



## Shore taco truck tour:

Cheriton's El Ranchito | Page 4



# There's still time to get your oysters!

Spring beckons, but oyster roasts continue | Page 3

## ESCC students in visual arts, poetry competition

In November 2025, Carla Kimbrough, director of organizational care and leadership development for the Virginia Community College System, once again launched the Visual Art Luminary and Poet Laureate 2026 Competitions across all 23 community col-

leges in Virginia.

This competition, in its second year, aims to “provide students the opportunity to express themselves creatively, verbally, and visually.”

“I Dream” is this year’s notable theme.

The two chosen winners (one for Visual Art Luminary, headed by Eastern Shore Community College English professor Bill McCarter, and one for Poet Laureate, headed by ESCC English professor Christina Duffman) will head to Virginia Western Community College in Roanoke to compete on the larger stage against 22 other students within the VCCS.

They will be judged in order to win the ultimate recognition — to be the Poet Laureate and Visual Art Luminary of the VCCS.

The coordinators were tasked with finding judges not associated with the college to ensure unbiased assessment as well as to provide a sense of anonymity amongst the entrants of the competition.

For the Poet Laureate compe-

tition, there were four judges in charge of reviewing poems according to the VCCS-issued rubric. These judges, chosen from the Eastern Shore, were Ann Marie Brown, Pedro Gonzalez, Jamaal Tankard, and Sandra Lewis.

After an arduous couple of weeks of reviewing poems, the judges finally decided upon their winner after listening to and watching their performative readings for the Poet Laureate competition.

Abigail Fluhart won first place, Steven Lamprinos won second place, and Ryshekia Allen won third place.

Ma’Lique Gray is the Visual Art Luminary of ESCC.

His watercolor painting depicts the epitome of the noted theme of “I Dream.”

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COURTESY PHOTO  
Pictured from left are Abigail “Abby” Fluhart, Ma’Lique Gray, ESCC President Daryl Minus, Ryshekia Allen, and Steven Lamprinos.



## Shore First | Cover story

# Try not to miss out on oyster roast season

Spring beckons, but there are still a few oyster roasts left on the Eastern Shore this season

**BY TED SHOCKLEY**  
Eastern Shore Post

These days, oyster roasts on the Eastern Shore have reached full flower. Many are not simply oyster roasts — they are full-fledged events benefiting local causes and are complete with fantastic food and live auctions.

These days oyster roasts are as much a social event as a food festival. There is plenty of camaraderie and catching up amid the eating and drinking.

At a modern Eastern Shore oyster roast, some attendees even come dressed like models in L.L. Bean catalogs, with plenty of flannel, khaki, tasseled loafers, and brand-new jeans created to look old.

Seemingly gone are the days when oyster roast attendees bundled against the winter cold in work jackets and opened smoky oysters in a farm shed.

But time is running out on oyster roast season. Many of the Eastern Shore's well-known oyster roasts have passed. Still, there are a few more oyster roasts and seafood festivals where a small contribution to an important cause will put you in front of all the oysters you can eat.

■ The Northampton County Education Foundation's Oysters for Education Oyster Roast and BBQ will be held Saturday, March 14, from 4 to 8 p.m., at The Shanty restaurant in Cape Charles.

There will be plenty of oysters, pork barbecue, sides, music, two included drinks, and plenty of fellowship.

Tickets are \$125 and can be purchased by visiting the website <https://givebutter.com/0sisR4>

The education foundation, which has been around now for most of two decades, helps fund a number of projects in support of Northampton County Public Schools and its teachers.

■ The 15th annual Snow Hill Chamber of Commerce Oyster Roast will be held March 29, from 1 to 5 p.m., in downtown Snow Hill.

It has grown into a favorite event for many on the Eastern Shore of Virginia who enjoy the diversity of oyster preparations — the bivalves are served a dozen ways.

One of the unique features of the event is that it is held on a Sunday afternoon.

It is hard to find another place where oysters will be served roasted, fried, raw, barbecue bacon-cheddar, and more.

There are also oyster tacos, scallops, crab cakes, pulled pork sliders, and much more.

There will be live music. The \$70 tickets include bottomless beer, sodas, and water. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [www.snowhillchamber.com](http://www.snowhillchamber.com)

■ There will be plenty of seafood at the fourth annual Central Accomack Little League Seafood and Music Jamboree, which will be held March 21, with gates opening at 3 p.m. There will be all-you-can-eat seafood, burgers, and sides. Soda and water are included in the ticket price and beverage tickets will be on sale.

There will be live music, silent and live auctions, and much more.

Tickets are \$50 for adults and \$20 for children aged 12 and younger. Visit <https://call2026jamboree.square.site> for tickets.

■ The 56th annual Chincoteague Seafood Festival will be held May 2, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and includes fresh local seafood, signature dishes from local restaurants, and regional culinary favorites. It is sponsored by the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce.

Tickets are \$65 and can be purchased at the chamber's website, [www.chincoteaguechamber.com](http://www.chincoteaguechamber.com)

## At El Ranchito, food is better than ever

I've been eating at Taqueria El Ranchito since I was a high school senior. I'd head off campus for lunch and drive straight to the colorful food trailer parked outside the store that shares the same name on South Bayside Road in Cheriton.

I can say with confidence that El

Ranchito is better than ever.

Jose Palacio and Adela Montalvo opened the store in 2004 and the taco truck followed the year after.

Back in the early 2000s, the menu was limited to staples like tacos,



Sarah Barban

gorditas, and quesadillas.

Now, El Ranchito offers familiar favorites alongside barbacoa fries; loaded hot dogs topped with ketchup, mayo, mustard, pico de gallo, and avocado; and Doritos — Doritos topped with a protein, cabbage, pico, cheese, and sour cream.

Plus, there are daily specials like mole, birria, and fresh fish.

Montalvo, who runs the food truck, credits her children with helping her to expand the menu.

"When my daughter grew up, she said, 'Let's do nachos and burritos San Jose,' and we got more customers," she said.

"I showed them how to do things and they learned. We just want to keep our customers happy and we do the best we can."



SHORE FIRST/SARAH BARBAN

El Ranchito, in Cheriton, has been serving tacos for over 20 years. Pictured from left are the steak, carnitas, and shrimp tacos.

Edith Palacio, Montalvo's daughter, bakes a rotating menu of desserts like Dubai chocolate brownies, Biscoff tres leches cake, and chocoflan, which are sold in the store.

El Ranchito also offers decadent milkshakes, funnel cakes topped with fruit, and a variety of fresh fruit cups.

I stuck with the classics on my latest visit. I was craving the dishes I

ordered when I was 18 and they didn't disappoint. I got three tacos: carnitas, steak, and shrimp.

The steak was tender and flavorful, the carnitas were rich and meaty, and while I'm not a huge fan of shrimp, these were well seasoned and paired really nicely with the fresh veggies.

They top their tacos with lettuce, pico de gallo, and queso fresco. I love queso fresco on tacos. The cheese really adds a bit of creaminess.

With a squirt of lime and a topping of salsa verde, the tacos at El Ranchito are so fresh and light.

Rather than the creamy green sauce found at a lot of taco trucks, El Ranchito's mild sauce is a salsa verde. It adds a nice kick and a touch of acidity. The hot salsa is truly quite hot. The tortillas are great, too — tender and delicately sweet.

El Ranchito might be my new post-Cape Charles beach food spot because the tacos feel like the perfect meal after a day in the Chesapeake Bay — especially with a real sugar coke or a Topo Chico from inside the store.

While I was there, I had to get a chicken tostada because it was one of my favorites back in the day. It was just as good as I remembered. The crunchy corn tortilla was topped with savory, rich refried beans and the most well seasoned, juicy chicken I have yet come across, finished off with shredded cabbage, pico, and queso fresco.

I think what has helped El Ranchito's food stay so consistently good over the last 20 years is the love Montalvo and her family have for the taco

(Continued on page 5)

The Eastern Shore of Virginia is home to a number of taco trucks producing delicious fare that you might not have tried. Sarah Barban of the Eastern Shore Post and Shore First staff is going to find them and report back monthly on what she ate. She expects to see readers more frequently at our local bonanza of taco trucks.

# Taco truck

(Continued from page 4)

truck.

Montalvo loves to cook. She will cook in the truck all day and then go home and cook for her family. Starting the truck and cooking for others was her dream, she said. I think her love and passion come across in her dishes.

"I think I always do the food with love," she said. "I like my customers to be happy."

El Ranchito is open from February through November. The hours for the taco truck are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday and Saturday, and Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the winter.

During the summer the hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday and on Saturday, and 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Friday.

El Ranchito is located at 21359 S. Bayside Road, Cheriton.



SHORE FIRST/SARAH BARBAN  
Top, a chicken tostada at El Ranchito.  
Bottom, the trailer in Cheriton.

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# Guinness Chocolate Cake perfect for St. Patty's Day

Moist and chocolatey, with a slight hint of malty flavor, this dessert comes together quickly

In case you haven't noticed, St. Patrick's Day is coming up this month. I love all the glittery shamrocks, leprechauns, and general greenery coming out of the woodwork. We sure know how to celebrate here on the Eastern Shore.

I thought, what better way to mark



Laura Davis

the occasion than by baking with beer?

This cake. For me it rivals my famous chocolate cake that won Grand Champion at the Great Pocomoke Fair back in 2012. It's ridiculously moist and chocolatey, with just a slight

hint of malty flavor from the Guinness. It comes together quickly with just a few ingredients — no layering and frosting to contend with. You just pour on a simple ganache topping and let it do its thing, which leaves you plenty of time to make a hearty Shepherd's Pie for supper.

If you don't want to use beer, you could certainly use coffee (which the original recipe calls for). But if you guys know me, I'm always on the lookout for a recipe that incorporates beer in some fashion. And this one is definitely a keeper.

Happy St. Patrick's Day, everyone!

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PHOTO COURTESY LAURA DAVIS

Guinness Chocolate Cake features the famous Irish stout and a simple ganache topping with green sprinkles.

Laura Davis, of Chincoteague Island, is a food writer and blogger at [www.tideandthyme.com](http://www.tideandthyme.com). Her recipes have been featured on Huffington Post and [www.craftbeer.com](http://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.

# Guinness Chocolate Cake

## What you'll need

- 1 egg, room temperature
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 6 ounces plain or vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup Guinness stout
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- green sprinkles, for topping (optional)

### For the ganache:

- 9 ounces semi-sweet chocolate (about 1 1/2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips)
- 3/4 cup heavy cream
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

## What you'll do

- Preheat oven to 350 F. Line a 9-by-9-inch square baking pan with aluminum foil, spray with non-stick cooking spray and set aside.
- In a large mixing bowl, combine egg, sugar, yogurt, oil, and vanilla, and whisk

until smooth and combined.

- Add beer and cocoa powder and whisk vigorously until batter is smooth and free from lumps.

- Add the flour, baking soda, baking powder, and salt, and whisk vigorously until batter has just combined, about 1 minute.

- Pour batter into prepared pan and bake for about 25 minutes or until top has set and a toothpick or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Allow cake to cool in pan completely, at least 30 minutes, before adding ganache to the cake.

- For the ganache, place the chocolate chips in a medium bowl. Place the cream in a small saucepan and bring to barely a boil on the stove top.

- Pour the hot cream onto the chocolate chips and let sit for 1 minute.

- Whisk vigorously until chocolate has melted and mixture is smooth and velvety. Add vanilla and stir to combine.

- Pour onto the cake, spreading the ganache with a spatula or offset knife.

- Allow to set up for at room temperature for at least 30 minutes before slicing and serving the cake; or speed this process up by placing pan in the refrigerator or freezer for a few minutes.



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# War ended, but danger lingered on the coasts

Even after Cornwallis' surrender, Picaroons continued raids on the bayside and seaside

A local legend suggests that four Chincoteague islanders fought in the Revolutionary War, two of whom were serving with General Washington's troops at Yorktown when British General Cornwallis surrendered on Oct. 19, 1781.



Kirk Mariner

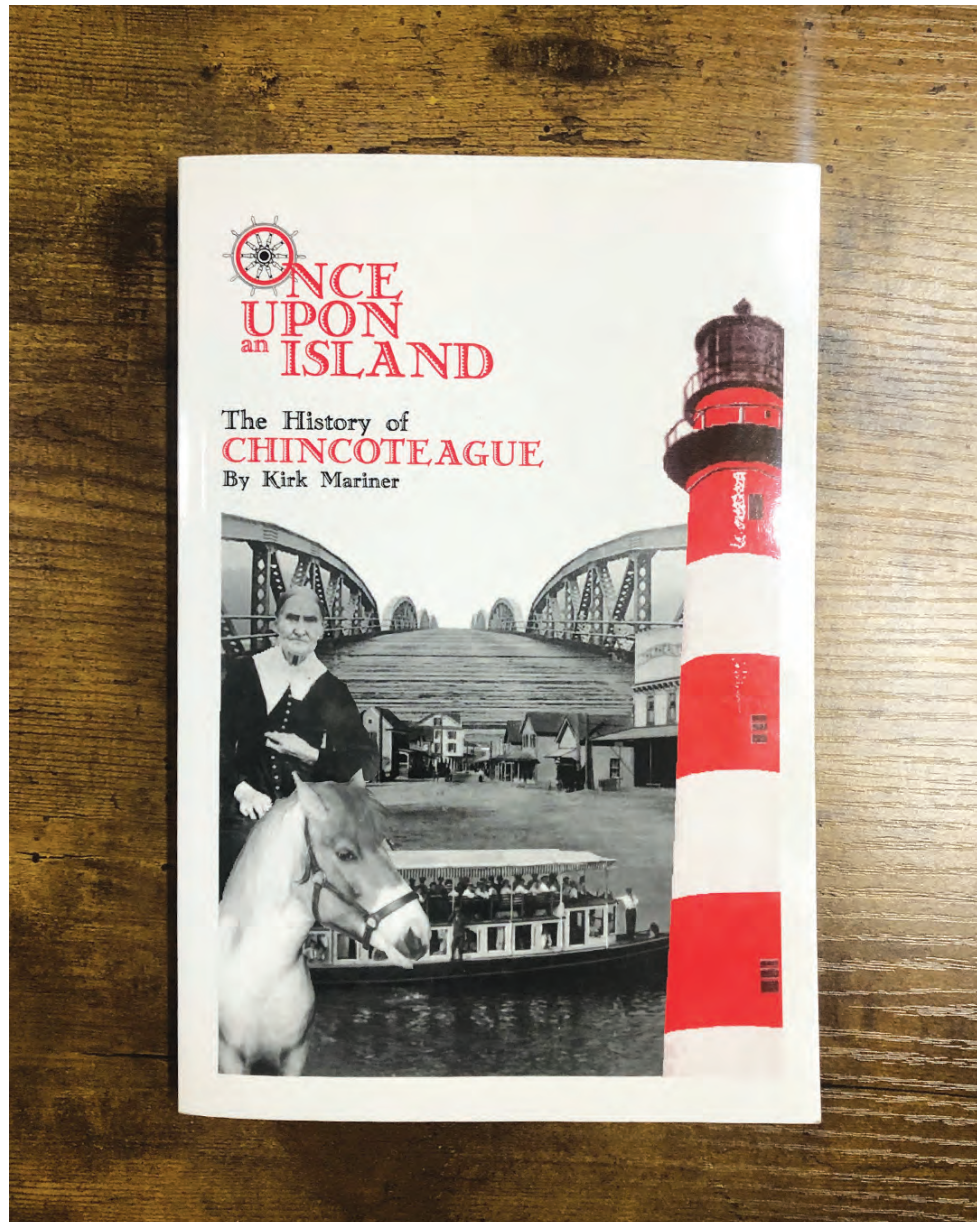
The two, named Chase and Smallwood, always claimed to have been close enough to the events to see both generals on that day, and the story insists that Chase arrived home well after the war was

over because Washington himself dispatched the islander to deliver the torn battle flag to his home at Mount Vernon.

But even the British surrender did not end the danger to the coastal areas. In the Chesapeake, pro-British "Picaroons" — a group of Tories, military deserters, runaway slaves, and "plain outlaws" — continued their raids as if the war had not officially ended.

Then, in 1782, Captain John Kidd, "Commodore of His Majesty's Fleet of Barges," established a base on Hog Island from which his more regular troops launched raids on the seaside.

In May of that year, Col. John



This excerpt is from Kirk Mariner's "Once Upon an Island — The History of Chincoteague."

Cropper, who lived on Folly Creek east of Accomac and whose house had been raided by the British in 1779 and only barely saved from burning, wrote to the Virginia governor that "we are surrounded by danger, and that season is now coming in which we are continually in alarm. At this moment, there are four or more barges of the enemy on the coast of Accomac. Two captured a schooner in sight of my house yesterday, and I received high intelligence last night that two more are at Chincoteague on their way from New York."

In November 1782, Zedekiah Whaley, commander of the Maryland Navy in charge of ridding the Chesapeake of this lingering British danger, put into Onancock with the news that both the Picaroons and Kidd were in the bay and requested assistance in routing them.

Cropper and 25 other members of the militia volunteered to assist, and they set sail aboard Whaley's vessel, the new Maryland barge Protector. They overtook the enemy in Kedges' Straits, well up the Chesapeake between South Marsh and Smith Island, Md. There, on Nov. 30, 1782, the last naval battle of the American Revolution was fought.

The "Battle of the Barges" was "a disaster, poorly planned and poorly executed." At the first sign of battle, all the barges except Protector

(Continued on page 9)

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 8)

fled, leaving Whaley vastly outnumbered to bear the brunt of the attack. The Protector's largest cannon had fired only twice before an ammunition chest was hit by returning enemy fire and exploded. All those of the crew who had not been killed outright were thrown overboard, or they jumped into the water with clothes ablaze.

The British easily had the better of the engagement, and among those who died was Whaley. Cropper put back into Onancock with 25 drowned or killed, 29 wounded, and only 11 unscathed. Whaley was buried in Onancock, and in Maryland an official government investigation of the cowardice of the other American commanders was launched.

This engagement occurred not only more than a year after the

British surrender at Yorktown but also on the very day that peace between England and the colonies was signed in Europe. News of the treaty reached Kidd on Hog Island in January 1783, and it is apparent that the remaining British ships in the area departed soon after. With his departure and the subsequent capture of the Picaroons, peace became a reality as well as a formality for Chincoteague and other coastal regions of Virginia.

Six years after the battle, an inventory of the government-owned ordnance in Virginia included one 18-pound cannon valued at £50, still to be found "at Gingotig, Accomac."

What happened to it, and whether it was located at the fort at Mosquito Point or the fort at Wallops Island, is not known.

Another Revolutionary 18-pounder stands today in Accomac, the county seat of Accomack, pointing straight upward at the corner of the Courthouse Green.

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# Hog Island cottage, lost to sea, hosted a U.S. president

Completed in 1892, the home was visited twice by Grover Cleveland before meeting its fate

The writer for the Philadelphia Ledger described it this way: “It is utterly unlike any other cottage ever built for the shelter of temporary residents by the ocean, or, for that matter, anywhere else.”



Curtis Badger

The writer was referring to a beach cottage built on Hog Island in the late 1800s designed by a Philadelphia architect named Theophilus P. Chandler.

This beach cottage has a vaunted position in Eastern Shore history. It is one of the few homes on the peninsula to have hosted an American president. Yet, of all the famous historic dwellings on the Eastern Shore, the Chandler cottage is no doubt the least known and certainly the most mysterious.

For one thing, as historic landmarks go, the cottage had a comparatively brief life span. It was completed in 1892, and by 1933 it was gone, its remains presumably scattered out to sea by a hurricane like so much driftwood.

The cottage was commissioned by Joseph Ferrell, a Philadelphia engineer who with his wife, Elise, bought huge tracts of land on Hog Island around 1890 and began

(Continued on page 11)



COURTESY PHOTO

Theophilus P. Chandler, a Philadelphia architect, designed this cottage in the late 1800s. It was commissioned by Joseph Ferrell and his wife, Elise, who bought land on Hog Island around 1890. The Ferrells moved into the home in 1892 and hosted President-elect Grover Cleveland for nearly two weeks.

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.

# Cottage

(Continued from page 10)

selling home sites. The Ferrells changed the name from Hog Island to Broadwater, built a large clubhouse, and began selling memberships, mainly to friends and business partners in Philadelphia.

The Ferrells wanted a beach house that would make an impression on wealthy visitors and set a standard for high-end vacation homes, and so they contracted Chandler to do the job. Chandler founded the architectural department at the University of Pennsylvania and was nationally known as a restoration architect.

Chandler was a Boston native who was educated at Harvard and then studied landscape architecture in Paris. He moved to Philadelphia, married Sophie DuPont, of Delaware, and designed homes and worked on restoration projects for the DuPont family, including what is now the famous Winterthur Museum in Brandywine Valley.

The Ferrells asked Chandler to design a casual, informal home that had architectural features in keeping with the island setting. Chandler designed a graceful building that perfectly fit the landscape of Broadwater Island. The gently curved rooflines echoed the sloping sand dunes nearby, and the naturally finished red cedar siding seemed perfectly at home nestled into the maritime forest.

In the fall of 1892 the Ferrells moved in, and that November they had Grover Cleveland as a house guest for nearly two weeks. The president-elect came to Hog Island for a few days of duck hunting to recover from the rigors of the election, and he returned again the following year as president to do some fishing and shorebird shooting.

Cleveland's extended stays on Hog Island were documented by newspapers from coast to coast, but the fate of the Chandler cottage became something of a mystery. The Broadwater development was doomed to failure. A deep recession called the Panic of 1893 eroded the

**MR. CLEVELAND AT HOG ISLAND.**  
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By Telegraph to The Landmark.  
EXMONT, Va., November 23.—The train bearing President elect Cleveland and party arrived here at 5:10 this morning and Mr. Cleveland started with his companions on the journey to Hog Island, his destination being the Broadwater Clubhouse. When the train reached Harrington, Del, last night a party of enthusiastic Democrats returning from a jollification at Milford attempted to board the car, but were not permitted to do so. At Laurel a band, which had but shortly before arrived at the station from the Milford celebration, serenaded the party, but Mr. Cleveland did not show himself. As the train approached Seaford the party retired to rest. An overland trip to ten miles is necessary to reach the coast and then will come a ten mile trip by water to Hog Island, or Broadwater Island, as its new owners have named it. Here the President elect will be about as completely cut off from the outside world as though he was in Africa. The island is the property of the Broadwater Club and no boats can land there unless by permission of the club. The clubhouse is a very comfortable structure although the island itself is bleak and barren. It is a hunter's paradise, however.

PHOTO COURTESY NEWSPAPERS.COM

This article about President-elect Grover Cleveland's first stay on Hog Island with the Ferrells appeared in the Nov. 24, 1892, edition of the *Virginian-Pilot*.

fortunes of executives in the railroad, steel, and banking industries, many of whom were investors in the Broadwater project. A destructive hurricane followed in 1896, further complicating efforts to market the island. Ferrell lost interest in the Broadwater project, returned to his home in Philadelphia, and died of a stroke in July 1904.

His family sold the Chandler cottage, and it changed hands several times over the years. The beach house that once hosted the president seemingly disappeared from public view. Hog Island resumed its role as a seaside fishing village, and the Chandler cottage never again made the headlines. Presumably, the cottage, like many others on the seaside, did not survive the Storm of '33, and whatever may have remained of the Chandler cottage was claimed by the sea.



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## ‘Piece of Eden,’ Tom Petty tribute coming to Cape Charles

As communities across the country prepare to commemorate America’s 250th anniversary, Cape Charles will bring the past to life on the Historic Palace Theatre stage this spring with “Piece of Eden,” a large-scale historical musical drama featuring more than 50 local and regional performers.

This original Arts Enter Cape Charles production offers audiences a 150-year theatrical journey, bringing to life the people and events that shaped the Eastern Shore and the founding of the nation.

Because of the Shore’s geographic isolation from the rest of Virginia, the region developed somewhat differently from mainland colonies, creating a unique cultural landscape and a distinctive moment in early American history.

Written by the late local historian Jean Collins and adapted for the stage by the late Sheila Cardano, with an

original score by Gwen Skeens, “Piece of Eden premiered in 2007 and returned in 2012.

The epic production now makes its third staging on April 24–26 and May 1–3, with direction by Clelia Cardano Sheppard and music direction by Megan Cartwright.

Earlier in the season, the theater will host “Damn the Torpedoes: A Tom Petty Concert Experience” on Saturday, March 28.

The nationally touring tribute band recreates the sound and spirit of Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, performing favorites such as “American Girl” and “Free Fallin’.”

Concertgoers can expect an electrifying night of classic rock and feel-good nostalgia.

Tickets and additional information are available at Arts Enter’s website, [www.artsentercapecharles.org](http://www.artsentercapecharles.org)



PHOTO COURTESY CHRIS ROLL

Over 50 local and regional performers gathered for the first reading of “Piece of Eden,” a historical musical drama presented at the Historic Palace Theatre in Cape Charles.

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March 1926

## Five killed when boiler bursts

Five men are dead today, three seriously injured, and several others suffering from shock as the result of a boiler explosion in Melfa in a remote section of Accomack County late yesterday.

Cold water turned into the boiler just about time for the shutting down of the saw mill is said to have caused the blast. A large section of the boiler was found 1,200 yards from the saw mill.

One of the men killed, Thomas Campbell, was a school bus driver who had stopped at the mill to visit a friend.

The explosion was so severe that it broke windows in houses a mile away.

— *Danville Register and Bee*

## Eastern Shore spuds planted

In spite of the adverse weather conditions of snow, sleet, and freezing temperatures during the first half of March, the potato crop of Northampton and Accomack counties, which normally dig 3 million barrels annually, is under the ground, and from the best information available, close to a normal acreage has been planted.

While it is said that Accomack County will show a 10% reduction in acreage planted, Northampton County has planted her full quota and unless some setback should cut the yield, close to a normal crop should be harvested from the whole Shore in June and July.

Some growers fear rot from frost reaching the seed during the severe freezes of the first half of the month. However, the general opinion is that the crop is not hurt and a normal stand is expected when potatoes are through the ground.

— *Ledger-Star*

## Trying to get water on Chincoteague Island

Trying for several months to get water on Chincoteague Island, the Chincoteague Water Company has finally had to give up the efforts.

The company has already bored a well about 400 feet deep and received water, but it had a brackish taste to it.

This week, W.H.B. Custis, of Harborton, well known on the Shore as a settler of artesian wells, has been at the end of the toll road settling a pump for W.H. Hickman in an effort to locate a supply of water suitable for drinking.

When a supply is found, there will be a line of pipes along the toll bridge to take the water to the island from the mainland.

— *The News and Advance*

## Steps on gas and foils two highwaymen

While on his way from Parksley to Accomac late Sunday night, Elmer W. Sommers, of Accomac, a well known lawyer of that town, reports that an attempt was made to hold him up.

A double wagon loomed up in the glare of the headlights of his sedan, and two men stepped out and raised their hands. Not liking the situation, Mr. Sommers thought he saw room to pass the wagon, and by doing so, he ran into the tongue, driving it through the side of the car. He put on more speed and shot ahead, carrying a long section of the wagon tongue with him. The affair was reported to the authorities.

— *Richmond Times-Dispatch*

75 years ago  
March 1951

## Air Force probes two B-26 crashes

The U.S. Air Force launched twin investigations today into crashes in Virginia of two B-26 bombers from Langley Air Force Base in which five crewmen died.

Less than 25 hours after one of the attack-bombers smashed into the side of a mountain near Staunton Monday night, another went down late yesterday near an island off Virginia's Eastern Shore.

The U.S. Coast Guard recovered two bodies from the wreckage in the Atlantic Ocean near Eastville last night. A third was still missing.

Northampton County Sheriff George Turner said the plane plummeted into the ocean about three miles northeast of Cape Charles light.

— *The Daily Progress*

## Chincoteague Naval Base returning to wartime status

The naval air base at Chincoteague is going to return to its wartime status.

A U.S. Navy announcement indicated this today. It said the status of the base is to be changed back to a naval auxiliary air station. This was its World War II classification.

Chincoteague had been designated as a naval air facility since Jan. 1 of this year.

In Navy terms, an auxiliary air station provides support and maintains facilities for the operation of a fleet air group. In other words, there is a lot of flight training going on.

On the other hand, a facility merely is operated in conjunction with a related operation like the ordnance test station here.

Aircraft of a facility are mainly used for ordnance tests.

The Navy announcement said the ordnance test station at Chincoteague, employing 530 civilians in addition to military personnel, will continue in operation.

The ordnance station "was established to provide a test range and train personnel to test, modify, and develop guided missiles, aircraft weapons, and aviation fire control equipment," the Navy said.

In March 1943, the base originally was designated as an auxiliary air station in support of the main station at Norfolk.

During World War II, when it was an auxiliary air station, it was a training base for B-24 bombers.

A \$5 million expansion program is being planned for Chincoteague. Victor W. Buhr, of Salisbury, is one of three engineers who hold an engineering contract for the expansion program.

It was reported in Congress recently that the station is to become a jet aircraft base.

— *The Daily Times*

## No one shows for hearing on seafood

No one showed up today at a public hearing on the reported decline in Virginia's production of oysters and finfish.

So after sitting around more or less hopefully for the better part of an hour, the Seafood Committee of the Virginia Advisory Legislative Council said the heck with it and adjourned.

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## Yesteryears

(Continued from page 13)

Today's scheduled hearing had been publicized in newspapers, but committeemen said they supposed the Eastern Shore's oystermen and fishermen were unwilling to take time out from their work to attend the hearing.

In view of this, the committee decided to conduct all subsequent hearings at night.

—*Ledger-Star*

### Marine arrested in Shore shooting

Police authorities on the Shore left today for Pittsburgh, Pa., to bring back a Marine wanted in the shooting near Accomac of Erwin Pack, 21, son of a wealthy Lakewood, N.J., poultryman.

Sgt. E.C. Majette of the Virginia State Police, said Accomack County Sheriff George C. Holt and two state police officers left at 5 a.m. today. They were notified yesterday by Pittsburgh police of the arrest of Clarence Wright, 25, who admitted to being AWOL from the Marine base at Parris Island, S.C.

Detective Inspector Adam Geisler notified Virginia authorities that Wright was arrested in Pittsburgh on a tip and that Pack's car and credentials were found in Wright's possession.

Pack was shot and robbed and his car was stolen on Feb. 9 while he was en route home from Florida. The young man lost an eye in the shooting.

—*The Daily Times*

### Radio failure cited in probe by Navy court

Naval investigators were told today that the disappearance of six enlisted men was not reported immediately by the LSU 1330 because her radio was out of order.

The testimony was given to a naval court of inquiry named to investigate the drowning of six men in Tangier Sound last Thursday night. The men left the landing ship utility in a 10-foot boat about 7:30 p.m. Thursday for liberty on Tangier Island. They were to have returned to the LSU at 11 p.m. The bodies of four of the six have been recovered.

Chief Boatswain's Mate B.C. Hek, of Crewe,

who was in charge of the LSU, was designated an interested party by the court shortly after it opened its first session today.

Asked by the court why no radio messages were sent to Hek's immediate superior officer when the six men failed to return to the ship, Hek said the vessel's main radio was out of order and he did not know how to operate the ship's two alternate radios.

Hek said that when the 10-foot dinghy was put over the side Thursday night, seven men were preparing to go ashore in it and he ordered one to remain aboard the LSU because he thought the small boat would be overloaded with seven aboard.

The boat left the LSU with orders that four of the men were to be taken ashore and the other two were to return to the LSU. The boat was to have been sent back to the island later for the four.

The court asked Hek whether it was usual for the LSU to anchor off Tangier Island while en route to and from Bloodsworth Island.

Hek said it was not usual but that he had done so once before and had allowed liberty parties to go ashore.

He felt no hesitancy in permitting the six men to use the boat because the area where the LSU was anchored was calm and there was no current to speak of, Hek said.

He said there were six life jackets in the dinghy, and as the men started rowing away from the ship, he ordered them to inflate the jackets.

Three empty life jackets were found floating in the area by search planes and vessels the day after the accident.

Hek said that when the six men did not return Thursday night, he maintained an all-night vigil aboard the LSU and began search operations at daylight on Friday.

He said he and two crew members went ashore at Tangier Island and talked with residents who had seen six Navy enlisted men the night before who answered the description of the six who had gone on liberty.

At 10 a.m. Friday, Hek — a veteran of 11 years in the Navy — said he contacted the Coast Guard lighthouse on Tangier and asked that an alarm be sent out and that the Navy be notified.

Hek said that as the LSU left Tangier harbor, it passed a fishing vessel that was towing the dinghy in which the six men had gone ashore. He said a fisherman told him the dinghy had been found about a mile west of Watts Island — about four miles from Tangier Island.

Hek said Tangier Island civilians reported seeing six sailors Thursday evening. The men did not appear inebriated, Hek was told. Hek said he told the liberty party not to get any liquor.

The court advised Hek he was designated an interested party for his own protection. The designation allows him to retain counsel, to call witnesses, and to cross-examine witnesses. The court has authority to change his status to that of a defendant.

—*Richmond Times-Dispatch*

50 years ago  
March 1976

### Shore farmers watch rail negotiations

Feeling that their livelihoods are at stake, Eastern Shore farmers are closely watching Southern Railway's attempts to buy the Delmarva Peninsula rail system.

"Maryland stands to lose a whole segment of its agricultural economy if settlement is not reached on the Southern Railway purchase of Penn Central's Delmarva rail system," F. Grove Miller, president of the Maryland Farm Bureau, said after he testified at a Senate subcommittee meeting last week.

Southern's plans to take over the rail system have been blocked by failure to obtain contracts with two unions. Transportation Secretary William T. Coleman Jr. has arranged another meeting between the railroad and the unions this week.

The farmers depend on the rail lines to obtain fertilizer, livestock feed, and machinery, according to Jack Matthews, executive secretary of the Farm Bureau. There are 4,500 Farm Bureau members on Maryland's Eastern Shore who will be affected, he said. There are more than 7,000 farm families in the Maryland, Virginia, and Delaware areas.

Without the rails, the farmers will have to turn to trucking, which "costs three to four times as much as shipping by rails," Matthews said in an interview at his Randallstown office.

He said if ConRail is allowed to take over the Delmarva lines, "ConRail has already indicated it will drop a good many of the lines.

"Most important is the line that links Pocomoke City and Cape Charles," he said. "It's

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## Yesteryears

(Continued from page 14)

the only rail line that links the total Eastern Shore, and ConRail has said that one would go. They also will cut out a lot of spur lines.

“Farmers are going to have to do a lot more trucking,” he added. “If those short lines are phased out, products will have to be trucked farther to get them to the processor.”

He said materials being shipped by rail from the South would have to bypass the Eastern Shore and go up through Washington, D.C., and Wilmington, Del., and then backtrack.

— *Richmond Times-Dispatch*

## Accomack group inspects erosion on bay island

Representatives of the Federal Aviation Administration, accompanied by several Accomack County officials, flew to Tangier recently to inspect the erosion problem at the airport there.

A steady loss of shoreline from erosion has been reported on the island’s western shore, where the airport is located. Three of the runway lights have washed into the water, and the land at the southern point of the airport has crumbled into the sea.

To combat the erosion, the Virginia Airport Authority, which owns the airport, recently issued a contract to lay 13,000 tons of rip-rap around the edge of the westerly shoreline on the small Chesapeake Bay island. The W.F. McGann Corp. of Chesapeake was awarded the contract and has nearly completed placing barge loads of the broken concrete as a stabilizer.

Another contract will be let in the near future to complete the fill-in between the edges of the rip-rap and the shore, extending the shoreline an additional 1,000 feet. The gained footage will lengthen the 3,000-foot runway that has been disappearing rapidly due to the buffering northwest winter winds that batter the island.

According to Asbury Pruitt, a Tangierman who has faithfully recorded erosion measurements, Tangier has lost 178 feet on the north end and 180 feet on the south end in the last decade.

Accomack County officials who were on Tangier with the FAA representatives were the third District supervisor Warren Nock, County Administrator C.M. Williams, and Director of Parks and Recreation Don Hull.

— *The Daily Times*

## Northampton school to get big new gym

A brand new gymnasium with a seating capacity of over 1,000 is planned for the Northampton Senior High school here. When completed, the building will be used for sporting events and other community affairs.

To finance the gym, the largest on the Eastern Shore, the county board of supervisors approved a \$1.25 million bond issue at its regular March meeting. The bonds are repayable over a 20-year period.

Northampton County’s updating of the school system has been planned on a 10-year period, with the total cost close to \$3 million. The \$1.25 million bond issue is borrowed from the Virginia Public School Authority at 5.98% interest. Included in the school plan is the expansion of the junior high school at Machipongo and renovation and expansion of the elementary schools in Exmore, Hare Valley, and Machipongo. All will be completed in steps, finishing by 1985.

The high school addition will give extra administrative office room and additional classrooms. Special features will be the music studio and media center. An art center will use the present cafeteria space. The lunch facilities will move to the old gymnasium building. Parking areas for several hundred automobiles will be provided on a 10-acre site adjacent to the school property.

School Superintendent George W. Young disclosed that bids on the construction will be awarded in July, with work to start in the fall of this year and be completed by 1977. No interruption of normal classroom procedures is foreseen.

— *The Daily Times*

## 25 years ago March 2001

### Eastern Shore lands windmill company

A Germany-based windmill company that looked at Isle of Wight as a potential site for its U.S. headquarters has decided to locate on the Eastern Shore in Cape Charles.

The town council of Cape Charles unanimously approved a conditional use permit for the company at its meeting on March 13. Prior to the meeting, the town held two public hearings, one at the planning commission and the other at

the town council meeting.

Cape Charles Mayor Alex Parry is excited about the project and expects construction at the Sustainable Technology Industrial Park to begin this fall.

“This is an exciting project for the area, and it may even promote some tourism for those curious to see the large, modern windmills,” Parry said.

The company is the Prevento Group, and the plan for the site is to construct six windmills that will be used as a demonstration area for potential customers and to provide the company with a U.S. headquarters.

Prevento had similar plans when it was considering locating on 350 acres at Lawne’s Creek.

Current plans do not include any manufacturing and would only provide a few jobs to the area. It is possible in the future that the company may expand to have a total of 15 windmills along the Shore, but not in Cape Charles, Parry said.

There are currently no conditional use permit applications in Northampton County from the company.

Parry said that the interest in the windmills may eventually create industry in Cape Charles related to windmill construction.

The site in Cape Charles is located between the harbor and the Chesapeake Bay. There is a housing development planned in the future for the area, but because the windmills will be located in the industrial park, Parry does not believe it will be a problem for future homeowners in the area.

“These windmills are amazingly quiet, and we have added additional provisions limiting the decibels to 55 to ensure that there will not be a noise problem,” Parry said.

The turbine with the blades is more than 300 feet tall and can produce enough power to supply energy to a small town. Energy generated from the windmills will be sold over the national power grid.

Each tower will cost \$1 million to construct, and Cape Charles Town Manager Cela Burge says the town will see estimated revenues of about \$10,000 the first year, based on the current tax rate.

Prevento will be leasing the land for the six pads that will support the windmill, with each pad being 15 feet in diameter, Burge said.

The blades and the turbines will be constructed in Europe and shipped here to be assembled.

— *The Smithfield Times*

# Tangier Island

*Nautical Souls  
May Apply*



**Cottage of Hopeful Future:** 100 years of care and aid of FEMA raising the home. 3 bedrooms, 1 bath, fronts West Ridge Creek. Split system heat & air, radiated floor heat, **\$142,000**



**Island Cottage,** in the town center. Renovated kitchen and bath, freshly painted, 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, with fenced yard for your pets. Neat as a pin, and well-maintained. **\$88,000**



**Island Life Double Opportunity:** Cleverly appointed duplex, posted as an active Airbnb. Each duplex has 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, a dining room, sitting room. Only need to bring your provisions, turn-key with bookings in place. **\$140,000**



**Chesapeake House:** 5 bedrooms, 3 baths, a sitting room, a coffee/tea bar, and a sprawling front porch. It is 1680 sq'. Detached 18 x 18 laundry room and workshop. Rental history. **\$168,000**



**Captain's Perch:** Circa 1910, completely renovated. Parks Marina and views of the Chesapeake are effortlessly enjoyed from the deck and garden. Enclosed porch, fully equipped kitchen, dining, utility, sitting, 2 bedrooms, 1 bath. **\$165,000.**



**The Waterman's Hideaway** is a 5-star Airbnb success story on a lovely island in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay. It is a two-story coastal-inspired home that accommodates 8 guests. Turn-key operation. The income is reliable. **\$195,000**



**Circa 2007** stick-built cleverly designed island home. Fully equipped with an open design. 3 bedrooms, 2 full baths. There is also a golf cart housing with a ramp. **\$188,000**



Over the bridge, through the waterways, is the **Fletcher House**, updated in watermen's style. Country kitchen, sitting room, 1 full bath, 1 full bath near completion, 2 bedrooms, enclosed front porch, sunroom. Adjacent to the waterways, deck & garage too. **\$155,000**



**Bungalow in the suburbs,** set apart from the busy area of town, 2-bedroom, 1-bath, utility room, and sitting room, 775 sq' cottage property reaches the waterway called the Ditches. The attic can become an additional living space. Waterfrontage. **\$75,000**



**Peaceful** local, 3-bedroom, 2-bath mobile home. Once a singlewide, with a bedroom and deck addition. Set well off the road, with the salty sea breezes from the Bay, **\$88,000**



**Island Cottage:** You can feel the love where generations of the family gathered. All on one level is this 2-bedroom, 1-bath home, with a spacious sitting room, dining room, and a fully equipped kitchen. Mud/Utility room too. Workshop/shed. **\$125,000**



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29 Market St | Onancock, VA  
757-787-0901  
lewininc@verizon.net  
www.lewincarr.com

