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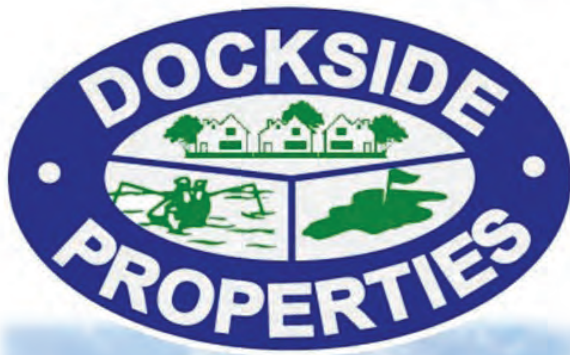
MANE EVENT

THE OFFICIAL COMMEMORATIVE PUBLICATION
OF THE CHINCOTEAGUE PONY PENNING CENTENNIAL
CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND, VIRGINIA | JULY 2025

Eastern Shore Post



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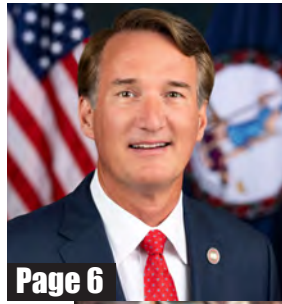
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Mane Event

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CHINCOTEAGUE PONY PENNING
CENTENNIAL | JULY 2025

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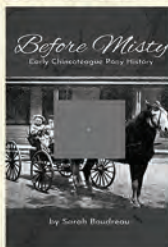
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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Office of the Governor

Glenn Youngkin
Governor

July 11, 2025

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the First Lady and I welcome you to the 100th Annual Chincoteague Pony Penning. This treasured Eastern Shore tradition celebrates the enduring spirit, beauty, and heritage of Chincoteague and Assateague Islands.

For a century, Pony Penning has drawn visitors from across the country to witness one of Virginia's most iconic and time-honored customs. From the thrilling Pony Swim across the Assateague Channel to the beloved auction, this weeklong celebration is rooted in community, conservation, and a deep sense of history that make Virginia truly special.

We are especially grateful to the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company and the residents of Chincoteague for their unwavering dedication to preserving this extraordinary tradition. Your stewardship honors the legacy of those who began this custom and ensures it will continue to inspire future generations.

Suzanne joins me in wishing you a memorable time on Virginia's Eastern Shore. While here, we invite you to explore the beauty, charm, and history that define the Commonwealth. Thank you for celebrating with us and for strengthening the Spirit of Virginia!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Glenn Youngkin".

Glenn Youngkin

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From Denise Bowden,
President, Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Co.
Mayor, Town of Chincoteague



‘The memories will last forever’

Denise Bowden: ‘Ponies are our life and our world does revolve around them’

Dear friends,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to Chincoteague Island for the 100th anniversary of Pony Penning.

Nowhere in the world will you see an event



**Denise
Bowden**

like this that has captured the heart and soul of so many for generations past and present.

For us locals, Pony Penning week is a time of reunions with family and old friends and a time to make new memories and new friends.

I have met so many people from all over the world who come just for this week to enjoy all that the week has to offer — many of whom I am friends with still today.

Whether this is your first Pony Penning or your 100th Pony Penning, I hope that you get as much joy out of it as we do — because for us, this is the epitome of all things Chincoteague Island.

Ponies are our life and our world does revolve around them.

Did you know our high school mascot is a

pony? And I often tell our high school seniors that, once a pony, always a pony — and they should never forget that.

I have served in the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company for 34 years and I take great pride in that service. It truly is a brotherhood and sisterhood like nothing else.

I’ve seen many changes over the years with the fire service in general but one thing remains constant: our desire to help save lives and property and to take care of ponies.

Our residents do not pay a fire tax so all the money generated from the carnival and pony auction goes back into the community in various ways — from purchasing fire engines, ambulances, and other lifesaving equipment, to providing scholarships for high school seniors, to sponsoring Little League and Boy Scouts, to perhaps helping a family with a heating fuel bill.

Please enjoy our island, our carnival, and Pony Penning. Relax, take it all in, and come back and see us.

As I tell everyone at Pony Swim Lane, the mud will wash off but the memories will last forever.

With gratitude,
Denise Bowden
President, Chincoteague
Volunteer Fire Company
Mayor, Town of Chincoteague

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From Bobby Lappin,
Chief, Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Co.

‘The ponies are simply a way of life’

Bobby Lappin: ‘To be a part of this is truly a privilege’



Dear friends,

On behalf of the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company, I would like to welcome you to our 100th annual wild pony roundup and swim.

Steeped in tradition, this event — which is known around the world — has continued on due to the dedication of our members, who have worked tirelessly to keep it alive generation after generation.



Bobby Lappin

A big thank-you goes to our visitors and our hometown folks who love this event as much as we do.

The ponies are simply a way of life here on Chincoteague Island and to be able to be a part of this is truly a privilege.

We welcome you and sincerely hope you have a pleasant time here.

If it is your first time, soak it all in. If it is not your first time, then we appreciate the fact that you return year after year to support our mission.

This event supports the fire company and our community in many, many ways and it takes dedication and determination all through the year.



EASTERN SHORE POST/JIM RITCH

Viewers take photos of ponies after the swim near Chincoteague Veterans Memorial Park.

We are so proud to say, “Happy 100th anniversary!”

Bobby Lappin,
Fire Chief, Chincoteague
Volunteer Fire Company
Chincoteague Island, Virginia

100 YEARS



Town of
Chincoteague

Beautiful Land Across the Water

The Town of Chincoteague congratulates the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company on its **100 years** of dedicated service to the Citizens of Chincoteague and for the years of hard work hosting the **World-Famous Pony Swim** and its profound effects on our community's development.

Pony Swim week events

- **SATURDAY, JULY 26:** Roundup of the south end herd on Assateague Island, starting at 7 a.m.
- **SUNDAY, JULY 27:** Roundup of the north end herd on Assateague Island, starting at 6 p.m.
- **MONDAY, JULY 28:** Pony beach walk on Assateague Beach, starting at 6 a.m.
- **TUESDAY, JULY 29:** Ponies checked by veterinarian and selections are made for buyback ponies, which will be auctioned off but will live out their lives on Assateague Island to replenish the herd.
- **WEDNESDAY, JULY 30:** The ponies will swim across the channel from Assateague Island to Chincoteague Island at an area near Memorial Park. The swim, which is always held at slack tide, will take place between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. Slack tide is the time at tide change when the direction reverses, there is no movement in the tidal stream, and the water is unstressed. Ponies will rest for about an hour before the Saltwater Cowboys lead them to the carnival grounds. They will parade south on Ridge Road, west on Beebe Road, and north on Main Street. Spectators will line the route to see the ponies.
- **THURSDAY, JULY 31:** The annual Pony Auction will be held at 8 a.m. at the back of the carnival grounds. Seating opens at 6 a.m.
- **FRIDAY, AUG. 1:** Ponies that were not privately purchased by bidders will swim back to Assateague Island from an area near Memorial Park. The return swim will take place about two hours later than the Wednesday swim.



EASTERN SHORE POST/JIM RITCH | FRONT COVER PHOTO BY JIM RITCH
Ponies parade north on Main Street after the swim.

Mane event

Pony Penning centennial a century in the making

Not many events last 100 years. But from humble origins and the efforts of a group of volunteer fire-fighters in 1925, Pony Penning connects the generations with a special event that has made Chincoteague Island famous around the world.

The Chincoteague Ponies draw constant adoration and admirers, no matter the season. The Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company, which owns and maintains the herd of roughly 140 ponies, nurtures and cares for the ponies all year long, in all kinds of weather.

During late July, however, planning and anticipation crest with the arrival of Pony Week events. Some of the East Coast's unique and time-honored traditions unfold.

It is a time of homecoming and fellowship, of vacations and volunteerism, of days watching ponies and evenings at the fireman's carnival. It is a time when children dream of owning a pony and families gather and reminisce.

It's the Pony Penning centennial — a once-in-a-lifetime event that brings out the kid in everyone.

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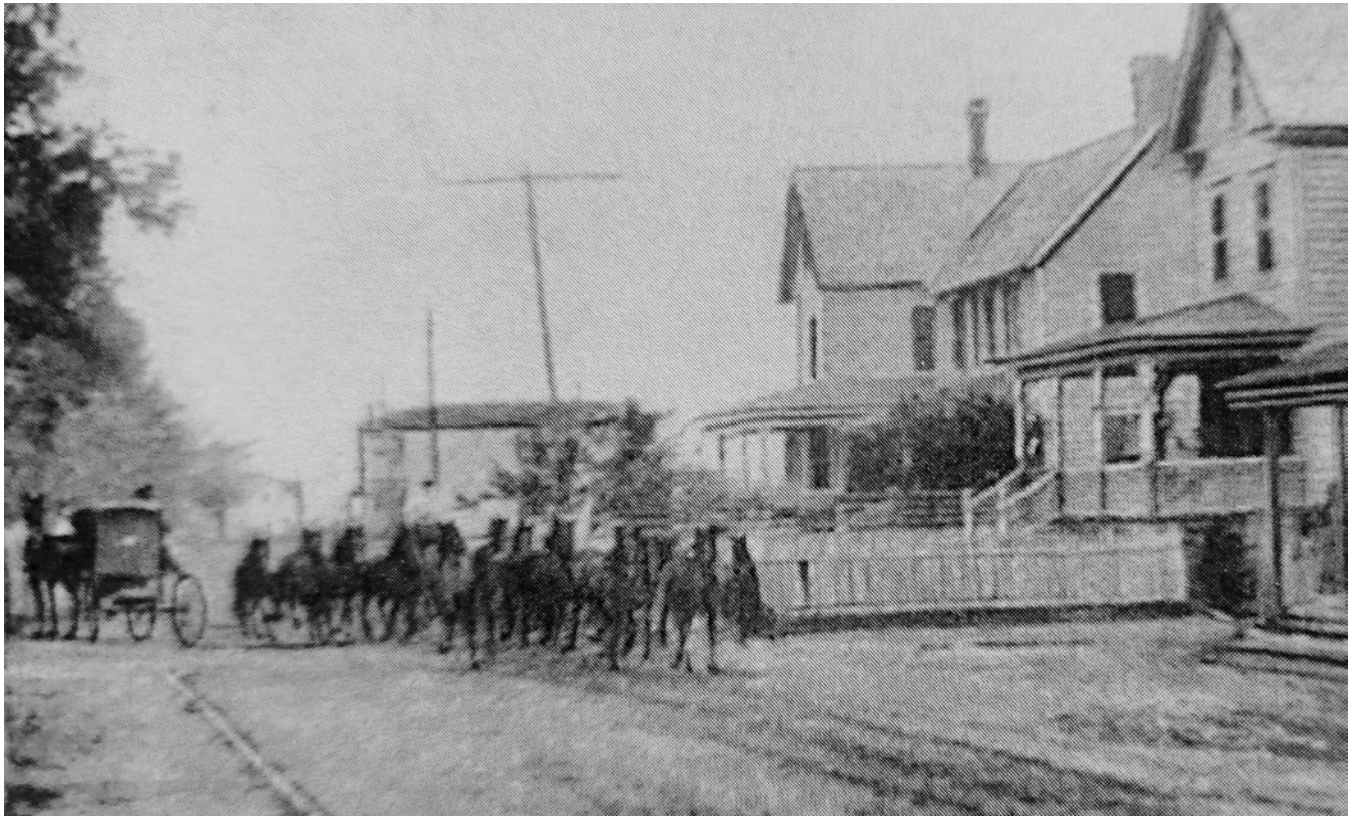


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PHOTO BY JOHN PARK





COURTESY PHOTO

Ponies parade to the carnival grounds in an undated photo from a long-ago Pony Penning.

Storied history

Penning, fire company linked in 1925

Though the town of Chincoteague had had a fire brigade for years, the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company dates its existence from 1925, when as a result of a second massive town fire, a new surge of interest and concern led to the organization of a new company independent of the municipal government.

Eba L. Jones (1888-1952), a native Coast Guardsman, was elected fire chief, and at the first meeting it was decided to fund the endeavor by sponsoring a carnival at Pony Penning.

And so it was that on June 11, 1925, the Town Council ordered that “the fire equipment be turned over to the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company” and that “the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company ... is hereby authorized to hold a carnival.”

In effect, the new fire company took over the Pony Penning — “this year it is the younger men of the Island who are running things,” they informed the public through the Peninsula Enterprise newspaper — even though the ponies that foraged on their island were not theirs to manage.

Joseph Pruitt, of Greenbackville, grazed his herd on Wallops Island. James Powell, of Worcester County, grazed his on Piney Island, and the Thornton family grazed theirs on what is known today as Marsh Island.

There were also, of course, herds on Chincoteague itself, particularly those of Clarence Beebe at the southern end, which was common pasture dating back into the distant past.

Although the firemen hoped, eventually, to acquire a herd of their own, their immediate problem was how to get the ponies of other people from Assateague to Chincoteague for the annual roundup.

The problem was easily and brilliantly solved: The ponies would be rounded up on Assateague and swum across the channel to Chincoteague.

Continued next page

History

From previous page

As the place for the swim, the firemen chose the narrowest part of the channel between the two islands, at today's Memorial Park, then less than half as wide as now.

Once ashore, the ponies could be herded to the Pony Penning site, which was downtown between Cleveland and Mumford streets.

The first Pony Penning under the auspices of the firemen, on July 30, 1925, was a huge success. "Largest Crowd Ever Seen on Island Expected for Annual Occasion," ran the headline in the local papers announcing it.

As many as 15,000 people were on the island for the event, and the festivities included pony races, swimming races, boat races, baseball, and food prepared by

the fire company's ladies' auxiliary. A chance flyover by the U.S. Navy dirigible "Shenandoah" created additional excitement.

Between 15 and 20 ponies were sold at set prices of \$75 for males, \$90 for females (the pony auction had not yet come into being), and in addition Clarence Beebe had his own pony penning at his home that day, offering stock for sale there.

The proceeds were over \$6,000 and enabled the firemen to purchase a new pump truck the following year.

The 1925 Pony Penning was the beginning of a new era for that ancient tradition — the first to join the three components that are now the stock features of the event: the traditional penning of the livestock, the firemen's carnival, and the pony swim.

It was filmed by the Hearst newsreels in 1927, by the state Chamber of Commerce in 1928, and by no fewer than five newsreel companies in 1935, by which time visitors were coming from as far away as Oklahoma to see it. By 1932 the ponies were being sold at auction and Beebe had folded his private penning into the main one run by the firemen. In 1937 the crowd was estimated at 25,000; in that year some of the ponies were rounded up on Chincoteague Island, some swam over from Assateague Island, and some were brought by boat from Wallops Island and from as far away as Hog Island.

— This story was written by the late Kirk Mariner and used with permission from his book, "Once Upon an Island: The History of Chincoteague."

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EASTERN SHORE POST/JIM RITCH

Ponies make their way from Assateague to Chincoteague during the world-famous Pony Swim.

It's a swim like no other

Pony Swim tips

- The main public viewing area is Chincoteague Veterans Memorial Park. The best way to get to the viewing site is the free Pony Swim Shuttle, which will begin running from several places around the island on Wednesday, July 30, at 5 a.m.
- There are no tickets required to attend the swim. Attendees should bring water and sunscreen.
- Instead of watching the swim, some enjoy watching the ponies parade to the carnival grounds.

People find spots everywhere to watch Pony Swim

Some stand in the marsh. Others wade knee deep into the water. Many arrive in boats. A nimble few will climb trees for a good view. Tens of thousands will head to Chincoteague Veterans Memorial Park, where large television screens will broadcast the proceedings. They all will be looking for the best view of the centennial Pony Swim on Wednesday, July 30.

Each year about 130 ponies make the swim, which this year will take place between 7 and 9 a.m. at slack tide. Pregnant mares, mothers with very young foals, or injured ponies will be transported over.

An orange flare marks the swim time. It takes about five minutes for all the ponies to cross the channel as a crowd cheers. The first pony ashore is raffled off later at the carnival.

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EASTERN SHORE POST/JIM RITCH

Saltwater Cowboys hold a foal to be auctioned at the annual Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company Pony Auction.

Dreams come true at the auction

About the Pony Auction

- The annual Chincoteague Pony Auction will be held Thursday, July 31, beginning at 8 a.m., at the corral and auction site behind the carnival grounds.
- Bidders and viewers will be allowed to take their places beginning at 6 a.m. in a first-come, first-served fashion. No chairs are to be placed before 6 a.m.
- Last year, the pony auction raised more than \$547,000 for the fire company. In all, 88 ponies were sold.

Buybacks, take-homes sold to the highest bidders

The crowds will gather early on Thursday, July 31, for the annual pony auction. It's a spirited time of bidding and buying when dreams come true and the crowd is captivated by the young foals.

Last year at the 99th annual auction, 89 ponies were sold, raising more than \$547,000 for the fire company. The highest bid was for a buyback pony — one that was purchased but will live its life on Assateague Island and replenish the Chincoteague Pony herd.

The highest winning bid for a take-home foal was \$8,000 for a bay pinto colt. The lowest was \$1,600 paid for a pinto colt purchased by buyers in Georgia.

Even those who don't plan to bid or buy enjoy the auction. It's a time to see beautiful animals in a spirited, intimate venue.

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COURTESY PHOTO

The Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company was formed after fires in 1920 and 1924 devastated the island.

Fire company: ‘Service for Others’

Fire company apparel

■ The Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company offers a number of fire company items for sale, including



company items for sale, including T-shirts, caps, sweatshirts, patches, the annual Pony

Penning poster, and more during the carnival and on its website. Be sure to check out the 100th anniversary products. To see the offerings, scan the above QR code.

Those who are familiar with American history know that for every need of this growing country came men and women with ambition and strength to meet each undertaking. The Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company is a classic example of this drive and determination.

Two devastating fires, one in 1920 and the other in 1924, destroyed large sections of the island. These events led to a small band of men to form the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company — what is now one of the most successful and one of the most modern volunteer fire companies on the East Coast.

The residents of Chincoteague Island have always stood behind their fire company, for they knew then and they know now that the fire company has and continues to meet one of its greatest needs, fire protection and EMS services. Today, the men and women of the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company continue to live up to their motto: “Service for Others.”

Chincoteague Pony Penning | 1925-2025



COURTESY PHOTO

Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company line and executive officers for 2025, pictured earlier this year at the 100th annual banquet, are from left, Alex Tucker, vice president and deputy chief; Baxter Brasure, assistant treasurer; Noah Jester, secretary; Denise Bowden, president; Bobby Lappin, chief; J. Wesley Jeffries, assistant secretary; Sam Richardson, assistant chief; Andrew Olsen, chief engineer; Dean Orsino, first assistant chief engineer; and Cody Britton, second assistant chief engineer. Missing from the photo are Billy Joe Tarr, treasurer; and Hunter Leonard, public relations.



COURTESY PHOTO

Award winners from the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company 100th annual banquet held earlier this year include, from left, Alex Tucker, line officer of the year; Noah Jester, EMS driver of the year; J. Wesley Jeffries, recognition of 50 years of active service; Cathy Repsher, executive officer of the year; Carol and Will Turner, honorary members of the year; Beverly Bowden, auxiliary member of the year; and Dean Orsino, firefighter of the year. Absent from the photo is Billy Joe Tarr, life member of the year.

Chincoteague Pony Penning | 1925-2025



C.V.F.C Past Presidents

**Denotes In Memoriam*

Leroy Conant*	Fred Tolbert*
Robert Keas*	Vernon "Slim"
Charles Showard*	Richardson*
Henry Leonard*	Robert
Ralph Laws*	"Bobby" Cherrix
Stewart Baker*	J. Wesley Jeffries
Claude Savage*	Ronnie
Wilbur Wimbrow*	Malone Sr.*
Edward Munger*	Jack Jester
Cardinal	Pete Richardson*
"Cudge" Mears*	Harry Thornton
Ray Taylor*	Benny Bowden
Carl Taylor*	Joe Thornton
Howard Rodgers*	Baxter Brasure
Wilson	Donald Holloway*
"Dink" Thornton*	Everett Lewis
Floyd Mason*	Nathan
Newman Snead	"Skibo" Clark
Brooks*	Eddie Moran*
"Beanie" Hudson*	Roe Terry
James Quillen*	Willis Dize
Frank Bull*	James Russell
Sewell Thornton*	Eddie Thornton
Thurlo	Parker Selby
"Fifty" Hancock*	Billy Joe Tarr
Leroy Jester*	Alan Matz*
Roy Post*	Ken Hardison*
Harry Jester*	John "Buster"
Carl	Dennis
"Chub" Jester*	Denise Bowden
Herman Whealton*	Harry Thornton
John Joe	Fred Hipple
"Jake" Baker*	Billy Joe Tarr
William	Rick Betts
"Bill" Williams*	David Jennings
Thomas Dukes*	James Russell
Keith Thornton*	Denise Bowden
Harry	Ronald Malone Jr.
Clay Bunting*	Willis Dize
Billy Ray Bunting	Dennie Savage
Bill Collins*	Chessie Rhodes
Billy Whealton*	Alex Tucker
Lee "Dutchie"	Hunter Leonard
Kleckner*	J.L. Jester
Asa Hickman*	Ronald Malone Jr.
Carroll	Harry Thornton
Burt Cherrix*	Denise Bowden

C.V.F.C Past Fire Chiefs

**Denotes In Memoriam*

Eba Jones*	Fred Tolbert*	Carroll Burt
Wilbur	Vernon "Slim"	Cherrix*
"Shrieves"	Richardson*	Harry Thornton
Wimbrow*	William "Pete"	Nathan
Leroy Jester Jr.*	Richardson*	"Skibo" Clark
Asa Hickman*	Ollie Reed	Bobby Lappin



EASTERN SHORE POST/JIM RITCH

Bobby Lappin, foreground, is the chief of the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company.

Chincoteague Pony Penning | 1925-2025



C.V.F.C Active Members

Luke Betts
Marty Birch Jr.
Mark Bowden
Cody Britton
Lane Campbell
Scott Christiansen
Bradley Conner
Kyle Gentry
Edward Jeffries
Joseph Jeffries
Noah Jester
Joseph Kambarn
Ashley Lappin
Justin Lappin
Ayden Leonard
Hunter Leonard
Steven Liscum
Ronald Malone Jr.
Shawn Malone
Andrew Olson
Billy Reed III
Sam Richardson
Joseph Thornton
Zachary White

C.V.F.C Life Members

Lloyd Belton
Naomi Belton
Rick Betts
John Birch
John Wesley
Bloxom
Paul Bloxom
Benny Bowden
Denise Bowden
George Bowden
Baxter Brasure
Billy Ray Bunting
Melanie Mariner
Carroll Burt
Cherrix Jr.
Harold Cherrix
Bobby Cherrix
Carl Lee Clark
Nathan
"Skibo" Clark

William Craigmile
John "Buster"
Dennis Jr.
Willis Dize
John Fecteau
George Fecteau
Robby Fisher
Fred Hipple
Kevin Holloway
J. L. Jester
Leonard Jester
Neil Kennovin
Robert "Bobby"
Lappin Jr.
Everett Lewis
John Lewis
Kenny Lewis
Amy Lewis
Ronnie Lewis
Doug Marshall
Jay Pronier
Rick Raymond
Joe Boy Reed
Ollie Reed
Cathy Repsher
Chessie Rhodes
Joe Ruffing
James Russell
David Savage
Terry Savage
Kenny Shreves
Ralph Shreves
Anthony Smith
Reginald Stubbs Jr.
Billy Joe Tarr
Edwin Taylor
James Taylor
Richard Taylor
Eddie Thornton
Harry Thornton
Joe Thornton

C.V.F.C Associate Members

Roger Adams
Lee Jester
Aaron Matthews
Todd Matthews
Derek
Richardson
Andrew Totty

C.V.F.C Junior Members

Jasmine Lewis
Jarrett Patton

C.V.F.C Auxiliary Members

Ashley Gentry
Austin Taylor
Barbara Godwin
Beverly Bowden
Billie Ann Bowden
Brian Tyndall
Charlie Kupelian
Chris Bott
Cynthia Wilder
Giovanni Rosanova
Ian Alward
Jack Bowden
James Beach
Jamey Massey
Jenny Tyndall
Jill Jester
Joe Vernallie
Julie Young
Justin Hurst
Kevin Liddle
Larry Conser
Leslie Riley
Lisa Harsh
Linda Loeper
Lou Loeper
Marlo Liddle
Mary Esther
Leonard
Melissa Barrett
Mike Jester
Mike Terry
Nick Howard
Nora Hoffman
Paul Kleckner
Paul Lotz
Rachel Hurst
Rae Thompson
Robert Wessells
Ron Riley
Steve Hoffman
Tammy Rosanova
Tina Wessells

Travis Thornton
Teresa Forney

C.V.F.C Honorary Members

**Denotes In Memoriam*

John Winder*
Wyle Maddox*
Leroy Conant*
Roy Twilley*
Nick Nichols*
Edward Clark*
Walter Carpenter*
Norman Jones*
Julian White*
Jack Jester
Billy Reed Sr.
Mary Tolbert*
John R. Taylor Jr.*
Paul Jester*
Wilson
"Hobie" Tull Sr.*
Stanley White*
Cliff Jester*
David Lewis
Chester
Brittingham*
Tom Downing*
Charles Saunders*
Sawyer Mears*
Herman Daisey*
Walt Clark*
George Hall*
Pete Watson*
Robert
"Burt" Savage*
Tommy Bowden
Harry Phipps*
Mike McGee
Phil Lucich*
Kenny Taylor
David Jester*
Eddie Quillen*
Wanda J.
Thornton*
Gary Rayne*
Greg
"Chief" Merritt*
Nolan Warnick*
George Foskey*
Doug Fish*

Elizabeth
Ann Hopkins*
Robert W. Bowden
Paul James Lewis*
Lester Walls
Walter Marks
Robert
"Jack" Bowden Sr.*
Richard Thomas
Harvey Spurlock
Andy Linton
Joanne Lewis*
Barbara Mason
John Graham
Jimmy Walker*
Wayne Estes
William Hillman
Ruby Lee Daisey*
Billy Smith
Butch Peters*
Connie
Salyer Bailey*
Robert Dill*
William
"Bill" Jones
Kathryn Tolbert*
Wayne Tolbert*
Brad Carter
Joe Rivera
Tiger Jones*
Mary Clark*
Harold "Tuck"
Post*
Linda Lewis
John Henry Howard
Mike Bernstein*
Eugene "Baby
Gene" Merritt
Ellis Savage
Donald Bloxom*
Martha Bloxom*
Lewis Earl Budd*
Jan Budd
David "Bubba"
Stitely
George Linvill
Rev. Bob Hudson
Continued next page

Chincoteague Pony Penning | 1925-2025



C.V.F.C Honorary Members, Continued

Arthur Leonard
Jay Savage
Billy Reed Jr.
Linda Snellings*
David Snead*
Will Turner
Carole Turner
Dr. Glenn Wolffe
Randy Coddington
Ron Pettit*
Joyce Pettit
Dr. Donald
J. Amrien*
Daniel Williams
Joan Carol Betts*
Fran Birch
Vernon "Mackie"
MacIntosh
Tommy Clark
David
McCready Jr.
John "Jack" Tarr
Cloyd Jester
Cindy Collins
Esley Collins
Ron Lionetti
Jack Brittingham
Pam Malone*
Ed Reynolds*
Brianna Merritt*
Emerson Liscum*
Edward Lewis
David Brumley
Don Mitchell
Glen Parsons
Barbara Huffman
Miranda Duston
Debbie Cherrix
Sandy Bowden
Earline Mariner*
Lisa Kambarn
William
Kambarn
Stewart Baker
Robbie Downs
Vaughn Rayne
Brayn Harris
Brad Hauck

C.V.F.C Members In Memoriam

Edward C. Davis
Arthur Leonard
George Mears
Aaron Bowden
Charles Wimbrough
Allen Russell
George Clear
William Wimbrough
Samuel Lewis
John Kollick
Eba Jones (First
Fire Chief)
Carl Taylor
Elmer Thornton
Stewart G. Baker
Henry
Lee Thornton
William Beebe
Claude Savage
Ernest Jones
Robert Keas
Wilfred Adams
Elva Jester
Carlton
"Lucky" Leonard
John Rodgers
William C. Boston
Cardinal
"Cudge" Mears
Edward Munger
Edward Beebe
Delmas Beebe
Ralph Laws
Floyd Wimbrow
Ralph Reynolds
Samuel Taylor
Daniel Hudson
"Baby" John
Bowden
Ernest Wimbrow
Leroy Conant (First
Fire Co. President)
Evans Russell
Brooks
"Beanie" Hudson
Lloyd Williams
Henry Leonard
Otis Marshall
Alvah Mears
Ebe Jester

Alfred
C. Johnson Sr.
Roy Post
Albert
"Kelly" Sharpley
Floyd Mason
Jack
Dempsey Bowden
Russell S. Thornton
David
"Petie" Savage
Ray Taylor
William
"Bill" Lewers
Carl
"Chub" Jester
Linwood Watson
Thurlow
"Fifty" Hancock
Charles "Mousey"
Turlington
Wilbur
"Shreaves" Wimbrow
Herman
"Smitty" Smith
Charles Showard
Harvey Mears
Newman Snead
Vernon
"Slim" Richardson
Lee "Dutchie"
Kleckner
Tommy Dukes
Stanley Thornton
Wilson
"Dink" Thornton
Simon Birch
Lloyd
"Frog" Watson
Howard Rodgers
Herman Whealton
Sewell Thornton
John T. Birch
John Beebe
Delbert Birch
Keith E.
Thornton Sr.
Albert
"Pee-Wee" Mears
Roland
"Red Journey"
Hitchins
Louis Jester

W. Russell Fish
Frank Bull
Claude Lewis
Asa T. Hickman
Fred H. Tolbert
William
"Bill" Williams Jr.
Carroll
Burt Cherrix Sr.
Reginald Birch
Robert
"Teapot" Melvin
Henry Jester
David Cherrix
Leroy "Lyle" Jester
Robert "Bob" Reed
Brad Lewis
John
Joe "Jake" Baker
William
"Bill" Mann
Howard Bowden
Eugene Bowden
Charles "Charley
Boy" Taylor
James P. Bloxom
Chet Williams Sr.
Alan Matz
Donald Repsher
Harry Clay
Bunting
Donald Leonard
Harold Brasure
Evans Derrickson
William Collins
Robert
"Rawhide" Jester
Carlton
"Cork" Collins
Ralph "Grandpap"
Shreves
Roy Mears Jr.
Grover
"Drizzle" Wilgus
Justin Lewis
Wesley
"Old Dad" Bloxom
Carlton
"Cork" Bowden
George Bickel
Jack Williams Sr.
Marty Birch Sr.
Harold Savage

Clarence "Bud"
Bowden Sr.
Ronald H.
Malone Sr.
Delmas Taylor
Kenny Taylor
Donnie
Holloway Sr.
Ken Hardison
Mike Sosebee
Eddie Moran

C.V.F.C Saltwater Cowboy Pony Committee

Harry S. Thornton,
(Chairman)
Mark Bowden,
(Co-chair)
Billy Reed Jr.
Noah Jester
Alex Tucker
Roe Terry
David Savage
Bobby Lappin
Nathan Clark
Rick Raymond
Justin Lappin
Eddie Thornton
John
Wesley Bloxom
Benny Bowden
Joe Boy Reed
Chris Bowden
Andrew Olson
Cody Britton
Ronnie
Malone Jr.
Hunter Leonard
Zach White
John Lewis
Denise Bowden
Luke Betts
Rick Betts
Continued next page



Chincoteague Pony Penning 1925-2025

C.V.F.C Saltwater Cowboy Pony Committee, Continued

Edwin Taylor
Billy Reed III
Gene Merritt

C.V.F.C Saltwater Cowboy Riders

Harry Thornton
Mark Bowden
John
Wesley Bloxom
Bennie Bowden
Jack Brittingham
Cody Britton
David Britton
David Brumley
Lane Campbell
Bryan Chandler
Tom Clements
Jackie Cooper
Lester Dennis
Robbie Downs
Jamie Elliott
Mike Ennis
Wayne Estes
Bryan Harris
Brad Hauck
Rob Jones
Bobby Lappin
Justin Lappin
Ayden Leonard

Hunter Leonard
Bryan Lewis
David Lewis
Edward Lewis
Gerald Lewis
John Lewis
Mike Lewis
Steven Liscum
T.J. Lord
Tom Lord
Tyler Marks
Walter Marks
Bryce Massey
Jamie Massey
Jeff Massey
Peanut Moore
Scuzzy Moore
Tom Newman
Norman Parker
Glenn Parsons
Joe Quick
Rick Raymond
Vaughn Rayne
Billy Reed Sr.
Billy Reed Jr.
Billy Reed III
Joe Boy Reed
Matthew Reed
Bo Reeder
David Savage
Edwin Taylor
Eddie Thornton
Alex Tucker
Lester Walls
Kenny
Warrington
Tyler Watkinson
Billy Webb
William Webb
Walt Widgeon



**Chincoteague
firefighters
with an early
truck in an
undated
photo.**

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EASTERN SHORE POST/JIM RITCH

Harry Thornton rides in the pony parade. Thornton is the chairman of the fire company's Pony Committee.

Saltwater Cowboys care for ponies

Saltwater Cowboys

■ For the Pony Swim, Saltwater Cowboys herd the horses across the narrowest part of Assateague Channel at low tide, after which they are examined by veterinarians. After a resting period, they are herded through town to a corral at the carnival grounds, where they stay until the next day's auction. The pony auction not only provides a source of revenue for the fire company, but it also serves to trim the herd's numbers, set by the grazing permit.

Group of volunteers protective of famous herd

For Harry Thornton, chairman of the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company's Pony Committee, and all of the Saltwater Cowboys, caring for the Chincoteague Ponies is a labor of love that lasts all year.

There are three roundups — spring, fall, and summer — and the fire company ensures tests are performed on the ponies and inoculations and medicines are given. The popularity of pony watching and the day-to-day checking ensures the world-famous animals are well cared for. "If somebody sees something, they'll call one of us," said Thornton. "Everybody knows what's going on, which is a good thing."

Thornton, 73, has been riding horses since he was 11. And the Pony Penning still brings out youthful enthusiasm. "I look forward to it," he said.

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COURTESY PHOTO

The home on the Beebe Ranch is now a museum dedicated to its history — and to the famous pony Misty.

Beebe Ranch tells story of Misty

Visit the Beebe Ranch

■ The Beebe Ranch is located at 3062 Ridge Road on Chincoteague. It is open now through October from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. Admission is \$8; children under 12 are admitted for free.

■ The home on the property is now a museum dedicated to the history of the ranch, the Beebe family, Misty, and how author Marguerite Henry and illustrator Wesley Dennis brought Misty's story to the world in the book "Misty of Chincoteague."

Community fundraiser helped purchase property

Two years in the making from its purchase by the Museum of Chincoteague Island, the Beebe Ranch officially opened its doors to the public on Saturday, June 28.

At one time, Clarence and Ida Beebe owned as many as 150 Chincoteague ponies on the original 143-acre ranch located at the southern end of Chincoteague Island.

Gradually, the property was split up through inheritance and much of it was sold. The Beebe family hoped the remaining 10.3 acres would be preserved and not lost to development. When family members decided to sell, they first approached the Museum of Chincoteague Island.

Cindy Faith, then the museum's executive director, was very enthusiastic despite the high cost (\$625,000) and a deadline of mere months to make it happen.

Continued next page

Beebe Ranch

From previous page

Soon, more than enough funds were raised and the museum purchased the property on June 30, 2023.

The home on the property where Ralph and Jeanette Beebe lived with their children — and where the pregnant Misty stayed during the Ash Wednesday Storm of 1962 — is now a museum dedicated to the history of the ranch, the Beebe family, Misty, and how author Marguerite Henry and illustrator Wesley Dennis brought Misty's story to the world in the book "Misty of Chincoteague." The movie "Misty" was later filmed on the island.

Once interior and exterior repairs were made to the Beebe Ranch, Faith, who is now the assistant director, began formulating



COURTESY PHOTO
Artist Chris Pruitt, of Chincoteague, painted the image of Misty in the front window of the Beebe Ranch.

her vision — starting with the treasure trove of family history and memorabilia found in the attic.

"Grandma Ida and Jeanette Beebe must have saved everything," said Faith. "It felt like Christmas day, opening box after box."

Faith said once word spread about the purchase, she was contacted by several people willing to donate items from their own collections.

Among the many treasures now on display are photos of Marguerite Henry and Wesley Dennis's arrival on Chincoteague in 1946 for the Pony Swim.

Bonnie Thomas Beebe, the widow of Billy King Beebe who passed in May 2024, had a chance to visit the museum with her immediate family before it opened.

"We are grateful that the history of Misty and Stormy, the Beebe Ranch, and the Beebe family legacy has been preserved by the Museum of Chincoteague Island," she said.

The ranch is still a work in progress, said Faith. But it has come a long way.

"It truly is a dream come true," she said.

— This story was written by Janet Bernosky, a staff writer for the Eastern Shore Post.

Welcome to the 100th Pony Swim!



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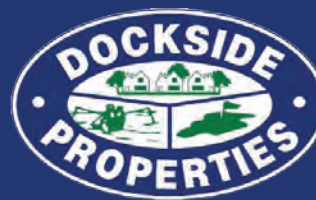
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EASTERN SHORE POST/TED SHOCKLEY

An oyster fritter from the Chincoteague Volunteer Fireman's Carnival is a delicious summer treat.

It's the carnival's centennial, too

Enjoy the carnival

- The Chincoteague Volunteer Fireman's Carnival continues July 11, 12, 18, 19, 25, 26, and July 28 through Aug. 2. It runs from 7 to 11 p.m. each day.
- Enjoy rides, games, bingo, raffles, seafood sandwiches, pizza, desserts, and much more.
- Buy a \$1 chance to win a pony. The first undesignated pony to come ashore will be raffled Wednesday, July 30, at 7:30 p.m. at the carnival grounds' bandstand.

Food, fun, fellowship are staples of town tradition

Oyster and clam fritters cooking at the Chincoteague Volunteer Fireman's Carnival have a distinctive aroma. The briny oysters and the mildly sweet batter, with the right amount of heat and oil, produce a savory fragrance. In the same cooking booth, salty clam fritters cooking in oil produce the scents of the sea. The alluring result wafts around the main entrance to the carnival grounds. It is the smell of summer.

"I see people coming up the sidewalk and coming in the front entrance, and they say, 'We've smelled this for 200 yards,'" said Andy Linton, who has volunteered in the fritter booth since 2006.

Chincoteague's fireman's carnival is celebrating its centennial along with the fire company's Pony Penning.

Continued next page



EASTERN SHORE POST/TED SHOCKLEY
A statue at the carnival grounds memorializes Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company members.

Carnival

From previous page

There are rides and games, seafood and desserts, bingo and raffles. There are young parents out with their children, teenagers holding hands, and empty-nesters enjoying cups of soft-serve ice cream.

And there are volunteers from the fire company and the community who make it all happen.

“If you ask anybody with the fire company, they will tell you we simply could not run the carnival without our community volunteers,” said J. Wesley Jeffries, who at 81 is the fire company’s oldest active member and the oldest certified emergency medical technician the fire company has ever had.

It takes well over 100 volun-

teers to staff each night of the carnival.

“It takes 12 people to open up the bingo stand alone,” he said.

Jeffries first worked in the bingo stand when he was 10 years old.

The carnival is inextricably linked to Pony Penning. The auction site and corral are at the back of the carnival grounds. It’s not uncommon for visitors to the carnival grounds to see a pony in the corral during a visit.

“I realize how important it is to us,” said Jeffries of the carnival, which is a big fundraiser for the fire company.

“I enjoy doing it,” said Linton, who fries the clam fritters while Ron Lionetti fries the oyster fritters.

“I enjoy talking to the people there. There are a lot of good people.”

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www.Facebook.com/ChincoteagueFestival

Pony Pennings through the years

100 years ago: 1925

Islanders to gather for wild pony roundup

Chincoteague Islanders will gather tomorrow in festive garb for the annual wild pony roundup. Chincoteague is the “Wild West” of the East. Its roundup predates the American cowboy, and its wild ponies roamed the salt marshes long before the first mustang was lassoed.

Two hundred and fifty years ago, the first English settlers were amazed to find the island inhabited by wild horses and Indian cattle. How the first horses reached this little

island five miles off the Eastern Shore of Virginia is not known. If the story told by the Indians is to be believed, they swam ashore from a Spanish shipwreck.

Hundreds of ponies were taken in the roundups of former years and they found their way into many different sections of the country.

There are fewer of them now, but the Chincoteague people, setting aside July 30 as “pony penning” day, have made the event an annual custom. Buyers and visitors come from the mainland and there is a varied and interesting program of contests

and games following the penning.

—*The World-News*
Roanoke, Va.


75 years ago: 1950

Chincoteague Ponies on auction block today

Ponies went on the block to the highest bidders on Chincoteague today as the feature event of the Atlantic Ocean island’s annual “Wild East” show got under way.

It was pony penning day on Chincoteague, and thousands of guests from all parts of the nation crammed the town to capacity to

Continued next page



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Years

From previous page

watch the auction and all that goes with it.

The extras included pony races, wild pony rides, boat rides, band concerts, and the annual dinner by the auxiliary of the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company, sponsors of the whole shebang.

— *Ledger-Star*
Norfolk, Va.

50 years ago: 1975

Wild Ponies make swim to Chincoteague

Approximately 70 of the famed Chincoteague ponies swam the 500 yards from Assateague Island to Chincoteague today as the 50th annual pony swim and auction got underway.

Originally scheduled for 8 a.m., the swim was delayed for about an hour due to a strong current in the east side channel, which separates the wild ponies' home from the carnival grounds where they are put on auction once a year to benefit the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company.

The festivities on Chincoteague, including a carnival, will continue through Saturday. The carnival grounds and, in fact, the entire town of Chincoteague, was overrun with visitors, with police reporting a massive traffic tie-up.

— *The Daily Times*
Salisbury, Md.

25 years ago: 2000

Saltwater Cowboys round 'em up

Every July, an estimated 50,000 people arrive to watch stocky wild ponies swim from nearby Assateague Island across a channel to Chincoteague — an event that has made the town of 3,500 famous the world over.

Volunteers known as “Saltwater Cowboys” round up the ponies the weekend before the swim and escort them during the swim at slack tide, between high and low tides when the current is still.

— *Daily Press*
Newport News, Va.



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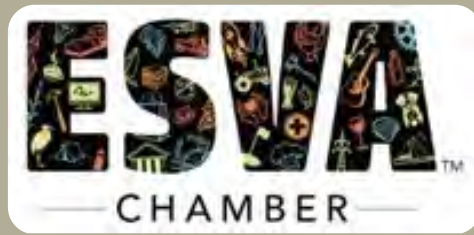
Harbour Rentals & CB Harbour Realty
6455 Maddox Blvd
Chincoteague Island, VA 23336
Phone: 800-221-5059 or 757-336-5490
harbourrentals.net
discoverchincoteague.com

Gladys Baczek & Anita Merritt
Owners

Anita Merritt and Gladys Baczek own and operate Harbour Rentals LLC. They have been selling real estate & managing rentals since 1987 and are experienced and successful in their field. They are affiliated with Coldwell Banker Harbour Realty, the largest real estate company on the Eastern Shore.

 **COLDWELL BANKER**
HARBOUR REALTY



The Eastern Shore of Virginia Chamber of Commerce is driven on helping local businesses grow and be successful. We help members with networking, marketing, and advocacy. The Eastern Shore is about community, and we are here to help our business community and members succeed.



BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- ✓ Referrals
- ✓ E-Blast
- ✓ Brochure Display
- ✓ Meeting Rooms
- ✓ New Business Ribbon Cutting
- ✓ & More!

CHAMBER EVENTS

- ✓ Chamber Fest
- ✓ Le Tour De Shore
- ✓ ESVA AG Fair
- ✓ Eggs & Issues
- ✓ Lunch & Learn
- ✓ Annual Awards Dinner

OPERATING HOURS

**Monday-Thursday
Friday**

**8:30 AM-5 PM
8:30 AM-3 PM**

19056 Parkway, Melfa, VA 23410

757-787-2460

www.esvachamber.org

*Saltwater Cowboy, Fire Company,
and Carnival Volunteer Autograph Page*



Get a marker, collect autographs, and create your own piece of Pony Penning centennial memorabilia in the space below

A large, empty white rectangular area framed by a thick blue border, intended for collecting autographs and creating memorabilia.

