Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore

ShoreLine

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Shore Delivery Corps “On a Roll”

Staff Report

Since the end of March, Shore Delivery Corps (SDC) has been making deliveries of groceries, medicines, and other supplies to those at high risk for COVID-19, allowing them to stay home and stay safe.

Thanks to quick planning and an anonymous donor, those deliveries have recently included 8 rolls of toilet paper and 4 rolls of paper towels per week, provided free of charge. SDC member and Accomack Supervisor Ron Wolff arranged with Holt Paper Company to provide the items at pre-pandemic prices. It’s another way to help keep vulnerable citizens away from busy supermarkets.

How does SDC work? Clients order and pay for their items online or by phone. Volunteers then pick up the orders and deliver them directly to clients’ doorsteps. Help with the ordering process is also available.

CBES is pleased to be a part of this Shore-wide team effort, established under the umbrella of the Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation and the United Way of Virginia’s Eastern Shore. To schedule a delivery or to volunteer, call 757-801-9950 or email shoredelivery-corps@gmail.com. More information: www.shoredelivery.org.

NOTE: There is currently a great need for volunteers in various capacities, either remotely or as delivery people, throughout the Shore.

Report Highlights Impact of Poultry Manure

By Sue Mastyl

A new report from the Environmental Integrity Project (EIP), released April 22, draws attention to the impact of poultry production on the Eastern Shore. The report focuses on the expansion of poultry farms in Accomack County, and the impact of the resulting manure output.¹ The full report can be found at https://environmentalintegrity.org/reports/poultry-and-manure-production-on-virginias-eastern-shore/.

Tracking the Manure

Through Freedom of Information Act requests, EIP accessed nutrient management plans (NMPs) for 70 of the 83 poultry farms in Accomack County, and 117 inspection records for 76 poultry farms, from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The plans provide guidance for on-site manure management for the poultry farm, as well as information about land application for poultry farmers who also raise crops. The 70 farms produce up to 85 million birds and 137,000 tons of manure annually.

The NMPs revealed that only 1 of the 70 poultry farms applied its manure to its own fields; for the other 69 farms, 72% is transferred to other crop farms in Accomack County, with 0.5% going to Northampton County, and the remainder going to Suffolk and Fairfax counties, as well as North Carolina. The report noted that “exactly what happens to exported manure – how much is spread per acre of farmland – is not clear because DEQ does not require all receiving farms to provide records that would show how that manure was applied.” The state’s Poultry Litter Transport Incentive Program is designed to address this gap, but it is voluntary, and funding is limited.

Using a conservative estimate of the phosphorus contained within the manure generated, at 1,150 tons, the 72% of the manure that is applied in Accomack County annually equates to 828 tons of phosphorus. However, See Poultry, cont’d on p. 6


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Time Slows Down to a Crawl

By Mary Miller

That’s what happens to time in a traffic jam, waiting for the baby to be born, feeling the hurricane about to hit. And now this virus pandemic response – hunkering down in place, social distancing, self-isolation – time slowing down to a crawl, but without a predictable end-game.

The town is very quiet every day – no school buses, no court traffic, no office workers, no church bells. Only the UPS and FedEx delivery trucks on their normal rounds. Post Office patrons carefully keep their distance from one another, would like to stop and chat, but just hold the door instead – and a plexiglass shield hangs in front of the still-cheerful workers.

The scene is the same in the grocery stores and pharmacies. Customers, many now wearing masks, quickly fill their baskets. Employees quietly keep filling the shelves and working the cash registers – and we’re grateful for their competence and composure. And grateful for the early morning, seniors-only hours, as well as online ordering and pickup services. And thankful to the drivers who labor to keep up with the deliveries of essential food and medicines.

Flour, yeast, and eggs are sometimes in short supply – but folks are learning, or relearning, to make do – and bake – as bread shelves empty quickly. Online recipe-swap groups among friends have created a whole new entertainment genre. Vegetable plants and seeds are selling well – a promise for the future. Popular local restaurants are learning they can turn on a dime and step up their take-out, pickup and delivery services – their loyal customers are responding with support, eager for tasty food they didn’t have to cook. And are hats really back in style? Or is it that we just can’t get haircuts?

We’re seeing volunteers joining together to provide help and support, and food and medicine deliveries for the ones among us who need it most. Mask-making has become a volunteer cottage industry – quilters donating their boxes full of fabric. Local news outlets keep getting the word out – how we’re doing, where to get help, explaining the new rules. It will take a lifetime to thank the medical professionals who are trained and ready to care for us if the time comes.

And most of us have at least one friend, neighbor, or relative with a public health or safety job. All these, and many more, are the ones holding the threads of community together right now – risking their own health and safety to safeguard ours. We’re seeing the best of everything small communities have to offer.

Some Things Still Feel the Same

At least the season is turning warm here on the Shore. The cherry trees and dogwoods know nothing about any “new normal.” Cardinals dance around the garden in the age-old rites of spring – and hummingbird feeders replace the nourishing winter suet cages near the bird feeders. Soon there’ll be tomatoes and asparagus, strawberries and peaches from the farms, and the summer feasts of crabs and clams from the watermen. The magnolias will still smell like lemon cream and the hum of lawn mowers will be heard in our land. There will be a long, hard road back to normal for many of our neighbors – but we have our home-place here to comfort us on the trip.

And We’ll Still Be the Shore

We will have oyster roasts and clam chowder suppers at the fire hall again. We’ll take the kids out for ice cream cones – then go fishing on the pier. We’ll plant winter greens in late summer as we keep an eye out for the signs of hurricane weather. The schools will open again, and football season and Homecomings will happen.

Church bells will ring on Sunday mornings, and all those delayed weddings will confirm another promise for the future. And we’ll welcome our children and grandchildren home from away, with open arms and joyful tears.

These will be our comforts as we work through these uncommon times.
The Cape Charles business district has grown exponentially for the past few years. Businessman Andrew Follmer owns 2 retail shops; he and manager Trish Bell answered questions regarding those enterprises and the ins and outs of developing them.

Follmer started The Boardwalk in 2011 with the aim of creating the type of shop he loves to find on vacation— one that “I can easily pass an hour or more browsing in, and come back the next day and see things I missed the day before, a store with dynamic inventory where there is always something new.” The store offers an eclectic mix of coastal-themed items, a range of home decor, accessories, humorous signs, drink ware, and affordable, high-quality jewelry. Shoppers can also find all sorts of toys and games for those 12 and under.

Games for the 13+ crowd are available down the street at Follmer’s “sister” store, Like A Sailor, which opened in 2016 in response to customer demand for puzzles and games that wouldn’t be appropriate next to a 12-and-under toy section.

Although Follmer opened when Cape Charles was feeling the worst effects of the economic recession and many storefronts were empty, he says, “The locals supported us from day one, and we have built a loyal following of both locals and visitors. Given the economic situation at the time, it was a low barrier to entry. Rents were very low, and it didn’t cost much to get started.” Follmer began with a business partner because he wasn’t living on the Shore full-time yet, and the enterprise grew with the town. He reports that recent sales are 3 to 4 times what they were that first year.

Follmer believes the Shore is a great fit for his businesses. He notes that people who choose to live or visit here appreciate the authentic small-town experience. They delight in finding unique, independent shops where they can find something not seen anywhere else. Also, as the town has grown, the business community has gotten stronger and works together, trying hard to complement each others’ offerings and filling gaps to meet customer demands. Follmer recollects, “There have been times when I have discovered a product that I thought was a perfect fit for someone else’s shop, and I have brought it to them, and there have been times when others have done that for me. We all love the Shore, and we get excited to share that love with customers.”

In the early days, Follmer says that finding reliable help was a problem, but there is a much larger and more diverse pool of labor these days, and he rarely has to look hard for new team members. The biggest challenge was affordable small-business credit. It’s not readily available the way it is for individuals or for a larger company.

Follmer’s advice for others? “It’s not a hobby. If your impetus is that you’ve always wanted to have a shop, you’re not going to just open and have customers beating down your door. You need to assess demand and what’s missing. You need to learn from others’ successes and failures, and build on that; and network with other business owners.”

The past weeks have been challenging for many Shore businesses. The economy is slowly regaining some momentum after the unprecedented shutdown ordered by state and local governments. Like a couple of other inventive business owners in town, Follmer has devised ways to maintain some cash flow during the time his stores have to be closed.

He has been featuring items for purchase on Facebook; for example, he offers puzzles from Like A Sailor and Boho Bandeaus (to cover the face) from The Boardwalk. All the items are offered with free local delivery or 10% off any shipped orders. They also have been hosting Facebook Live shopping events a couple times per week to feature new merchandise. Follmer reports that the stores’ supply of regularly priced puzzles with immediate availability and free local delivery has been a big hit!

Private shopping by appointment is also available. For more information, call Follmer at The Boardwalk or Like A Sailor: (757) 331-2424.
The General Assembly passed dozens of bills, and Gov. Northam signed them into laws that go into effect July 1, 2020. Some can impact local governments and residents:

**Voting Rights**
- Expands voting rights and makes Election Day a holiday
- Eliminates photo ID requirement
- Voters can vote absentee without an “official” excuse, helping to prevent the disenfranchisement of the elderly, minorities and the disabled

**Nondiscrimination**
- Virginia Values Act becomes law
- Prohibits discrimination in employment, credit transactions, housing, and public spaces on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity
- Virginia is the first southern state to codify these protections

**Confederate Monuments**
- Gives localities control of Confederate memorials in their jurisdictions

**Women’s Health Care Rights**
- Eliminates what the Governor describes as “medically unnecessary restrictions on women’s healthcare”

**Marijuana Laws**
- Simple possession of marijuana has been decriminalized
- Group will study and report the impact of legalizing marijuana in Virginia

**Gun Safety**
- Establishes universal background checks
- Establishes Extreme Risk Protective Order – allows confiscation of guns from those deemed too dangerous to themselves or others
- Requires gun owners to report lost/stolen guns to the authorities within 48 hours
- Reactivates Virginia’s one-handgun-a-month law
- Increases penalties for leaving loaded firearms in a manner that endangers a child
- Allows localities to regulate firearms in public buildings, parks, recreation centers, and during permitted events
- Prohibits individuals subject to protective orders from possessing firearms, and requires them to turn over their firearms within 24 hours and to certify to the court that they have turned over their weapons

**Immigration Rights**
- Allows Virginia students to get in-state tuition, regardless of their immigration status
- Eligibility includes: 2-year Virginia high-school attendance, graduated after July 1, 2008, or passed equivalency education, and at least 1 parent filed state taxes for 2 years

**Environmental**
- Codifies the Virginia Clean Economy Act.
- Requires new measures to promote energy efficiency.
- Sets a schedule for closing old fossil fuel power plants:
  - Largest coal-burning plants and all oil-burning plants by 2024
  - Dominion biomass units by 2028
  - All remaining fossil fuel plants, including natural gas, by 2050
- Requires electricity to come from 100% renewable sources, as defined.

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**A Letter to CBES Bike Tour Riders and the Community From the CBES President**

Dear Friends,

For 28 years, Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore has worked to provide you with the safest Bike Tour possible and a fun, memorable event for our riders. While no one knows what the future will bring with the coronavirus, CBES is working even harder during these challenging times to keep your ride safe.

The Between the Waters Bike Tour supports CBES, whose mission is to protect this fragile coastal gem that we call home – and that you explore each year on the Tour – through education of our citizenry, advocacy for good government process, and a host of local activities and communications.

To ensure that our small non-profit can pursue our mission and bring the Bike Tour to you for years to come, this year’s ride will have the same No Refund Policy as always. Any registration that is purchased but not used is eligible as a tax-deductible donation to CBES.

We are planning for a successful ride this fall. We will be transparent about our plans and will always prioritize the safety of our riders, volunteers, and community. Thank you for your patience, understanding, and – as always – your loyal support. We are looking forward to sharing our shores with you this fall.

Sincerely,

Arthur Upshur, CBES President
Whimsy & Water
Simpson’s Winning Artwork Graces 28th Bike Tour
By Donna Bozza

Showcasing “our waters and the critters that call it home,” was Shore artist Bethany Simpson’s objective for her 28th Between the Waters Bike Tour painting. That, and offering a much-needed dose of whimsy to all who will enjoy her beloved Coastal Folk Art image on Bike Tour apparel, commemorative tees, and promotional materials. The winner of the 2020 Bike Tour Raffle will receive the original painting.

This is the 4th year the popular local painter has donated her artwork to CBES iconic ecotourism event, set for October 24. The Bike Tour draws 1,100 cyclists and their guests for an extended weekend that, last year, provided the Shore with an estimated $385,000 in economic impact.

For prior Bike Tours, Simpson has showcased scenes including local watermen and bountiful farm fields aside the waters of our rural peninsula. This year she takes us into those waters – with a playful twist. The painting is replete with a mermaid cyclist, wearing a safety helmet, of course, riding through a colorful swirl of fish, blue crabs, clams, sand dollars, and dolphins.

“There is a whole other world under the surface of our waters that is just as important as life above it, and we Shore people – we are all tied to it,” said Simpson, whose family has deep roots here. She says she continues to support the Bike Tour to help ensure that our ecosystem is healthy and continues to sustain our way of life.

“The mission of CBES Bike Tour is ‘Pedal to Protect Virginia’s Eastern Shore,’” said CBES President Arthur Upshur. “As our major fundraiser, it allows us to continue our work informing our community on critical issues. Bethany’s beautiful work has become synonymous with the Bike Tour and we couldn’t be more proud.”

Raffle tickets are $20 each or 3 tickets for $50; they can be purchased on www.cbes.org. See more of Bethany’s work on Facebook at Bethany Simpson – Artist, or call her at (757) 710-1867. For CBES members who receive the printed ShoreLine, do check out the full-color painting on www.cbes.org!

Strawberry Cake With Sauce

It’s getting to the end of strawberry season, and you couldn’t resist those last 2 baskets at the farm market. Even when the berries are getting a little soft, this cake and sauce will still have all the sweet/tart flavor you want. This is a classic single-layer cake, often made with olive oil instead of butter. Takes about 10 minutes to put together – easiest in a stand mixer, traditionally baked in a 9” springform pan for easy presentation. A dusting of confectioner’s sugar and a little sauce on the plate completes the picture.

- 2 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup sour cream
- ½ cup light olive oil (or vegetable oil)
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- Whatever strawberries you have – at least 2 cups total, a few more is fine

Cake:

Butter the pan and line the bottom with parchment paper – butter the paper. Using half of the berries, cut half in small pieces and slice the rest in half for the cake top. Beat eggs and sugar for 5 minutes. Add sour cream, oil, and vanilla; beat to just combine. Whisk flour, baking powder, and salt – then add to wet ingredients by thirds, mixing after each addition. Spread half the batter in pan, top with cut-up berries – spread remaining batter over berries. Cover the top with the halved strawberries. Bake at 375° for about 50 minutes. Cool and dust with a bit of icing sugar.

Sauce:

Put the remaining strawberries in a blender or food processor, add ¼ cup sugar, and blend into a sauce.

In Times of Shortages …

If you’re dismayed by empty shelves where toilet paper, paper towels, and other essential items used to be, think about “reduce” and “reuse.” Imagine what everyone used before they came up with these convenience products (and save a few trees in the process):

- Getting low on paper towels? Clean rags or old towels work perfectly well, and can be washed and reused.
- Running out of paper napkins? Try going back to cloth napkins – if you’re worried about stains, stick with dark colors. Don’t have any on hand? If you’ve got some extra fabric lying around (after you’ve made your masks), you can make your own – just a simple hem on all 4 sides of a 16” x 16” square.
- And remember to wash and reuse other items, like plastic Zip-loc bags.

But What About Toilet Paper?

For most of us, the #1 concern has been running out of toilet paper. (Believe it or not, one police department issued a statement that this doesn’t qualify for a 9-1-1 call.)

Americans use 9.2 billion pounds of toilet paper each year, an average of 28 pounds per person – 4% of the world’s population uses 20% of the world’s toilet paper. Much of it comes from old, virgin forests, home to endangered and threatened songbirds, among other species. One person’s uses of Charmin is equivalent to 300 pounds of CO₂ per person. (Check out your brand’s environmental score at https://www.nrdc.org/experts/jennifer-skene/issue-tissue-how-us-flushing-forests-away.)

Clean rags, towels, or old, soft t-shirts work perfectly well – just wash as for cloth diapers. If you use another paper product, you shouldn’t flush these with most systems (wet wipes are a menace to wastewater treatment plants).

Or try a bidet! Bidets are actually more hygienic than toilet paper. Water usage is the same as used to make 1.5 sheets of toilet paper – about 1/8 gallon. You can buy a toilet attachment for less than $100.


Poultry, cont’d from p. 1

Rates determined by the Department of Conservation and Recreation indicate that the County’s soils can only remove 609 tons of phosphorus each year, meaning that more than 200 tons of excess phosphorus are being applied to Accomack County croplands every year, adding to the excess levels of phosphorus already present in the soil.

Violations With No Penalties

Inspection records showed violations for 56 (74%) of the 76 operations between May 2017 and April 2019. No penalties were imposed; warning letters were sent to 13 operators. The most common violations included:

- Outdated or absent paperwork (34 operations), which EIP points out “undermines the ability of state regulators to monitor and keep agricultural pollution sources in check.”
- Residual manure outside manure storage areas (29 operations), which can be flushed by rain into local waterways and groundwater, and can grow fly larvae and pathogenic bacteria and viruses. One repeat offender was inspected 6 times, with violations on 5 occasions.
- Improper disposal of dead birds, which were left exposed to the elements and predators (22 operations); inspectors described “uncovered mortalities resulting in strong odors and liquid sludge leaking from compost piles.”
- More birds on-site than were indicated on the NMPs (7 operations), including 1 farm with double the number.

Recommendations

The report noted, “runoff from manure undermines the Commonwealth’s ability to meet its pollution reduction targets for the year 2025” for the Bay, and recommended:

- Imposing “more penalties on poultry operations that do not properly manage their manure and dead birds” – DEQ’s “failure to penalize violations … encourages the operations that ignore the law, imposing a burden on the land, water, and the people of Virginia’s Eastern Shore.”
- “Robust tracking of manure transported from Virginia’s poultry operations would allow regulators to accurately monitor and assess the spreading of manure on fields and the impact on waterways.”

In reacting to the report, Danielle Tergis, spokeswoman for Perdue Farms, reported a “rigorous” program in place to address environmental issues, including regular farm checks to ensure that there are no issues with manure. Hobey Bauhan, President of the Virginia Poultry Federation, called the report “yet another effort to depict the poultry industry in the worst possible light,” noting that the operations have state permits to manage nutrients.
CBES Membership 2020

New _____ Renewal ______ ShoreLine by US mail _____
Name ______________________________________________
Phone______________________________________________
Address____________________________________________
City_____________________ST________ Zip__________
Email ________________________________________________

______ 1 yr. Regular Membership (includes ShoreLine) $25
______ Life Membership (includes ShoreLine)  $500
______ Optional add’l tax-deductible contribution of $______
______ Gift subscription to ShoreLine for a friend  $25

Please provide recipient’s name, email, and mailing address so we can send a welcome card; otherwise, we will welcome them via email____________________________________________
___________________________________________________
___________________________________________________

Please consider renewing your membership and/or sending a donation now!

Help CBES continue our Mission
– and keep ShoreLine going –
during this challenging time.

Send to CBES, PO Box 882, Eastville, VA 23347
Join online at www.cbes.org – Thank you!

Keeping Track

Menhaden Control Moves to VMRC

As reported in the April 2020 issue of ShoreLine (“General Assembly Wraps Up”), the General Assembly voted in February to transfer management of the menhaden fishery – a critical resource for many species in the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean – from the General Assembly to the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC). Until now, menhaden was the only fishery directly controlled by the Virginia General Assembly.

On April 28, the members of VMRC voted unanimously to take over management of the menhaden fishery. This vote will bring Virginia into compliance with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASFMC) management plan, and avoid the federal moratorium that would have taken effect June 17 (see February 2020 ShoreLine, “Moratorium May Be Imposed on Menhaden”). To get the state back into compliance, the cap for Omega Protein’s Chesapeake Bay harvest this year has been cut by the amount that they exceeded the cap last year.

“This is a historic moment,” noted Bill Goldsborough, retired Senior Fishery Scientist for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. This vote “finally brings management of these critical links in the Chesapeake/Atlantic ecosystem into the Virginia state agency best equipped” for the task.

Virginia Council on Environmental Justice

Call for Applications

On March 3, 2020, Governor Northam signed legislation that codified the Virginia Council on Environmental Justice, created to advise the Governor and provide recommendations intended to protect vulnerable communities from disproportionate impacts of pollution and provide such communities meaningful involvement in the decision-making process.

Interested applicants are encouraged to apply by July 1; applications accepted on a rolling basis. Questions? Contact Meryem Karad, Policy and Communications Advisor, Secretary of Natural Resources. Email: meryem.karad@governor.virginia.gov. Telephone: (804) 385-4097.

Cook – Share – Reach Out
Help Thy Neighbor
CBES ANNUAL MEETING
JULY 14, 7 PM

How we wish we could gather at a picnic with our members! That not being possible, we need to adhere to CBES ByLaws and hold our annual meeting for the election of the 2020-2022 Board of Directors. We will facilitate this online using the ZOOM Meeting platform. We hope you will join us and say hello. Details to follow at www.cbes.org and in the July ShoreLine.

The COVID-19 Memorial Page


Community Calendar*

*NOTE: As of press time, all in-person public meetings in both counties have been cancelled until further notice. Some are available to view or join online; for current status, go to the appropriate website or contact by email or phone.

Accomack County
757-787-5700
www.co.accomack.va.us

1st Wed  Board of Zoning Appeals
10 AM, Accomac

2nd Wed  Planning Commission (PC)
7 PM, Accomac

3rd Tues School Board
6:30 PM, Accomac

3rd Wed  Board of Supervisors (BOS)
5 PM, Accomac

4th Tues PC Work Session
7 PM, Accomac

4th Thur Wetlands Board
10 AM, Accomac

CBES and Other Activities
1st Wed  VIMS Public Seminar
7:30 PM, Wachapreague

3rd Tues ES Ground Water Committee
10 AM, Accomac

3rd Tues CBES Board Meeting
7 PM, Eastville or Belle Haven

Northampton County
757-678-0440
www.co.northampton.va.us

1st Tues Board of Zoning Appeals
10 AM, Eastville

1st Tues Planning Commission (PC)
6 PM, Eastville

2nd Tues Board of Supervisors (BOS)
6 PM, Eastville

3rd Wed Wetlands Board
Meets as needed, Eastville

3rd Wed PC Work Session
6 PM, Eastville

4th Tues BOS Work Session
5 PM, Eastville

4th Thur School Board
6 PM, Machipongo

For membership and other CBES information:
www.cbes.org