



Citizens
for a Better
Eastern Shore

CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EASTERN SHORE

SHORELINE

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Culture on the Eastern Shore of Virginia*

TM

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Update on Residential Solar

By Sue Mastyl

We last reported on “Solar Power for the Homeowner” in the September 2011 *ShoreFacts*, which focused on the decisions my husband Bill and I made in installing solar photovoltaic and solar hot water for our home. Although some things have changed, a lot of the information we found is still valid.*

Our Status

In the 13 years and 9 months since we installed our photovoltaic panels, we’ve saved 142,107 pounds of CO₂ – equivalent to the emissions from 165,243 miles driven by the average gasoline-powered automobile. We’re past the calculated payback period of 8 years, with the system still producing power, so we’ve essentially got free electricity, except for the customer charge we pay each month. Our plan is to re-evaluate the solar system when we replace our roof in the next 10 years or so; since we’ll have to remove the panels anyway, we’ll upgrade to new, more efficient panels, so we’ll need fewer of them.

One possible change will be to the solar hot water. It’s proven technology, and provides plenty of hot water, but it’s rarely at the time we need it. In the winter, we have to time activities like laundry to take advantage of sunny days. In the summer, the temperature in the tank can exceed 160° F, so we need an expansion valve. However, even in the winter we’re heating 90° water instead of 55° water from the ground – still saving energy. But, if we had to do it over, I would probably opt for additional photovoltaic panels to power our electric hot water heater.

What’s New

The most important development was the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022, which stabilized the Residential Clean Energy Property Credit at 30% for clean energy projects including solar panels, battery storage, and geothermal heat pumps. Importantly, you can roll over your tax credits from year to year. An additional Energy Efficient Home Improvement Credit provides tax credits at 30%, but these are capped annually for specific improvements such as heat pumps.

The cost of systems has decreased dramatically. When we installed our system, solar panels ranged from \$6.00 to \$7.00 per watt. Currently, the average cost is between \$0.90 and \$1.50 per watt. The size has also changed – our system includes panels with 230 watts each, while today’s panels average 350 to 400 watts. Batteries have also come down in price, so many homeowners are now including battery back-up storage with their systems.

Most importantly, there are more resources available to help homeowners navigate the process. Through late 2023, over 4.6 million solar energy systems have been installed nationwide, with almost 48,000 in Virginia.

Where Can I Find More Information?

- A&N Electric Cooperative (<https://www.anec.com/renewable-energy-options>) has good information on net metering, community solar (for those who may not be able to install solar on their own roof or grounds, but still want to use

renewable energy), and renewable energy credits. Currently, there are 153 residential, 10 non-residential, and 9 non-jurisdictional net metering systems installed on the Shore, with 2.6 million kWh estimated annual generation. ODEC’s Energize Efficiently website (<https://www.odec.com/energize-efficiently/>) provides ways to save money on energy, calculate your home’s energy usage, and more.

- Solar United Neighbors (<https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org>) offers many resources, including a guide to finding a solar installer you can trust, a Solar Help Desk, a free roof review, a guide to battery storage for homeowners, a guide for rural businesses, and more.
- Hampton Roads’ own HRClimate Hub provides local resources, including Solar Resources (<https://www.hrclimatehub.org/solar/solar-resources/>) and a Solar Installer Comparison (<https://www.hrclimatehub.org/solar/solar-installer-comparison/>).

See **Solar**, *Cont’d* on p. 5

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Thoughts for a More Intentional 2024

By Arthur Upshur

I spent a lot of my corporate career working in marketing for a food company. It is amazing how much time, money, intellect, and organizational resources are dedicated to a simple goal – how to get, and keep, the consumer’s attention. Would a sweepstakes be more compelling than a coupon? Was this or that spokesperson more likely to get people to pay attention to our brand? With the advent of social media and the electronic devices we carry with us all day, the quest for people’s attention has become more incessant – and a little more frantic.

There were very few brands that wanted to be connected to such powerful emotions as fear and anger. Despite their strength, they were avoided; most marketing professionals preferred positive images. So you can see the natural tension of social media. The most powerful way to get people’s attention is to find content that creates anger or fear, which leads to “engagement,” a fancier way of saying you got folks’ attention. Marketing materials for a home security system might benefit from fearful content. Certainly there are politicians that believe they can win office if they

create enough anger toward their opponents. But most brands are hurt by that kind of association. Even most politicians that rely on it cannot get much done once in office.


... the goals and ideas of the attention-seeking industry are outside the realm of what really matters to most people ...

Nonetheless, our society today is awash with content that has but one purpose – to get your attention. Cities run by Democrats are living hells of crime and sin. Breathless warnings of a Far Right creating an amoral “religious” dictatorship. Politicians claiming their opponents are trying to destroy your family, your wealth, your freedom, our country. Where does all this lead? You pay attention if you are convinced that I am talking about something that should make you angry or fearful.

But our attention is an individual decision. No one can *make* you pay attention. You have to *choose* to do that. It is a series of choices that we make every hour of every day. The marketers and social media, the performance artists and politicians – all are constantly seeking a way to influence our decisions.

In the end, it is each of us that decides what to pay attention to. We can decide not to look at our phones for an afternoon. We can notice what creates anger and fear, and simply ignore it. We are the decision-makers. We can choose to pay attention to things that are positive and helpful, or we can focus on things that create frustration and hopelessness. Most of the content that is designed to create anger and fear is more about marketing someone or something than it is about genuine warnings about something to be fearful of. Warnings usually are coupled with helpful action – beyond sending someone money or re-posting the information.

The other fascinating thing is that the goals of the attention-seeking industry are outside the realm of what really matters to most people and their lives. Have you ever noticed that paying attention to friends and family has no marketing component attached to it? In fact it is the opposite – attention-seeking media get in the way. To paraphrase an old colleague, no one ever lay on their deathbed regretting that they had not kept up well on Facebook or Instagram, or had not posted more on TikTok. When we consider the good times, they are seldom influenced by the influencers. When I watch a sunset, go for a walk on a quiet morning with my dog, get out on the water with my grandkids, social media is pretty irrelevant. It is peripheral to what really matters.

So the point of this is to suggest, when you think of 2024 New Year’s resolutions, that you consider what you want to pay attention to. And perhaps more importantly, what you have been paying too much attention to during the past year – that should be ignored. Happy New Year. 

Erratum

The article in the December 2023 *ShoreLine* describing the recently aired menhaden documentary (“Menhaden – The ‘Biggest Little Fish’”) included an error. The statement attributed to Ellen Pikitch of Stony Brook University, that forage fish in the Bay have an economic value of \$11.3 billion, with \$5.6 billion for the menhaden fishery, was incorrect. The numbers actually refer to the global catch, with the economic value for forage fisheries of \$5.6 billion and the fisheries supported by forage fish at \$11.3 billion.

We regret the error.

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The Hamlets of Northampton County

By Mary Miller

The hamlets in Northampton County have always been those very small residential enclaves formed over decades, sometimes centuries – that have specific place names. They grew up at intersections, around churches with small cemeteries, or alongside a general store/post office/family home – the original multi-use building – a one-room schoolhouse, a railroad stop, or maybe a pub or social hall. Extended family groups sometimes formed part of these multi-generational neighborhoods. Hamlets are often where culinary and other cultural heritage is kept alive. But until just a few years ago, these communities went without any county designation, with no certainty of compatible neighboring development.

For nearly a year, community meetings were held to receive public input for the 2009 review of the county’s Comprehensive Plan and subsequent Zoning Ordinance. Legal support was provided by well-known Virginia land-use attorney Randall T. Greehan. It became apparent then that the legal framework for rural residential zoning was so imprecise as to leave many homeowners without a reasonable status for their homes. The planning professionals went over county maps, tax maps, soil maps, GPS, etc., and found many existing small enclaves of homes in Agricultural (AG) Districts. Some were clusters around road intersections, others were linear – houses clustered on rural roads, with acres of farmland behind them. Many of the grandfathered lots were much smaller than permitted in AG Districts, and they had no protections from uses incompatible with a residential area. Most of the named Hamlets still contain infill lots for further development.

A Hamlet, Defined

The Hamlet/Residential District (H/R) developed from this research. A definition was adopted, the existing Hamlets were identified by name and mapped, and residential, neighborhood commercial, and community service uses were established. When the documents were adopted by the Northampton County, property owners in the existing Hamlets then had certainty that infill development would be compatible with a residential neighborhood, instead of with an AG district. The county’s Hamlet district is specifically defined as *existing* rural settlements – a dictionary definition is not used if the county’s documents contain its own.

Comprehensive Plan 2009 – 2.2.3 Hamlet: *Hamlets are existing, unincorporated, small rural settlements, typically of 10 to 30 houses designated on the Future-Land-Use Map.*

Comprehensive Plan 2021 – Rural Settlement Hamlets: *Hamlets are existing, unincorporated, small rural settlements, typically of 10 to 30 houses. They are often of local historic or cultural significance.*

Hamlets are existing, unincorporated, small rural settlements ... often of local historic or cultural significance.

Zoning Ordinance 2016 – (C) Hamlet/Residential District (H/R): *The intent of this District is (1) To recognize the county’s small rural settlements of historic or cultural significance, often located at crossroads, and which have, over the years, taken on the form of primarily residential neighborhoods.*

The county’s existing Hamlets are mapped H/R Districts on the 2009, 2016, and 2021 county documents. There are no criteria in the Zoning Ordinance for creating new Hamlets. They are not considered Floating Zones like Mobile Home Parks (MHPs). MHPs are a Floating Zone and there are criteria for establishing new ones. That was in recognition of the fact that many of the existing MHPs were full and there might be a need for more.

The current Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance are very clear that the Hamlet H/R District consists only of existing residential enclaves and there are no criteria for creating new ones. If new Hamlets are to be created, there would need to be amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance first – and would require support by studies and from community input.

An application to rezone agricultural land to a new Hamlet near Kiptopeake has been submitted to the county. The Hamlet District H/R currently is comprised only of existing rural enclaves. There are no criteria for establishing new Hamlet Districts. Despite the lack of criteria, and apparent lack of compliance with adopted county policies, a Public Hearing by the Planning Commission has been scheduled for its regular meeting on February 20 at 6 PM.

Ed. note: *The public may speak on subjects of their choosing during the Matters From the Public segments of the regular meetings of the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission. Comments are made part of the Public Record, but not the Official Record for a specific action.*



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Art Meets Ecology on the Marsh

By Emily Boone, Director of Biological Instruction, University of Richmond

On a windy Saturday in October, 11 art and science teachers from across Virginia convened, easels in tow, to the marsh surrounding Upshur Creek at the Nature Conservancy's Brownsville Preserve. They came to spend the day painting and learning about the ecology of one of the Eastern Shore's most vibrant coastal ecosystems. Peering over the railing of a footbridge, observing periwinkle snails perched on cord grass just above the tide line, they learned to read the science in the details. Every plant's position in the marsh reflected the tug-of-war between the physical stress of salt water and the competition with other species. As minute details gave way to landscape-level observations, they considered how to paint the story. Then, brushes in hand, they raced the clock, working to commit the scene to canvas before the incoming tide and shifting shadows reduced it to a mere memory.

The teachers were part of an Art and Ecology Plein Air Painting workshop held at the Anheuser Busch Coastal Research Center (ABCRC) in Oyster. The weekend program was the latest in a series of workshops originally developed in 2012 by the late Art Schwarzschild, former site director of the ABCRC.

Schwarzschild wore many hats during his time on the Eastern Shore – among them, scientist, educator, community activist, and contributor of a highly regarded CBES Pig Roast barbecue sauce – but the work he was most proud of was the Art and Ecology programming he started on the Shore. It was a chance encounter with Alice McEnerney Cook, a New Jersey-based artist and educator, that sparked the initial idea for the program. The two discovered that McEnerney Cook's work – painting coastal landscapes over the previous 20 years – paralleled Schwarzschild's own work monitoring coastal ecosystems with the Virginia Coast Reserve Long Term Ecological Research Program.

Through different mediums, each was providing a record of a changing landscape. They realized that science



Art and Ecology workshop participants needed to capture the light and forms of the landscape quickly, as they raced changes in water level and the position of the sun. Photo: LTER

and art intersected at the point of observation and that training unbiased observation was essential to success in both disciplines. Within a year, they had developed the first workshop and were joined by science colleagues Linda Blum (UVA) and Emily Boone (University of Richmond). The program expanded from Plein Air painting to Observational Drawing and field sketchbooks, with art and science teachers convening in October and April each year to learn about the ecology of the Shore and record their observations in paint, pencil, and charcoal.

While education workshops often target students, Art's mantra was, "teach a teacher – and you will reach a thousand students." When Art died unexpectedly in March 2017, his family wanted to do something to ensure that his legacy for teachers and students would continue. They created the Arthur Schwarzschild Memorial Fund for the Combination of Sciences and the Arts, with the hope that teachers would be able to benefit for years to come. With donations from family and friends, the fund allows Alice, Linda, and Emily to continue to honor their friend, colleague, and partner by continuing the program. Support from The Nature Conservancy also enabled the group to develop an additional summer workshop that allowed teachers to learn about barrier island ecology as they worked on Parramore Island.

For several years, Covid pandemic restrictions led to the cancellation of the Art and Ecology Workshop Program. October 2023 marked the return of the program; plans are being made for spring and summer workshop programs, with the hope of engaging a new generation of teachers. A snapshot of the natural world frozen in time, the works they create provide a record of a changing landscape.

For more information about this and other collaborative programs, go to <https://www.abcrc.virginia.edu/siteman2/index.php/outreach-and-involvement/>.



Art and science teachers painted seascapes on The Nature Conservancy's properties in Oyster and Nassawadox. Photo:LTER

Northampton County Education Foundation Mobilizes Community Support

Submitted by Barbara C. O'Hare, CBES Board Member

We often hear that Eastern Shore public school systems lack the financial and personnel resources of larger jurisdictions to support students and teachers. Community stakeholders – businesses, local organizations, and parents and students – want schools that produce graduates well-prepared for employment or college. The Northampton County Education Foundation (NCEF) is addressing that issue.

Founded in 2006 as a 501(c)3 organization, the Foundation is managed by an all-volunteer Board of Directors, currently chaired by Billie-Jean Bensen and assisted by a diverse group of community leaders. During the 2022-2023 school year, NCEF provided nearly \$69,000 toward instruction, teacher support, and program development. In addition to financial support, NCEF has played an important role in initiatives that directly support students and teachers, and strengthen links to the wider community. As noted on the website, www.ncedufoundation.com, students benefit through scholarships, Fund-A-Project, the provision of classroom resources through Adopt-A-Class and Bulletin Board, and Kids' Closet (distributing gently used clothing). NCEF initiatives also recognize and encourage teachers, and the Foundation makes itself available to support teachers' needs.

The NCEF provides ways to involve community members and businesses in the improvement of county schools. Knowing that their dollars are going to better prepare students as productive employees and community members, outside funding to the Foundation has seen steady growth. In 2022, the Bay Creek community contributed \$25,000, with a challenge to others in the community to match their contribution – which they did. This academic year, Bay Creek donated another \$25,000, again with a community challenge. Local businesses, such as The Boardwalk in Cape Charles, have donated a percentage of their profits on selected sales days. Individuals have also stepped up to give generously.

On November 9, the 2023 State of the Schools program held at Northampton High School was an uplifting view of the current and future activity of the schools. Wayne Bell, a Foundation board member, was master of ceremonies, setting a positive tone for the morning. Speakers included Foundation Chair Billie-Jean Bensen, School Superintendent Dr. Lisa Martin, and the Principals of the High School, Middle School, and Elementary Schools.

At all levels, there are initiatives for addressing behavior and the learning environment, as well as new opportunities for students. One major accomplishment of the year was the large increase in dual-enrollment students (who take Eastern Shore Community College courses while in High School). The expansion of the Cal Ripken STEM

program, which introduces Middle School students to principles of circuitry, engineering, and coding, is particularly notable, as it is a direct result of NCEF funding.

The NCEF provides ways to involve community members and businesses in the improvement of county schools.

State of the Schools roundtable discussions and the STEM lab ribbon-cutting ended the morning program. The take-away message was that we can all take ownership

to support a public school system that is a valued part of our Eastern Shore community.



Broad support from the community is crucial for continued improvement in our public school systems, as well as increasing awareness of all that the public

schools provide. There are monetary and non-monetary ways to show your support; for example, volunteering in the Shore Mentoring program supported by NCEF. A visit to the website: <https://www.ncedufoundation.com>, explains the ways you can contribute. We can all make a difference in the quality of our public schools.



Solar, Cont'd from p. 1

- Forbes Home provides several resources, including The Complete Homeowner's Guide to Going Solar (<https://www.forbes.com/home-improvement/solar/>), Best Solar Companies in Virginia for 2023 (<https://www.forbes.com/home-improvement/solar/best-solar-companies-virginia/>), and Local Solar Companies in Your Area (<https://www.forbes.com/home-improvement/solar/local-solar/>).
- Rewiring America (<https://homes.rewiringamerica.org/>) provides information for both homeowners and renters, including a savings calculator and information on projects from stoves to renewables to clothes drying.
- CNET (<https://www.cnet.com/home/energy-and-utilities/>) has reviews of solar panels, installers, battery storage systems, and more.

Installers should provide free quotes, although most companies from across the Bay will charge for travel costs. There are scammers taking advantage of the situation, so be skeptical of offers that sound too good to be true. Make sure you know what you'll be getting, and that you understand the financial arrangements. Although some leasing arrangements may seem attractive, be aware that you won't reap the full benefits of the tax savings *or* the energy savings.



* The September 2011 *ShoreFacts* is available on CBES website at <https://www.cbcs.org/additional-resources.html>.



RECYCLING CORNER

By Sue Mastyl

Potpourri

More on Glass Recycling

As mentioned in the December 2023 *ShoreLine*, Accomack County has begun collecting glass for recycling, in a separate container at the Fishers Corner convenience center in Parksley. This glass will be transported to O-I Glass in Toano, and recycled back into glass bottles and containers, often within 30 days. The county is hoping to expand to additional collection sites in the near future.

Northampton County is also collecting glass separately, at all convenience centers. Due to transportation costs, the county has not yet found a way to recycle the glass; in the meantime, it is being crushed and used whenever possible to fill in potholes and as landfill lining. Unfortunately, if there is no need, it is disposed of as trash.

Some Facts About Glass Recycling

- Glass containers for food and beverage are 100% recyclable, and can be recycled endlessly without loss.
- Most glass bottles and jars include at least 25% recycled material.
- Recycled glass can substitute for up to 95% of raw materials.
- In 2018, 31.3% of all glass containers were recycled,
- More than 6 tons of natural resources are saved, and 1 ton of CO₂ is reduced, for every 6 tons of glass recycled.
- The weight of glass bottles has decreased by 40% over the last 30 years.

REI Recycling Program

Although REI in Virginia Beach no longer accepts snack bags and chip bags through Subaru's partnership with Terracycle (see September 2021 and January 2022 *ShoreLine*), they still recycle many other materials with Terracycle, including used socks and footwear, Tom's of Maine toothpaste and bath products, GUTM performance gel, GoGo squeeZ[®] plastic pouches, and silica gel packets. They also recycle bicycle inner tubes, and have a robust program to trade in gently used gear (<https://www.rei.com/used/trade-it-in>), including any brand that they sell. You can drop off your jackets, clothing, shoes, boots, backpacks, tents, sleeping bags, kid's bikes, etc. at their location, or ship it for \$6.00 (they provide the label), and receive an REI gift card in return. REI inspects all the gently used items, and selects the best for resale. You can shop their used-gear collection in-store or online. REI estimates that buying used gear instead of new typically avoids carbon emissions of 50% or more.

Patagonia has a similar program (<https://wornwear.patagonia.com/>), for their brand only.

Keeping Track

Bill to Add Land to Coastal Barrier Resources System

A bipartisan bill has been introduced by Rep. Jen Kiggans (R, VA-02) in the House (H.R. 5490, the Bolstering Ecosystems Against Coastal Harm, or BEACH, Act) and by Sen. Tom Carper (D, DE) in the Senate (S. 2958, the Strengthening Coastal Communities Act of 2023) to add lands to the Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS). The system, established in 1982, includes 3.5 million acres of land and associated aquatic habitat designated by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The bill would designate an additional 277,950 acres, including 96,000 acres in Virginia, along the Chesapeake and Atlantic shores.

The designation does not prevent development, but doesn't encourage it either. Lands within the CBRS are prohibited from receiving any government subsidies, including infrastructure grants, federally backed flood insurance, or disaster assistance funds. By acting as a buffer, these lands help to protect more-developed lands outside the designation. Studies have shown that the CBRS designation helped to reduce federal disaster spending by almost \$10 billion from 1989 to 2013, and could save up to \$108 billion through the 2060s. After Superstorm Sandy in 2012, a study estimated that the coastal wetlands in the CBRS system prevented \$625 million in property damage, or 10% of the total.

Saltwater Intrusion on Agricultural Land

A recent study from the University of Maryland, University of Delaware, and George Washington University found that salt patches on the Delmarva Peninsula doubled from 2011 to 2017, covering more than 2,200 acres and translating to \$107 million in annual crop losses. An additional 19,000 acres were converted to marshland over the 6-year period. Although "it could have been just a foot along the edge of these fields ... when you add it up, it's a lot of acreage across the region," noted co-author Jarrod Miller, soil expert at the University of Delaware. The researchers have developed a GIS app (<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/830352c8f8d84266b9131196388479c3/page/Map/?draft=true&org=udel&views=Pic1>) to help landowners track salt encroachment.

The researchers also noted elevated salinity levels hundreds of meters from visible salt patches, indicating additional stress on crops, and calculated that more than 400,000 acres lie within 200 meters of visible salt patches. Corn is especially vulnerable; it is not very salt-tolerant and represents a substantial portion of the crops grown on Delmarva. Farmers may elect to switch to more salt-tolerant species, including sorghum and switchgrass, in these fields.

Although only 300 acres of salt intrusion were recorded on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, that amount represented a 243% increase during the 6-year study period.

See Keeping Track, Cont'd on p. 7

Short-Term Rental Permits? Decision Postponed

A Public Hearing was held recently to solicit input on creating guidelines for short-term vacation rentals (STRs) by requiring a Special Use Permit (SUP). The Board of Supervisors proposed the permit requirement and the Planning Commission submitted recommendations.

As background: the goals of zoning in the Virginia Code include consideration for the existing use and character of an area, and for the conservation of property values. That would include ensuring that land is used in a way that is compatible with the surrounding area and that does not negatively impact the value of neighboring properties.

Speakers at the Public Hearing were generally opposed to an SUP for a vacation rental. Reasons ranged from limiting their personal income to trampling on their property rights. Notification to neighbors of a proposed STR, and the opportunity for the neighbor to voice an opinion, seemed of particular concern to several speakers. Realtors objected to the onerous SUP-process burden. Those in favor of the SUP cited defending their property rights and values, and the right to be informed about a commercial use proposed for their residential or rural community. There were comments about vague language, in both the violations of the proposed conditions and how conditions would be enforced.

One speaker pointed out that STRs were the source of similar controversy across the state. This appears to be a classic conflict between property owners who prefer carte blanche to do what they want with their property, and property owners protecting their property rights against incompatible development. There was also a suggestion to include conditions in the county business license for STRs, similar to Norfolk,* which combines conditioned licenses with SUPs. However, this might eliminate the public notice requirement. Finding a compromise will be complicated.

The next opportunity to address the Board of Supervisors will be January 9, or you can send written comments to the Board (jwilliams@co.northampton.va.us) or by mail to P.O. Box 66, Eastville, VA 23347. Comments on this subject will be part of the Public Record, but not the Official Record of the proposed action.

*<https://www.norfolk.gov/4295/Short-Term-Rentals>



ESVA Rail Trail Newsletter

The ES Rail Trail Foundation is encouraging the community to sign up for their newsletter, which includes updates and information about the multimodal trail.

Rail Trail construction schedules have not yet been finalized; the good news is that significant funding has been allocated and planning is underway. To sign up for the ES Rail Trail Newsletter, go to: https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Eastern-Shore-of-Virginia-Rail-Trail-Newsletter.html?soid=112615467041&aid=VTRRhr5uv_w.



Tortellini With Roasted Mushroom Sauce

For an evening dinner, when something luxurious and slightly fancy would just hit the spot – and oh, it needs to take less than 20 minutes to pull together – this mushroom and Italian sausage tortellini dish might check all the boxes. Set a pot of salted water on to boil, warm a sauté pan, turn the oven up high, and you're halfway there. Fresh tortellini (or frozen), sliced mushrooms, and a few pantry staples – that's it.

- 1 lb. mushrooms
- A little chopped onion
- 1/4 cup white wine
- 2/3 cup light cream or half & half
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- Butter and olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- 10 oz. pkg fresh Italian sausage tortellini (or your choice)

Roughly chop 3 to 4 mushrooms; slice the rest into 1/4" slices. Toss sliced mushrooms with a little olive oil, salt, the next opport and pepper, and roast on foil-covered baking sheet about 10 minutes at 425°, or until moisture has evaporated. Reserve several roasted slices for garnish. Cook tortellini according to package instructions, drain, and keep warm. Sauté onions and reserved chopped mushrooms in a little butter and olive oil until soft – add a little more butter, then add most of the roasted mushrooms to pan. Add wine and reduce, then slowly add cream or half & half, mix well, and add grated cheese. Season with more salt and pepper to taste; add a bit more half & half if needed. Spoon over warm tortellini and garnish with reserved roasted mushrooms.

Mary Miller – The Kitchen Hive

Reprinted with permission: <https://www.talkrealnow.com/tortellini-with-roasted-mushroom-sauce/>

Happy New Year




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Happy New Year