virginia Organizing, a nonpartisan statewide grassroots organization. They have been meeting monthly to identify an issue to focus local efforts for change, and decided at their January meeting on Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline. Other chapters around the state are also working on this issue, which involves reducing high suspension rates in the schools. Students as young as pre-K are suspended from school for fighting, cursing, being late to class, and disruptive behavior; according to the American Civil Liberties Union, suspended students are three times more likely to become involved with the juvenile justice system. With over 5,000 children in schools in the two counties, this issue could impact many families on the Shore.

Since 1995, Virginia Organizing has worked to “challenge injustice by empowering people in local communities to address issues that affect their lives,” said Chapter Organizer Meghan McNamara. The group “encourages the participation of people that have traditionally had little or no voice in society,” and helps “build relationships with diverse individuals and groups throughout Virginia so they can work together.” The group’s first success came in 1995, when they challenged the jury selection process in Lee County, resulting in

the first African-American appointed as a jury commissioner. Some of the issues that have been addressed around the state include:

- Racial profiling
- Affordable housing
- Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Medicaid expansion
- Voting rights restoration
- Environmental justice issues, including:
 - Opposing a landfill in Richmond
 - Preventing rail cars carrying hazardous waste from parking in residential areas in Fredericksburg
 - Protecting families from rezoning with a Mobile Home Park Protection policy in Chesapeake and Virginia Beach
- Predatory lending
- Immigration reform
- Diversity issues, including:
 - Language in the Harrisonburg city’s hiring policy to state that the city seeks a diverse and inclusive workforce
 - A resolution by the Charlottesville City Council encouraging the General Assembly to adopt language to include sexual orientation in the hate crimes law
 - Adoption of bilingual notices for the Alexandria Housing and Redevelopment Authority
 - Inclusion of African-American and Native-American contributions to the city’s history in the meeting

room mural for the Spotsylvania Board of Supervisors

The local Eastern Shore chapter includes members of NAACP, Delta Sigma Theta, Mary N. Smith Alumni, CBES, the Center for Family and Community Development, Coming to the Table, and several local churches. Two local events that have been held were a one-day workshop on Dismantling Racism on October 8, 2016, and a rally in Onley on February 4, 2017, to support the ACA.

The next event for the group will be a Listening Session for Students and Parents, on March 4 from 11:00 to 1:00, at Gaskins Chapel AME Church in Onancock, to share experiences and concerns about the public schools in both counties.

More information on the organization can be found at:
www.virginia-organizing.org



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Plus Health Fair Insert!

Planning Commission Holds Up Board Requests

Adds Disbanded CPAC Members to Stakeholders Group

Staff Report

At a recent meeting, the Northampton Board of Supervisors sent a request to the county Planning Commission for review and recommendation of several zoning changes – to clarify wording and definitions, checking for duplication, etc. The Planning Commission responded:

“It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to wait until after the Comprehensive Plan update is completed before reviewing the zoning items. It was the Commission’s feeling that review of these items would take time away from their work on the Plan.”

The Planning Commission began work on the state-mandated 5-year Plan review as long ago as September, 2011. Six years later, the review is still incomplete. Yet another time-line for completion has been issued by the Planning Commission, and it appears that requests for zoning recommendations from the Supervisors will be put on the back burner.

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F. Victor Schmidt

Staff Writers

Tim Krawczel Dr. Mike Peirson
Janet Sturgis

Editor/Design

Sarah Morgan, Savoy Studio

How to reach CBES

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

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The Comprehensive Plan Review


- In 2012, a Plan Review Stakeholder Group (PRSG) was formed by the Planning Commission to provide community input and feedback as the Plan review progressed. Over 70 residents were appointed – a diverse group representing agriculture/aquaculture, tourism and recreation, small business owners, land and resource preservationists, retirees, entrepreneurs, community organizations, neighborhood groups, real estate, government, non-profits and first responders, among others. Since its appointment, the Group was convened only once, in 2012.
- Also in 2012, seven community input meetings were held in schools, fire halls and church meeting rooms up and down the county. The summary of comments from those meetings was intended to inform the Plan review and has been provided to the Commission.
- A previous Board appointed a Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) consisting of 7 men – mostly professionals and/or business owners, some retired, charged with providing an Economic Plan for the county. In 2013 the Committee submitted their Plan in a Report, based partly on a telephone survey funded

by the National Association of Realtors, which indicated general dissatisfaction with the county’s development. The CPAC was subsequently disbanded by the Board.

The Planning Commission Moved On

In its required Annual Report to the Board, the Planning Commission said this in February, 2017:

- “After hearing from various groups over the summer and fall, the Commission continues to make additional revisions to the draft (Comprehensive) Plan...”
- “...the Planning Commission has spent the last few months meeting with other stakeholders and updating the Plan based on input from those meetings.”
- “Planning Review Stakeholders Group membership is being updated; there have been job changes for some members.”
- “On Jan. 12, 2016 the Board dissolved the CPAC.”
- “On Jan. 20, 2016, the Planning Commission added members of the CPAC to the PRSG” (the Stakeholders Group).
- “August-October 2016: Planning Commission invited various panels to seek input for the Plan.”

Next month: A discussion of the input received by the Planning Commission. 

Energy Justice Presentation

Wednesday, March 15, at 7 PM

Broadwater Academy, Exmore, Virginia

Speaker: Mike Ewall, Energy Justice Network in Philadelphia

Topics include:

Poultry Litter Incineration: Facts vs. Myths; Green Solution or Public Health Threat?; Not a Solution to Factory Farm Pollution; Manure to Energy: Theory and Practice.

For information of the speaker: www.energyjustice.net/mikeewall

Shore Honeybees – Getting By...

...With a Little Help From Their Friends

By Ann Snyder

Like most of us here on the Eastern Shore, European honeybees are a non-native species. The first *Apis mellifera* were brought to Virginia in 1622. Once here, those first honeybees sent swarms westward in advance of the colonists.



Honey has been found in the pyramids in Egypt and bees are portrayed in ancient European cave drawings as well as in Biblical psalms and stories. Honeybees are, next to human beings, the most intensely studied creature on earth. Still, it's only recently that we've recognized the value of honeybees' work of plant pollination, not only for humankind but also for entire ecosystems.

If you've been attentive, you may have noticed that honeybees began to disappear in the late 1980s. First came various mites (tracheal and varroa), which spread to every continent. Now we hear of the mysterious "Colony Collapse Disorder" – the sudden demise of an apparently healthy colony. It's difficult to determine the one cause for colony collapse when so many things are going wrong for honeybees. Is it the environment or genes or nutrition or disease? A parasite, virus, bacteria or fungus ... or is it herbicides, pesticides or fungicides? Is it a factor or an accumulation of factors, or the timing of factors? The facile answer is "yes."

But really, we don't know. What we do know is that the art of beekeeping is more complicated now than it was a generation ago. On the Eastern Shore, the rate of hive loss each year is like the national average: 30% – 40%. Beekeepers, though, are eternally hopeful. The joy of working in cooperation with these beautiful, orderly and miraculous creatures is a powerful motivator. A great deal of university research and the interest and support of the Commonwealth of Virginia encourages us. And fellow beekeepers everywhere share strategies to help the bees.



Quinby beekeepers work to install bees in a new hive box.

The Beekeepers Guild of the Eastern Shore is a group begun in 2010. We currently have 60 active members, and our annual Beginning Beekeeping class typically fills with about 30 new people each year. There are hundreds of beekeepers old and new on the shore now, and no matter where you live, you're not far from one.

Our goals are to support bees and beekeepers, and to help inform the public. We appear at farmers markets, schools, and public events. We help each other with advice and with the physical and sometimes intimidating work of examining our hives.

We share resources and equipment. We stay connected to regional clubs as well as the Virginia State Beekeepers Association. One of our members brings extraordinary knowledge from his native Belize, and has drawn the interest of our state apiarist. Not too long ago another member invited an expert beekeeping friend from Germany to speak at one of our meetings. To our delight, a picture of us soon ended up on the cover of a German beekeeping journal, so perhaps we can honestly claim an international reputation!

Honeybees today are the objects of concern and fascination, and are suddenly well represented in art, in stylish jewelry, in textiles, and in literature and media – a timely awakening to the fragility of those fellow creatures whose lives are so interconnected with ours. We beekeepers know that our efforts to care for honeybees are good for us, the economy and of immeasurable benefit to our world.

For those who want to help honeybees without actually becoming beekeepers, the Beekeepers Guild offers these suggestions:

- Allow a little untidy weediness wherever you can. Bees require wildflower forage all year, and our monoculture grassy lawns and manicured roadsides represent "food deserts" for them, a serious problem.
- If you happen to find a honeybee swarm, or bees inhabiting a structure, call us and we will make every effort to remove them and give them a good home. If you think you must use chemicals in your garden or fields, try to avoid applying them at the time the plants are flowering.

For anyone who might be interested in learning more about beekeeping, the Guild is offering a 2-day Beginning Beekeeping Course. It will be held on two consecutive Saturdays: March 4 and March 11, from 8:30 – 1:30, at the Va. Tech Agricultural Research and Experiment Center in Painter. For more information, please contact Ann at 442-4118, or bleakhouse@verizon.net. To register, please visit our website www.bgesva.org.



Keeping Track in Accomack

by Sue Mastyl

Although many issues come up during the course of the year, we can anticipate some of what Accomack County's Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will be focusing on by what has been identified in the 2017 projected workload for the Planning Commission. Highlights include:

- **Poultry Monitoring Meeting:** An annual review of the current status of applications for poultry houses was held at their February meeting, no action was taken.
- **Utility-Scale Solar:** Development of a zoning overlay for utility-scale solar, scheduled for the January and March meetings, after which a recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors
- **Comprehensive Plan:** Review and scoping of the comprehensive plan, scheduled for September through December, with identification of issues of community interest scheduled for July
- **Coastal Roads Inundation** A discussion in conjunction with VIMS, scheduled for June

Agendas and information packets are posted each month for the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors on the Thursday before each meeting at www.boarddocs.com/va/coa/Board.nsf/Public.



Get your taste buds ready! Farmers from New Church to Kiptopeake are readying their gardens and planting for the season so that Shore foodies can buy local produce and other products. Please see article on page 6.



Photo by Skyhaiku

PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS!

– BE A SPONSOR –

25th Anniversary of a sellout cycling tradition

CBES Between the Waters Bike Tour

Saturday, October 28, 2017

Sunset Beach Resort

This is an epic year to share the exposure to over 1,000 riders and their support teams. The new venue at the recently upgraded Sunset Beach Resort, an expanded "Oink & Oyster Roast" following the tour, and more ways to promote your business make sponsorship a win-win proposition.

Rider Demographics: Affluent households, with the vast majority from Virginia – Hampton Roads region & Richmond, followed by Maryland, Pennsylvania, and NJ

The Between the Waters Bike Tour is aggressively marketed on social media and in *Coastal Virginia Magazine*, *Jim Baugh Outdoors Show*, *Blue Ridge Outdoor*, *Potomac Peddler*, and *Coastal Angler*. Other promotions include rackcards distributed to over 200 locations as well as in CBES Monthly *ShoreLine*, on www.cbcs.org, and E-Blasts.

Join Presenting Sponsors Sunset Beach Resort & Coastal Virginia Magazine

Support *Pedal to Protect the Eastern Shore*

Sponsorship Levels run from \$2,000 to \$100. For more info: www.cbcs.org, info@cbcs.org, 757-678-7157



Health Care, Health Fair, Health Insurance

Rural America May Face More Health Care Crises

By Mary Miller

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in a December 2016 report, states that for the first time in 20 years, United States life expectancy has declined. The decline was highest in rural areas and small cities. The decline was partly driven by increased mortality rate for white, working-class Americans in rural areas.

This mortality increase in rural areas is linked to growing rates of chronic illness, obesity, and diabetes; increased alcoholism, smoking, opioid addiction and other drug abuse; and a decrease in access to affordable health care and health insurance. These conclusions are consistent with data provided by <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org> for Accomack and Northampton counties. These conditions are made worse in many southern states with decreasing access to medical care.

Employer-provided health care and individually purchased health insurance are often unaffordable for small businesses and families in rural areas. A recent increase in people insured, especially in rural areas, under the Affordable Care Act (sometimes referred to as “ObamaCare”), has allowed more access to medical care for people who previously had no coverage. But prior years of caring for an underinsured/uninsured population base had added to providers’ fiscal operating struggles, which then resulted in widespread rural hospital closures and consolidations – 51 rural hospitals closed since 2010.

According to a report from the Rural Research Program at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, nearly two-thirds of them were in the south. The report also states that the unwillingness of many southern states to expand Medicaid to low-income adults has been a major factor in the closings.

Are Changes Coming for Government-Administered Health Insurance Programs?

The compiled information in the table below appears to confirm that over half the Shore’s residents are either relying on government-administered health insurance programs or are uninsured. Proposals in Washington which might change health insurance programs have already created uncertainty and concern. Federal or state restructuring of these programs, either through tighter eligibility requirements, a revised schedule of lower payments to health care providers, or elimination of programs, would probably have serious short- and long-term effects both on the insured and on the health care service providers.

Effects on families, children and the elderly would be immediate and painful – loss or decrease of health insurance would lead to loss or decrease of medical care, drugs, medical supplies and support services. And the uncertainty of reimbursement by those government supported health insurance programs could have long-term effects on the

See Health Care, Cont’d on page 7

Enrolled numbers/status in government administered health insurance options

	Accomack County	Northampton County
Medicare A & B ¹ <i>Age restricted</i>	8,181 24.8% of county population*	3,216 25.6% of county population*
Affordable Care Act ² insurance plans <i>Income restricted</i>	1,709 5% of county population	840 7% of county population
Medicaid ³ <i>Income restricted**</i>	1,342 4% of county population <i>15.69% of eligible** residents</i>	596 4.9% of county population <i>17.02% of eligible** residents</i>
Total enrollees in Medicare A/B, Affordable Care Act plans and Medicaid % of population	11,232 34% of county population	4,652 38.2% of county population

¹ and ³ Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

*15% of US population enrolled in Medicare

² <https://aspe.hhs.gov/health-insurance-marketplace-cost-sharing-reduction-subsidies-zip-code-and-county-2016>

³ **Eligibility for Medicaid – Weldon Cooper

- a) pregnant women – income dependent
- b) parents of dependent children – household income dependent (e.g, family of 4 – \$32,319)
- c) adults, no dependent children – not eligible
- d) FAMIS and CHIP for children – income dependent

SL Comment. *The information in the Table appears to show that over one-third of the population in both counties relies on government-administered health insurance. And according to the County Health Rankings for 2016, 20% of Accomack County residents and 21% of Northampton County residents are uninsured. Many low-income families and individuals eligible for government supported health insurance programs have never applied for them.*

Farmers Markets and the Shore Economy

By Arthur Uphur

Spring is now hidden in each warm spell on the Eastern Shore. The first flowers of spring are up and threatening to open at any moment. For those of us who love fresh, local foods, the opening of the farmers markets around the Shore each spring is an exciting start to the fresh food season. We have three well established local producer markets on the Shore at Cape Charles, Onancock, and Chincoteague. Several other towns also have markets in the planning stage. For an area our size and population, we are blessed with a relative abundance of local markets. They offer a chance to shop for our things in an atmosphere that reflects our local culture. Often, there is local music, local artists are demonstrating their techniques, and fresh veggies and fruits are available that could not be bought at any of our supermarkets.

Keep Money in the Community

Economic study after study points to a thriving local exchange sector as one key to a healthy local economy. Keeping local dollars local has a profound effect on the strength of our Shore economy. When we buy at Food Lion or Walmart, most of the dollars we spend go off the Shore to pay for their non-local suppliers, the non-local distribution system, and, of course, their headquarter profits. While their employees recycle some of those dollars back to the local economy, the reality is that most of those dollars go off the Shore. Local farmers and producers, on the other hand, generally plow a much larger percentage of their sales dollars back into the local economy through their direct purchases of other goods and services and the higher labor “content” of their products.

The higher the percentage of dollars that stays local, the higher the multiplier effect of those dollars. That is, the more those retail dollars cycle back, the more they create a multiple of economic activity from that original purchase. So one dollar spent locally may create and support \$2.00 of local activity where one dollar spent at Walmart may only create \$0.15 of additional local economic activity (*based on chain store average of 14% local return per an American Independent Business Alliance 2012 study*).

Buy From Local Producers

The markets listed here are all producer markets. That means that the folks you buy from grew or made what they sell. These are not the same products as those sold at local chain stores. When you buy a cutting board from Cal’s Putterings, it reflects his local craftsmanship, unique artisanship, and individualized design. All of that probably means a higher price versus cutting boards available at Dollar Tree – but that premium reflects what we are purchasing. We always pay more for bringing artistic expression into our lives. An original Picasso costs more than a poster bought



The Cape Charles Farmers Market with the town's award-winning water tower in the background.

online. A farmers market allows us to deal directly with the artisans that bring their products to the market. Whether it is local beauty products from Lavender Skies or fresh veggies from a neighborhood farmer, the markets represent a way for you to support and enjoy the work of these artists crafting their products for you to enjoy.

Needed: More Foot Traffic

While we have some wonderful markets on the Shore, we need to be aware that none of them are truly sustainable yet. The issue is that none of them have enough foot traffic to sustain their vendors in the long-term. One old standard rule of thumb is that a vendor should hope for at least \$1000/week at a market in sales. Rules of thumb are just rough estimates. But clearly we need a lot of foot traffic to keep a market thriving. Our markets seldom reach this standard for customer count today. This raises the worry as more markets are proposed – how many markets can the Eastern Shore support? But maybe the real question is how many of us will support our markets? But if we all support the current markets, their growth will spur new markets. Hopefully, we can find the right mix with a growth in the number of shoppers keeping this shopping experience alive for the long term on the Eastern Shore.


Farmers markets are still a relatively new venue. It takes time to build their clientele and for more people to incorporate them as a regular shopping habit. But it is clear that, for them to survive and thrive, we need to really support them. They need all of us to make our local market a

*See **Farmers Markets**, Cont'd on page 7*

Farmers Markets, cont'd from p. 6

weekly habit – we shop there first before we fill in the gaps at the chain stores. If you do not see something you want, make a comment to the market manager on site or to the vendor to start the wheels turning on how they might add a new product.

Help your local market avoid the “Catch 22” dilemma that they all have. Today they limit their vendors to try to make each vendor’s sales high enough to make the market worth it for the vendor. But that can mean too little selection, making the market less attractive to its customers as a place to shop each week.

The key is traffic – if most folks on the Shore made a stop by the market every week, that would enable more selection and better pricing from more throughput at the market. But whether we still have these wonderful local venues in the future will depend on whether we all collectively are willing to add them to our weekly visits – just as today we all trudge to Food Lion or Walmart, we all need to add a farm market visit to our weekly shopping plans. 

Eastern Shore Farmers Markets

Chincoteague Island Farmers and Artisans Market

6309 Church Street

Saturdays 9 AM-1 PM from April 15 to October 28

Wednesdays 9 AM-1 PM from May 31 - September 6

(Pony Penning Week, the Market is on Tuesday, July 25)

The Onancock Market:

Corner of Market Street and Ames Street - across from the Post Office in downtown Onancock, Virginia

Saturdays 9 AM-12 PM from May through November

Cape Charles Farmers Market:

814 Randolph Ave, Cape Charles, VA – at the Cape Charles Museum on the main road into Cape Charles.

Tuesdays, 3-6 PM from May 2 - October 31

CBES Membership 2017

New Renewal *ShoreLine* by email only

Name

Phone

Address

City ST Zip

1 yr. Regular Membership (includes *ShoreLine*) \$25

Life Membership (includes *ShoreLine*) \$500

Optional add'l tax-deductible contribution of

1 yr. Gift Membership (includes *ShoreLine*) \$25

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

Health Care, Cont'd from p. 5

providers themselves. How would the future abilities of the hospital, primary care providers, home health care services, pharmacies, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers and medical transport and supply services to continue to serve an underinsured, or uninsured, population be sustained?


Health Care and Wellness – a Shared Professional/Personal Responsibility

A robust and more pro-active relationship between professional medical care providers and the users of those medical services, and accepting the importance of adopting healthier lifestyles, may become more and more critical for a healthy community. Personal management of wellness, lifestyle choices, preventive medicine, participation in activities and actions that promote fitness and well-being, can increase personal wellness and may help relieve some pressure on the health care system if professional medical care and services become less accessible or less affordable.

Wellness includes being aware of some medical conditions which can occur with few or no symptoms – conditions which research has identified as health risks in the two Shore counties. Periodic screening for vision and hearing loss, high blood pressure and cataracts, and testing for diabetes, prostate cancer and coronary heart disease, can catch these conditions and start treatment early.

The Community Health Care Fair

In support of spreading the word about services, for both medical help and personal wellness, the Community Health Care Fair on April 1 at the Northampton County High School (*see insert*), will bring together representatives from many of the resources available in the community right now. Screenings for vision and hearing problems, and for blood sugar and high blood pressure, will be available on site. Screenings can help identify health problems before symptoms appear. Further tests can then indicate the proper treatment. Information about nutrition, physical and occupational therapy, hospice and home care, mental health services, medications, primary care and emergency services will be provided by professionals in those fields. Representatives from businesses and community resources will be on hand to share ideas and to help with planning ways to stay fit and healthy.

The possibility that more responsibility for staying healthy will fall to personal and community partnerships will work best when the available community health and wellness resources are well used. 

Come to the Health Fair!

April 1 • 10 AM to 2 PM

Northampton High School, Eastville

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

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**HAVE YOU
RENEWED YET?**

SHORELINE

Community Calendar - March 2017

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

CBES and Other Activities		Accomack County		Northampton County	
Mar 1	VIMS Public Seminar 7:30 PM, Wachapreague	Mar 1	Board of Zoning Appeals 10 AM, Sup. Chambers	Mar 6	Board of Zoning Appeals 1 PM, Conference Room
Mar 9	Shorekeeper Meeting* 3 PM, Barrier Islands Center, Machipongo	Mar 8	Planning Commission 7 PM, Sup. Chambers	Mar 7	Planning Commission 7 PM, Sup. Chambers
Mar 15	Energy Justice Presentation 7 PM, Exmore	Mar 15	Board of Supervisors 5 PM, Sup. Chambers	Mar 14	Board of Supervisors 7 PM, Sup. Chambers
Mar 21	ES Groundwater Committee 10 AM, Accomac	Mar 21	School Board 7 PM, Sup. Chambers	Mar 15	Wetlands Board TBA, Conference Room
Mar 21	CBES Board Meeting 7 PM, Onley	Mar 23	Wetlands Board 10 AM, Sup. Chambers	Mar 23	School Board 5:30 PM, Sup. Chambers
Apr 1	Community Health Care Fair 10 AM, Northampton High School			Mar 27	BOS Work Session 7 PM, Sup. Chambers

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

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