



**FREE
TAKE ONE**



**Local wine, local oysters
on a local tour** | Page 6



**Taylor Swift cover band
coming to Cape Charles** | Page 10



Fall is the time for oysters

Grilled oysters in garlic butter a seasonal treat | Page 12

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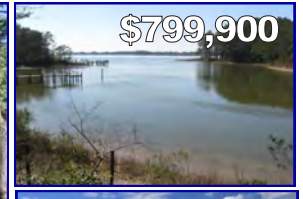
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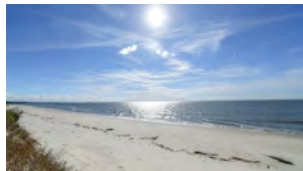


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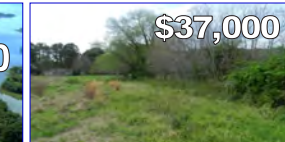
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September 13 | Cape Charles Crabby Blues Festival

MUSIC FESTIVAL: 2 to 7 p.m., Cape Charles Central Park, Cape Charles. The Crabby Blues Festival will bring live music, food vendors, artisan and craft vendors, kids activities — and plenty of steamed crabs.



September 27 | Exmore Exmore Fall Festival

FESTIVAL: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., the Exmore Fall Festival will take place all over town. There will be artists and artisans, live music, food trucks, and more. There is free admission.

September 27 | Cape Charles Swift Nation: Taylor Swift tribute show

TAYLOR SWIFT TRIBUTE SHOW: 7:30 p.m., Swift Nation will perform at the Historic Palace Theatre in Cape Charles. Visit www.artsentercapecharles.org



Saturday, Sept. 6

■ **YARD SALE:** From 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. the Town of Saxis will hold its annual town-wide yard sale and the Sammy Marshall Antique Truck and Car Show. The car show will run from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. There will also be an open house at the Saxis Island Museum.

Saturday, Sept. 13

■ **POKER RUN:** Registration 9 to 11 a.m., Cape Charles Brewing Company, Cape Charles. Chincoteague Police Department's annual Poker Run kicks off in Cape Charles. There will be additional stops at The Shanty in Cape Charles, The Blarney Stone in Onancock, Off the Rails in Parksley, and Don's Seafood in Chincoteague. The cost is \$35 per person and includes a T-shirt, food, a pin, a poker hand, and door prizes. The ride will end with a block party, live music, and a live auction at 3 p.m.

■ **CAR SHOW:** 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Atlantic Volunteer Fire Company, 10071 Atlantic Road, Atlantic. The fire company and Eastern Shore Cruisers are hosting a fundraiser car and truck show. There will also be door prizes, a 50/50 raffle, food and drink for sale, and rescue demonstrations.

■ **ART SHOW:** 6 to 9 p.m., Chincoteague Center, 6155 Community Drive, Chincoteague. The Chincoteague Cultural Alliance's 22nd annual plein air art show, reception, and sale will feature the work of over 60 artists who will spend from Sept. 6 to Sept. 13 painting outdoors on Chincoteague. Meet the artists and see their work. Admission is free. There will be appetizers and sweets, as well as a cash bar.

Saturday, Sept. 20

■ **MARINE LIFE DAY:** noon to 4 p.m., The Virginia Institute of Marine Science's Eastern Shore Laboratory in Wachapreague will hold Marine Life Day at 40 Atlantic Ave., Wachapreague. Admission is free. Visitors of all ages will have the opportunity to view and touch live displays of local marine life and learn about research conducted.

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SHORE FIRST/JANET BERNOSKY

Thomas Haney, of Laughing King Oyster Company, near Cape Charles, examines one of his homegrown oysters.

Homegrown oysters, homemade wines highlight a Shore tour

Laughing King Oyster Company gives the story behind the flavors

Boat tours and oyster tastings

Laughing King Oyster Company, near Cape Charles, offers oyster farm boat tours and oyster and wine tastings. For more information or to register, visit the company's website at www.laughingkingoystercompany.com

BY JANET BERNOSKY
Shore First

A spectacular mid-August day provided the perfect opportunity for a trip on a boat in a creek along the Chesapeake Bay with one thing in mind.

The goal was to taste *Crassostrea virginica* — otherwise known as the eastern oyster native to the Atlantic coast — at its absolute freshest,

shucked while you wait.

Thomas Haney is the owner of Laughing King Oyster Company, named after the Powhatan Chief Debedeavon, who was also known by this moniker.

Haney runs seasonal tours on his oyster boat, transporting eager mermeliars (oyster lovers, or “slurpers,” for short) to his beds in Old Plantation Creek, while sharing information about shellfish aquaculture on

the southernmost creek on the Chesapeake side of the Eastern Shore.

Once back on land, a short jaunt up the hill leads to a covered outbuilding for a wine tasting of the varietals he and his wife, Erin Lusk Haney, grow and bottle at their Vessel Farm and Vineyard, located on the creek just south of Cape Charles.

Haney is passionate about this tiny but mighty mollusk that plays a crucial role in its water habitat, filtering up to 50 gallons of water per oyster per day.

Largely self-taught through research and by doing, Haney literally plunges in physically every day the weather allows to nurture and harvest the oysters he grows from seed.

The couple met while environmental studies majors at Prescott College in Arizona and later married.

After spending time out west — he working as a smoke jumper fighting fires and she as a midwife — they moved in 2014 to the Eastern Shore, where Erin grew up, to raise a family of their own.

Over the years, they talked about someday becoming small-scale, sustainable farmers.

Oysters became the logical choice after Haney spent time helping Erin's father with his oyster beds.

Haney's Louisiana-born parents have relocated here and now his father helps him out — conveniently paid in oysters, the elder Haney's favorite food.

“We all just really happen to love oysters,” Thomas Haney said.

Eventually, Thomas Haney was able to quit his job as a firefighter in Virginia Beach in 2022 to oyster farm full-time.

Haney raises his oysters in bags above the sea floor, as opposed to wild growing, to reduce sediment, he said.

He is also a huge proponent of “tide turning.” His oyster bags are naturally turned each day by the tide cycle. However, Haney will turn them manually as well.

This results in a prettier, rounder oyster with a deeper cup by chipping

(Continued on page 7)



COURTESY PHOTO

Wine from the Laughing King Oyster Company.

Oysters and wine

(Continued from page 6)

away at the longer, tapered bill at the front end that typically develops in unturned oysters.

For a chef, it results in a more sought-after, attractive presentation on a plate.

He said a turned oyster is also thicker and meatier.

Given their location near where the bay meets the ocean, his oysters measure in at about 22 parts salt per thousand of water (ppt) in terms of salinity, which Haney calls “just salty enough.”

He said seaside oysters come in around 30 to 35 ppt.

Harvesting about 8,000 oysters weekly on Wednesdays, Haney personally delivers them on Thursdays to his clients, which include AJ’s Bar & Grill in Cape Charles, plus about 20 other restaurants across the bay in Williamsburg, Norfolk, and Virginia Beach.

Although time-consuming, Haney said this personal touch allows the ability to forge relationships with business owners and chefs to understand exactly what they want.

His customers also know precisely how fresh his oysters are, as opposed to buying them at a wholesaler through a middleman.

The job is not without its perks.

“Sometimes, a chef will ask me to taste a new dish or give my opinion on a certain wine,” he said.

The Haney family decided to grow wine grapes for their own consumption on their farm in 2021. Before his wife knew it, Haney had gone full-tilt researching — and planting — hundreds of vines.

Although their first grape was the muscadine, they discovered the climate and sandy soils on the Shore favored growing European varietals, especially white grapes, as opposed to those grown in other areas of Virginia.

The Haney family makes their wine using no additives, only the natural yeast found in the air and on the grape stems and skins.

This is their first year offering them to the public at their wine tastings.

Overall, Erin Haney characterizes their wines as “bright” because they aren’t overly acidic.

She describes their Traminette as an easy drinking wine with tropical fruit tones, while their Petit Manseng is more full-bodied with pineapple tones.

With their red grapes, they have produced their Petit Verdot Field Blend, a smooth, medium-bodied wine with red fruit tones.

Actually having the chance to taste their ripe grapes, along with the wines, was an unparalleled experience.

“We absolutely love what we do,” said Erin Haney. “We have found our niche with oysters and grapes. I can’t imagine doing anything else.”



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SHORE FIRST/JANET BERNOSKY

The Chincoteague Pony Drill Team is pictured at the Kentucky Horse Park.

Chincoteague Pony Drill Team comes full circle in Kentucky

Chincoteague Pony Drill Team

The Chincoteague Pony Drill Team performs at events and parades throughout the year on the Eastern Shore. "I can't say no to a parade," said the team's coach, Kendy Allen, of Bloxom.

BY JANET BERNOSKY
Shore First

In 1996, Bloxom resident Kendy Allen had no inkling that watching a 4-H equine drill team perform in Kentucky would have life-changing implications.

While living in Pennsylvania, Allen was attending the annual BreyerFest event held at the Kentucky Horse Park, in Lexington where she

Twenty-nine years later, Allen returns with her own drill team

was showcasing some of her own Chincoteague ponies.

She promptly returned home and started her own drill team — without any experience — coaching eight fearless and skilled teenage riders eager to learn with her.

In July, 29 years later, Allen returned full-circle to BreyerFest 2025, when she was invited along with her own one-of-a-kind drill team, who exclusively ride Chincoteague ponies.

This year's theme, "Cheers to 75 Years," highlighted the history of this popular brand of model horses, while celebrating the breeds they represent, with events including live performances, workshops, and meet-and-greets held July 11 to 13.

Equine drill involves choreographed movements set to music and performed by riders on horseback, Allen said.

Her riders learn the steps on foot first before teaching the routine to their ponies.

To prepare for Kentucky, The Chincoteague Pony Drill Team, which is also a nonprofit, had practiced diligently since March.

It paid off.

BreyerFest's request for "something different" led to a memorable performance at the famed "Celebration of Horses" event.

Riding in near darkness, lights entwined in the ponies' manes and tails twinkled in a color known as "Breyer Blue."

The drill team actually made the 1,400-mile round trip to perform at the Kentucky Horse Park last year, proving so popular with the crowd that it immediately was asked back for this year — which happened to also coincide with BreyerFest.

With eight performances total — five for BreyerFest and three in other venues at the horse park — along with other activities spanning just a few whirlwind days, the trip left everyone elated and exhausted.

It was also a reunion for Allen and Misty's Red Dawn, her Chincoteague pony currently in residence at the horse park as a breed representative.

Allen caught horse fever early in life. Her first equine was Misty II, a granddaughter of the original Misty of Chincoteague, from her daughter Stormy.

Over the years, her drill team was also well known for its nightly routines at the Chincoteague Pony Center on Chicken City Road until it closed in 2017.

This also happens to be where the

(Continued on page 9)



COURTESY PHOTO

The Chincoteague Pony Drill Team performs in Kentucky.

Drill team

(Continued from page 8)

body of Misty II is buried.

Allen then moved her ponies to Kerkaken Acres, her farm named by blending the first syllables of her three children's monikers together.

It's here where she continues to introduce people to the breed, both in person and through the children's books she has authored.

All the ponies on the drill team belong to the Allen family and some descend from Misty.

She is quick to acknowledge her dedicated riders who blend this with their personal lives.

"I have a remarkable team who loves what they do and work so hard together," she said, adding that they

plan to participate in several upcoming parades in Virginia celebrating the country's semiquincentennial.

"I can't say no to a parade, plus the Chincoteague pony is Virginia's state horse."

Allen said she and the drill team are most grateful to all the donors and

sponsors who made this year's trip to Kentucky possible.

"Without BreyerFest all those years ago, there would be no drill team," Allen said. "Thanks to their generosity and support, we were able to travel to where this all began."

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Shore First | Back to campus



COURTESY PHOTO

From left, Emily Abraham, Christina Duffman, Arron Brown and college President Daryl Minus take in the activities on the front campus lawn on Aug. 27 during the Eastern Shore Community College Back to Campus Bash.



COURTESY PHOTO

Students enjoyed a beautiful weather day, live music, horse rides, games, and amusements, all topped off with pizza and Smith Island cake.

Arts Enter Cape Charles launches new season

Arts Enter Cape Charles is embarking on a new theater season with a live band journey through the eras of Taylor Swift on Saturday evening, Sept. 27, at 7:30 p.m.

The Swift Nation tribute band is the premier live band sing-along tribute.

The lead singer is the extraordinary Melody Ebner, a renowned songstress hailing from San Diego.

Attendees will embark on a thrilling musical odyssey that spans the entire spectrum of Taylor Swift's illustrious career.

With a voice that commands attention and a passion for Taylor Swift's artistry, Ebner is the driving force behind this unforgettable tribute experience.

From the country-infused melodies of Swift's early albums to the chart-topping pop hits that followed, the band meticulously recreates every era.

Ebner and the talented ensemble of musicians embody the spirit, style, and emotions that define Taylor Swift's ever-evolving artistry.

Mind mysteries

The season continues on Oct. 11 with something entirely different as Dan Gaffney astonishes the audience with his Mind Mysteries show.

Gaffney is a lifelong entertainer. He is host of the top-rated radio talk show, the Dan Gaffney Show, and has been voted best radio personality.

He is a master mentalist and professional emcee. Gaffney presents a fun, interactive live show of mind reading magic where audience members' thoughts are the props.

Gaffney reveals private thoughts, detects lies, and reveals cell phone numbers, pin numbers, and more in a show called "highly entertaining" by audiences everywhere.

'Coldplay in the Clouds'

On Nov. 1, Boston-based pianist and photographer Michael Leidig takes the stage and blends jazz, clas-

sical, and pop in mellifluous, impressionistic medleys with a program called "Coldplay in the Clouds."

Like clouds, Coldplay's music is beautifully ethereal, seeming to form and dissipate in the blink of an eye or tone of a note.

Leidig will be playing on the Grand Steinway as cloud imagery projected on the big screen creates an immersive experience.

'Send Me No Flowers'

"Send Me No Flowers," a 1964 American romantic comedy by Norman Barasch and Carroll Moore, will be presented Nov. 21 to 23 and directed by Clelia Cardano Sheppard.

The plot involves George Kimball, a devoted yet neurotic hypochondriac who mistakenly believes he's dying after overhearing his doctor speaking about another patient.

Determined to secure his wife Judy's future, he secretly arranges for her next husband and his funeral.

His well-meaning but misguided efforts unravel into a series of hilarious misunderstandings, ultimately reaffirming love, trust, and the absurdity of jumping to conclusions.

Virginia Eye Consultants serves as the Presenting Sponsor for this production.

Be a sponsor

A full theater may look like financial success, but ticket sales alone cannot sustain live performance.

Presenting sponsors play a vital role in making Arts Enter's ambitious season possible.

What is a presenting sponsor? Any business or individual who wishes to invest in the arts in a proactive way has the opportunity to be featured and recognized in all marketing for the title event while providing significant financial support for the sponsored production.

Other benefits include 15 tickets to the performance and a pre-show VIP reception and mention in all social and print media leading up to the event, including a full-page color ad in the Broadway-style glossy color season playbill.

Shore First | Back to campus



COURTESY PHOTO

The ESCC Student Government Association gave away a Bluetooth soundsystem in the popular “key” game, which was won by Michael Vargas, pictured here with Julie Nash, Arron Brown, and Daryl Minus.

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Grilled oysters with garlic herb butter is a taste of fall

Fall is around the corner here on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, which means oyster harvests will be in full swing in the waters surrounding our little peninsula.

From the salts on the seaside to the sweeter guys harvested out of the Chesapeake Bay and the rivers on the western shore, we have such an amazing variety of oysters in Virginia.



Laura Davis

While delicious in any incarnation, on the grill is my favorite way to prepare them. And what better way to celebrate the segue of summer to fall, ESVA style?

I like oysters on the half shell, brushed with a simple garlic-herb butter while sizzling on the grill. It couldn't get easier, more delicious, or more impressive.

If shucking isn't your thing, you can steam them until they pop open and then pry off the top shell. The garlic butter will still keep them plump and juicy.

If you're really lucky, like I was on a particular day, you may find a tiny friend lurking inside your oyster. Pea crabs are considered a delicacy by many around here, tender yet slightly crunchy little crustacean parasites that like to set up shop inside our oysters. We eat them, but if it's not your thing — by all means, serve them their final eviction notice before enjoying.

A few minutes on the grill is all you need, just until you see the butter start to sizzle. Then use a little squeeze of fresh lemon juice to finish. Enjoy them hot and be prepared to reload the grill. You can't eat just one.



PHOTO COURTESY LAURA DAVIS

Grilled oysters on the half shell brushed with garlic herb butter is an easy and delicious recipe.

Laura Davis, of Chincoteague Island, is a food writer and blogger at www.tideandthyme.com. Her recipes have been featured on Huffington Post and www.craftbeer.com, among other publications. She is a frequent guest on WBOC-TV's DelmarvaLife show, where she showcases her culinary talents for viewers. Her work appears monthly in Shore First.

Grilled oysters with garlic herb butter

- 1 cup (2 sticks) salted butter
- 12 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp fresh parsley, minced
- 1 Tbsp fresh thyme, minced
- 24 large oysters, shucked and on half-shell
- fresh lemon wedges, for serving

In a small saucepan, melt the butter over low heat. Add the garlic and herbs and let simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.

Heat your grill to the low end of the high spectrum (about 450 degrees).

Carefully place oysters on the grill and spoon a small amount of the garlic butter into the center of each oyster (about 1 tsp). Cover, and let oysters cook for about 5 minutes.

Once the butter is sizzling and the oysters have plumped up, they're ready. Remove from the grill and let cool for a couple of minutes.

Serve with lemon wedges and give a squeeze just before enjoying.

Broadwater Academy honored by magazine as top K-12 school

Selected from schools in the Eastern Virginia Region, Broadwater has been selected by the readers and editors of Virginia Living Magazine as the top K-12 school.

Broadwater has an almost 60-year history of developing the next generation of respectful, civic-minded leaders and productive citizens of the Commonwealth.

Graduates from Broadwater attend colleges of their choosing while honoring their roots on the Eastern Shore. Broadwater has an extensive program of academics, athletics, and performing and studio arts.

Most importantly, the community standards reinforce leadership skills and shape young people of high character and values. An honor code guides student and faculty action at Broadwater and pride is felt throughout the campus.

Broadwater alumni impact a myriad of fields and industries.

Broadwater notched the top spot, with Norfolk Collegiate School and Walsingham Academy rounding out the top three in Eastern Virginia.

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Devastating storms added to Depression-era hardship

Chincoteague Island was struck by two destructive hurricanes during the 1930s

Chincoteague, like the rest of the nation, plunged into hard times at the end of the 1920s. The town government was feeling the scarcity of money by March 1933, when one town employee was laid off, three others

had their salaries cut by \$10 a month, and a motion that “we dispense with the police car” was only narrowly defeated.

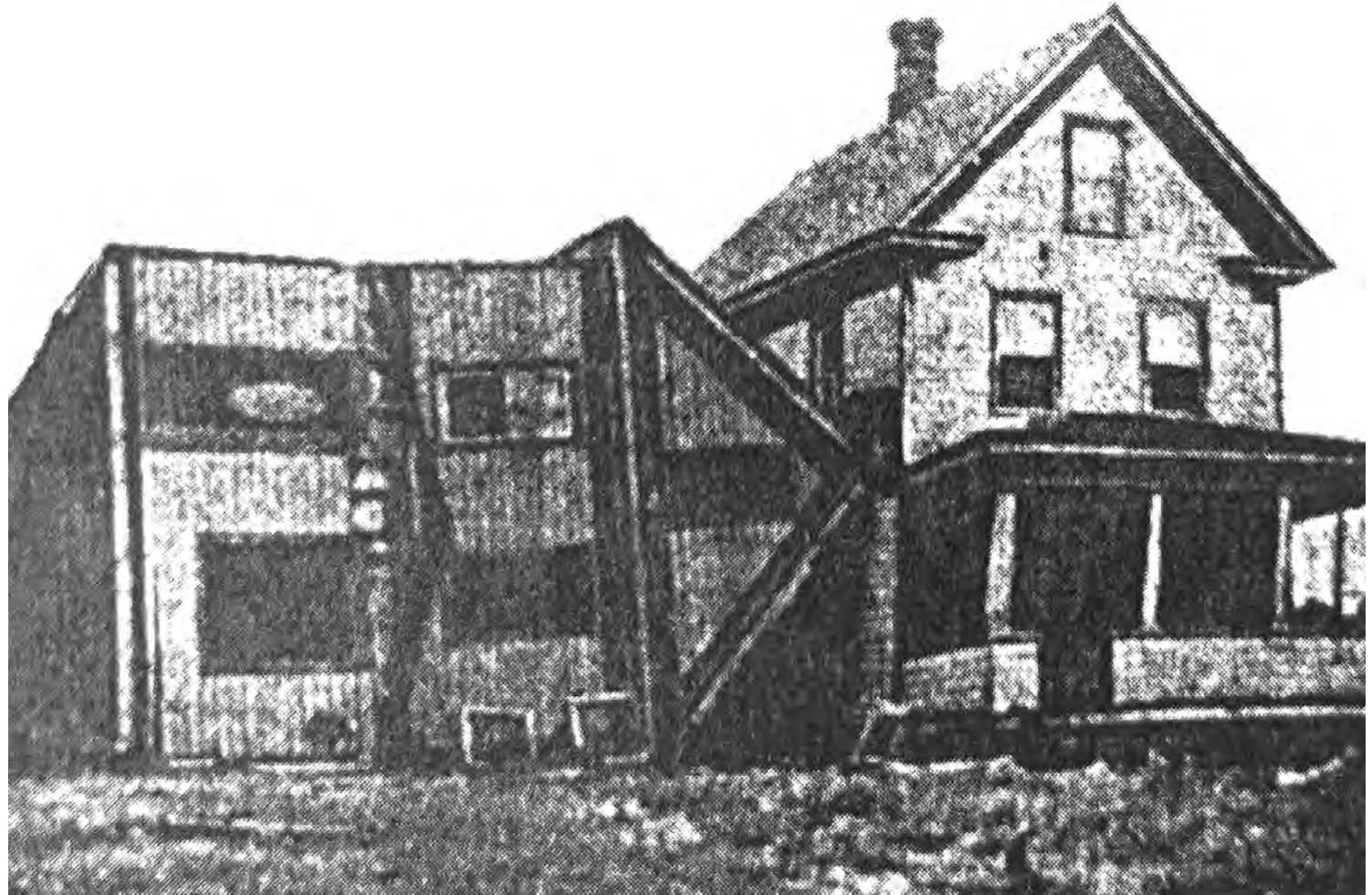
In April the Town Council reduced the wages paid to unskilled laborers by 20 cents an hour, and in September combined the



Kirk Mariner

Office of Tax Commissioner with that of the Water and Street Commissioner. The island’s banks were also feeling the economic pinch, and the Marine Bank merged with the Bank of Chincoteague in that same year.

It was during the Great Depression that a number of islanders turned to a new source of income: chicken farming. Like many another islander, waterman Levin Lynch had always raised a few chickens, but when farmers in neighboring Maryland and Delaware began to get \$1 for chickens raised specifically to be marketed for food, he expanded his roosts and became the first on the island to raise them in large numbers for wholesalers. By 1934 Accomack County



COURTESY PHOTO

This excerpt is taken from Kirk Mariner’s “Once Upon an Island: The History of Chincoteague.” Pictured is Joshua Brasure’s house at 4496 Main St., which was lifted off its foundation, turned on its side, and slammed into Leslie Merritt’s home during the Sept. 16, 1936, storm that struck Chincoteague.

was raising half a million “broilers” annually.

By 1939 it was raising over two and a half million, and Chincoteague Island was on its way to becoming its largest

producer. The long, low chicken houses that began to appear across the island needed sand for floors, and at least one family burial ground on Willow Street was eradicated, its bones scattered,

as an islander sought sand to line the floor of his chicken house.

Twice during the 1930s nature added her fury to the years of economic

(Continued on page 15)

The Rev. Kirk Mariner was an Eastern Shore author, historian, and United Methodist minister whose book, “Off 13: The Eastern Shore of Virginia Guidebook,” is an indispensable volume for natives and visitors alike. Mariner died in 2017. His work appears in Eastern Shore First courtesy of Miona Publications. This first appeared in his book, “Once Upon an Island: The History of Chincoteague.”

Mariner

(Continued from page 14)

hardship. On Aug. 22 and 23, 1933, a devastating hurricane hit the islands, rolling across Assateague in 25-foot waves that destroyed the high dunes on the beachfront. Tides inundated Chincoteague, where at 3747 Main St., the water inside Charles Gall's store rose to 18 inches.

Even so, Chincoteague was spared the greater destruction visited upon other communities of the Eastern Shore of Virginia, where five lives were lost and damage totaled more than a million dollars.

One result of the storm, which unearthed coffins from some of the island cemeteries, was that many islanders began thereafter to bury their dead on the mainland in public cemeteries in Oak Hall and near Temperanceville.

Even more destructive for Chincoteague, though not for the Eastern Shore in general, was the storm of September 16, 1936. Tides carried boats and heavy equipment from the

One Baby, 100,000 Chickens Killed by Chincoteague Storm

CHINCOTEAGUE, Sept. 19—(AP)—Chincoteague Island counted one dead and property damage amounting to \$500,000 today as it dug itself out from the wreckage left by the hurricane that swept almost directly across it Friday shortly before noon.

A small child of Joshua Brasure was injured fatally during the height of

the storm, estimated that only 10 boats remained intact on the island.

More than 100,000 chickens were drowned and swept away by the wind. They cost between 13 and 15 cents apiece. One poultry industry, Collins Brothers, lost 5,000 birds, and Pointer Brothers reported losing about the same number. Dozens of smaller poul-

FILE PHOTO

The Richmond Times-Dispatch reported on the Sept. 16, 1936, storm that swept across Chincoteague. Pictured is an excerpt of the article that appeared in the Sunday, Sept. 20, 1936, edition of that newspaper.

wharves into the center of the island, while winds destroyed chicken houses, oyster houses, and the Wimbrow Brothers shipyard.

Joshua Brasure's house at 4496 Main St. was lifted off its foundation, turned on its side, and slammed into the neighboring

house of Leslie Merritt. An infant pulled from the debris did not survive. The Black Narrows bridge was completely swept away.

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Four tools to delve into Shore history

Whitelaw's books, a website documenting the railroad era, the MilesFiles genealogy database, and the Heritage Center are great resources for researching the Eastern Shore

If you want to delve into Eastern Shore history, you will want to equip yourself with four indispensable tools.

First on the list is Ralph T. Whitelaw's two volume set, "Virginia's Eastern Shore."

Second would be the website Countryside Transformed, which documents the railroad era through various media. Third would be the MilesFiles, a massive database essential to the study of the genealogy of the Shore. Fourth is a shiny new tool, the East-



Curtis Badger

ern Shore of Virginia Heritage Center in Parksley, part of the Eastern Shore Public Library.

Let's start with Whitelaw. Whitelaw was born in St. Louis, Mo., in September 1880, a member of a prominent family that operated a chemical business for generations. After college, Ralph joined the family business but retired in 1926 at age 46, and he and his wife moved to the Shore. They restored the historic Warwick Plantation near Quinby, and Ralph immersed himself in local history. From around 1935 until his death in 1950, Ralph compiled property records and historic documents on more than 200 properties.

But Whitelaw did more than just



SHORE FIRST/TED SHOCKLEY

The Heritage Center at the Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Library in Parksley is a great place to learn more about history on Virginia's Eastern Shore.

list property transfers. For example, he was the first to write about the suspected relationship between Edmund Scarborough and Anne Toft and their plantation getaway in Gargatha Neck. That relationship was recently documented in a new historical marker on Rt. 13 near Gargatha Neck Road.

Countryside Transformed is an online collection of various media documenting the Shore during the railroad era, 1870 to 1935. It is a collaborative effort of our local public library and the Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities at the University of Virginia. It was begun in 2008

by Brooks Miles Barnes when he was librarian. If you want to get an idea of what was happening on the Shore in the 1880s, there is no better way than reading the newspapers and court records of the day. You can do it in Countryside Transformed.

If you want to do research on an Eastern Shore family, MilesFiles is the place to go. It is a massive genealogical database begun 25 years ago by M.K. Miles, of Saxis. A team of contributors adds to it on a regular basis, and it has become a vital tool for anyone studying family histories.

The fourth tool is the new one, and

it works cooperatively with the others. The Heritage Center is the grown-up version of the old Eastern Shore Room that once was part of the public library in Accomac. When the new library was built in Parksley, the Eastern Shore Room was expanded to include state-of-the-art archival storage facilities, a collection of local books, documents, photographs, and genealogical materials, and work space for researchers. There also is a lecture hall where programs are presented on a regular basis.

It is interesting to note that our public library plays a role with all four of these resources. The Whitelaw set is long out of print and very expensive when one enters the market, but it can be perused free of charge in the reference sections of any of the four libraries.

The new Heritage Center is up and running and is already housing collections of local historians such as the late Frances Latimer and Kirk Mariner. A full time archivist is on duty, and the staff is ready and willing to assist with any inquiries regarding Eastern Shore history.

In fact, the Heritage Center will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of the MilesFiles genealogical database later this month. And if you haven't had a chance yet to tour the new center, that would be the perfect time. The event will be held on Sept. 30 at the ESHC in Parksley from 5 until 7 p.m.

Not long ago it was assumed that libraries were strictly about books. But at the Eastern Shore Public Library today, books are just the beginning.

Curtis J. Badger is a Delmarva native who majored in English at Salisbury University and, with the exception of four years traveling as a U.S. Air Force photojournalist, has enjoyed a career photographing and writing about his native coast. His books include "Salt Tide: Cycles and Currents of Life Along the Coast," "Bellevue Farm: Exploring Virginia's Coastal Countryside," and many others. He lives in Accomack County.

100 years ago
September 1925

Steamers carry automobiles southward

During the month of August, the Norfolk Division steamers between Cape Charles and Norfolk transported 450 automobiles southward, 197 of which were from states other than Virginia. This is an average of almost 15 cars per day for the entire month and evidences the possibilities of the Del Mar Via Trail as a link in the Coastal Highway, particularly when concrete roadway links Cape Charles with the Maryland line, and this, according to a report in the Times Dispatch, of Richmond, may be done during 1926, as approximately 50% of the distance is already hard-surfaced.

Out-of-state license plates numbered 23 in Cape Charles last month. This shows a considerable increase over last year but practically none over July. Of the 450 transported, 253 bore Virginia plates.

— Worcester Democrat and the Ledger-Enterprise

Good oyster season predicted for Chincoteague

Oyster packers predict the best season for winter seafood, especially the bivalves, that the Shore has experienced in many years. It is believed fully 400,000 bushels of oysters will be marketed from Chincoteague waters alone and the quality is excellent.

All sanitary arrangements affecting the handling and packing of oysters have been made in compliance with the orders of federal, state, and Accomack County health boards. Special wells were driven on Chincoteague Island to furnish uncontaminated water for use by the oyster houses.

Reports from other waterfront sections of the Shore are optimistic. The crop promises to be large and the oysters fat. The market has a healthy tone. Scallops, as usual, are also in demand, and the season for them has just opened.

— The News and Advance

Cokesbury oak one of two living specimens in the U.S.

One of the famous objects of interest to Accomack County and to visitors of Onancock is the cork oak at "Cokesbury," the famous Poulsen home.

This tree is one of the only two living specimens of its kind in the United States and is the survivor of three smuggled out of Spain before the War Between the States.

The one now growing here was planted by R.J. Poulsen in 1847, and though a railing was built around it to protect it from souvenir hunters, decay has ravaged it during the past year. W.F. Relter, a tree surgeon, has cleaned out the affected tissue, fumigated it with carbon disulfide, and filled the cavity with cement. The tree shows no evidence of passing away and looks to be good now until the year 2025.

— The Daily Progress

Virginia boasts richest section in the country

One of the original counties of Virginia named for English shires, Northampton County was formed in 1634. It was among the eight first formed in the colony of Virginia and originally embraced the territory now cut off and formed into Accomack County.

The first permanent settlement on the peninsula was made in 1619 in what was known as Savage Neck. Eastville is the county seat. It has been the seat of county government since 1630, and in the ancient courthouse there may be found court records dating back to 1632 without a break. It is the home of the oldest court records in the United States.

Northampton's original name was Accawmacke County for an Indian tribe of the same name that dwelt there. In 1672 another county was formed out of a portion of the shire and was called Accomac. The area of Northampton County is 252 square miles and in 1920 it had a population of 17,852.

Situated on Virginia's Eastern Shore, the long peninsula that extends down from Maryland, Northampton County consists of level plains with a few rolling hummocks. It is one of the richest counties in the entire United States, and its soil produces a great variety of products.

Bordered on the one side by the open Atlantic Ocean and on the other by the wide expanses of the Chesapeake Bay. Northampton County enjoys a climate that permits the growing of very early vegetables and fruits.

It is estimated that 2% of the white potatoes and 5% of the sweet potatoes grown in the United States come from Northampton County.

These, in fact, constitute the principal crops, though early strawberries, onions, cabbages, and

other truck crops bring vast revenues to the growers. In addition to these products, corn, wheat, and other staple field crops are grown for home consumption. Stock raising is carried on for home meat chiefly and for work animals.

The fishing and oyster industry employs thousands of persons annually in Northampton County. Next to truck crops, or indeed rivaling trucking, stands the seafood trade. Oysters, crabs, clams, and fish are taken by the hundreds of thousands of dollars worth from the bays, inlets, and rivers throughout the county.

— The Roanoke Times

75 years ago
September 1950

Governor Battle goes fishing off Chincoteague

When Gov. John S. Battle caught an 8-foot blue marlin near the Winter Quarter Lightship a little more than a week ago, he actually landed three fish — attached to the sides of the marlin were two small pilot fish. These small parasites, measuring about 8 inches in length, attach themselves to the undersides of larger fish and spend their lives there. They feed on whatever the larger fish feed on.

They are very unusual looking. While attached to the larger fish, they look very similar to any other fish that size. Once removed, their appearance changes greatly. Where the top of the head would ordinarily be on any other fish, the pilot has a huge suction cup. It is with this cup that it maintains its hold and goes along with the larger fish.

Needless to say, the governor did not include them on his mounting specimen.

Personalities always make for good stories, and the governor proved to be no exception.

On the way to Chincoteague that morning to meet Dr. "Lum" Martone and go aboard the Three Sons, there were jokes told about how the chief executive would get hooked up with a large fish like his son had caught the preceding weekend.

The governor, who is getting along in years, was not too sure that he wanted to get in that situation. Someone also called attention to the fact that if he did manage to land a fine specimen, it would have to be mounted. That would mean an expenditure of approximately \$150.

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Yesteryears

(Continued from page 17)

The governor laughed and said that clinched the deal.

Later in the day, after the governor had spent the first 30 minutes of the two hours it took him to land the fish, his attitude changed. He became interested in the tussle and like the rest of us worried about whether or not he would be able to bring the marlin to the boat.

When it was safely aboard and the governor had a short breathing spell, he whipped out \$50 and gave it to the guide for a down payment on the mounting charge.

No doubt the fish will some day be the topic of many conversations in the executive offices in Richmond.

— *Ledger-Star*

He was known as the sheriff with no guns

Charles Magruder Lankford, 6-feet, 200 pounds of sheriff, took a pistol from a collection of murder evidence in the Northampton County courthouse at Eastville and departed for Cape Charles to find and arrest the desperate murderer of an Army sergeant.

He didn't slip the pistol in a holster at his side; he didn't have a holster. He didn't put it in his pocket or within easy reach beside him on the car seat, but he tucked it carefully away in the bottom of a cluttered briefcase in the back of his car.

That is as close as Sheriff Lankford ever came to carrying a gun in over 40 years as deputy sheriff and later sheriff of Northampton County.

Charles Magruder Lankford was born at Marion Station, Somerset County, Md., on March 15, 1864. He came to the Eastern Shore of Virginia at the age of six. In 1890 he was elected deputy treasurer of Northampton County and then went on to serve as deputy sheriff and sheriff until succeeded by the current sheriff, George Turner, 20 years ago.

During his 40 years as a law enforcement officer, Sheriff Lankford recalls only one fight and other than that remembers having struck only one other man. The fight was with a bootlegger who, emerging from a patch of woods with his pockets and arms loaded with bottles of whiskey, walked straight into the sheriff's arms.

The unlucky individual who had the dubious honor of being the only other man struck by Sheriff Lankford was a man who went crazy in Accomack County, near Keller. Lankford was called out and arrived at the scene in a

horse and buggy to find a half a dozen men holding the unfortunate man on the ground.

He took the man behind the nearby general store and quieted him with, of all things, cheese and crackers. He then handcuffed him and they started for the Eastville jail. After changing horses at his home in Franktown, the sheriff and his prisoner continued toward Eastville.

Apparently the effects of the cheese and crackers wore off, for the prisoner grabbed the reins with his handcuffed hands and hauled back. As he did so, the sheriff swatted him a mighty blow and knocked him out of the buggy. The remainder of the trip was quiet.

Sheriff Lankford served under eight circuit court judges, one of whom was Judge Wescott, who, on several occasions, pointed a finger at the sheriff and said, "Sheriff, I fine you \$5 for shaving in the courtroom!" The sheriff had and still has a unique shaving method that made it possible for him to shave while attending a session of court — he uses a small pair of scissors and snips at the hair on his face.

There is a story, almost a legend around the Eastern Shore, that illustrates how thoroughly Sheriff Lankford's authority was taken for granted.

Once, the story goes, the sheriff broke up a knife fight between two men in which one suffered fatal wounds. The sheriff took the killer by the shoulder and said, "Look, Tom, you go on home now and spend the night. I'll take you to jail in the morning."

Tom was waiting patiently at the sheriff's back door the next morning and had the sheriff's horse and buggy hitched for the trip.

— *The Daily Times*

50 years ago September 1975

Northampton rejects plan for offshore drilling equipment plant

Northampton County supervisors rejected Tuesday a proposed rezoning ordinance that would have permitted a huge Texas construction firm to build a metals fabrication plant near Cape Charles for the assembly of offshore drilling equipment.

The three-man board voted 2-1 against the rezoning request by Brown & Root, Inc., of Houston, a subject of hot controversy among residents of the rural Eastern Shore county for more than a year.

Board Chairman Harold Wescoat joined Supervisor T. Hume Dixon in voting down the proposal, which would have created a plant ultimately em-

ploying some 2,000 people in the county of about 14,000.

Both expressed fear the Brown & Root project would bring a "massive influx of outsiders" to Northampton and place too great a burden on the county's public facilities — highways and water supplies in particular.

Supervisor J.T. Holland, 33, youngest member of the board, was the lone supporter of the rezoning.

Holland told an overflow crowd in the county courtroom he did not believe the views of Wescoat and Dixon represented the desires of a majority of the county's residents.

"I firmly believe that reasonable men can work together to solve any problem," Holland said.

Then, turning to the other two board members, he added: "I can only come to the conclusion that in your hearts, you don't want to see any problem solved."

— *The Daily Advance*

A '100-years storm' hit Chincoteague in 1821

There was a black wrack throughout the day to the southeast of Chincoteague. All night the air was breathless yet filled with strange moans and sounds. Pine needles quivered at the forecasting hurricane to the southeast.

When daylight came, the frightened inhabitants looked out on the Atlantic Ocean and saw how the waters had receded. Miles of sand lay bare in the gloomy air.

There was a dull roar approaching. A mass of wind and rain and salt spray leapt on the island. Great pines bent and were uprooted. Houses were thrown from their foundations. Next came a deeper roar and a monstrous wall of inky waters rushing with the speed of lightning toward the island. The tidal wave struck Assateague and in the next instant Chincoteague.

A waste of seething foam and pine trunks swept over the salt marsh flat, carrying men and ponies away like insects. One man and his grandson, clinging to his neck, were swept six miles to King's Bush marsh. Another man, his wife and family swept from his sight, was found hanging by his waistband 20 feet from the ground in a pine tree.

The above material was taken from a Scribner's Magazine feature story about Chincoteague in April of 1877. The account of the storm, which swept the island in 1821, had been handed down by word of mouth by island natives.

Since then, there have been hurricanes along the Delmarva Coast but nothing reported so violent as that

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Yesteryears

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one. Could it happen again? Scientists say it could. They refer to such things as “a 100-years storm,” meaning one can be expected at such intervals, give or take some years either way.

— *The Daily Times*

Tangier Island: Its remoteness means peace

It is dawn on a hot summer day. The waters of the Chesapeake Bay’s Tangier Island are as smooth as the worn handle of an old ship rudder.

Willie Crockett, master waterman, stands at the tiller of a 40-foot, open-foredecked vessel pursuing the life of a Tangierian that every Crockett since 1686 has pursued.

Talking in the Elizabethan dialect of his Cornish forefathers, Mr. Crockett yanks a sunken potful of crawling crabs up over the boat’s stern and hollers to his shipmate, “This toime we ketchin’ more jimmy crabs whur the water’s shoallow.”

Over a span of 300 years, not much has changed for Tangier Island’s close, waterbound community of fishermen and their families.

The only hints of world problems on Tangier are a \$25 price tag for the barrels of oil that power electric generators and a sharp jump in the cost of herring and menhaden bait for crab pots.

So when the U.S. government gave Tangier Island \$140,000 in August to construct a community center, residents’ reactions were reserved.

“Is Uncle Sam actually doing something for tiny Tangier?” they asked.

The island’s 175 youth have no movies, no dance halls, no recreation center, just their boats and motorbikes. Natives tell visitors there is no juvenile problem, and the recreation center is a gift to the children for being so good.

With little now but a cramped Sunday-school building for gatherings, islanders also will use the new federal facility for the yearly homecoming celebration of 5,000 Tangierians who have left the island but return each August to measure changes and mend family ties.

Shaped like a seahorse — and not much bigger — Tangier lies in the middle of the wide, choppy Chesapeake Bay.

Fourteen miles from the nearest mainland, Tangier is remote. But here remoteness means peace.

Private phones were not installed until 1966 and families still shop by mail order to such catalog firms as Sears and Montgomery Ward’s. Just a few cars drive the island’s narrow roads.

Church lies at the heart of Tangier. Since 1831, liquor has not been sold nor public drinking allowed. Motorbikes are prohibited from passing the church during services.

Beneath Tangier’s anachronistic quaintness lie unique customs. Watermen shake hands with a “fishy” grip. An amusing but confusing way of “talking backwards,” saying hot when cold, cloudy when sunny, often requires an interpreter.

And while some changes may come and go here, only one thing really matters. “I don’t care if the sun rises in the east or west as long as we catch crabs,” says Mr. Crockett.

— *Daily Press*

25 years ago
September 2000

Marsh hen season opens Sept. 13

My introduction to rail hunting came on an early autumn day a number of years ago.

My wife and I stayed in the old Wachapreague Hotel on the Eastern Shore and I booked a clapper rail hunt for a half day. We loaded into my guide’s fishing boat and headed out to the flooded marshes towing a skiff from which we would hunt rails.

They call them marsh hens on the Eastern Shore, but the proper name is clapper rail.

The clapper rail I hunted that autumn day out of Wachapreague is a bird of the saltwater marshes.

They are best hunted when the high tide floods the marshes so most hunters check the tide tables closely and plan their hunts accordingly. A rail hunt rarely exceeds three or four hours.

If you engage a guide as I did that late September day, he positions you in the bow of the boat and poles the boat from the stern. Or a pair of hunters can launch a john boat and alternate poling and shooting. Poling is hard work. The birds flush from the marsh grass and offer wingshooting.

This year, upon the recommendations of its wildlife biologists, the department set the rail opening date for Sept. 13 and in two segments. The first segment ends Oct. 2, while the second one opens Oct. 11 to run through Nov. 29.

— *Danville Register and Bee*

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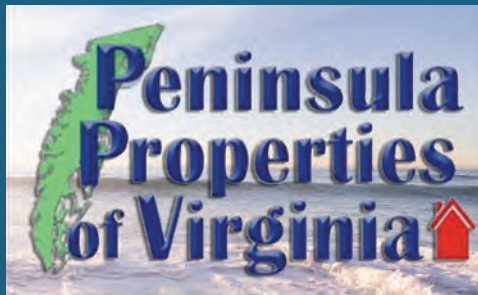
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