



HISTORY • REAL ESTATE • FOOD • FUN •
Shore First
 July 2026
 Vol. 10, No. 3
 ON THE EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA

FREE TAKE ONE



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Pony month comes to Chincoteague
101st annual Pony Penning will be another classic event | Page 4

July 3 | Onancock Onancock Ice Cream Social

ICE CREAM SOCIAL: 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Historic Onancock School, 6 College Ave., Onancock. Onancock Business and Civic Association is hosting its annual ice cream social and patriotic band concert. There will be free ice cream.



July 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, and Aug. 1 | Chincoteague Carnival

CARNIVAL: The Chincoteague Volunteer Fireman's Carnival will take place throughout July and Saturday, Aug. 1, running from 6 to 10 p.m. Find games, rides, food, and fellowship. The carnival is synonymous with the island and Pony Penning.



July 5, 12, 19, 26 | Pocomoke City Discovery Museum leaf crafts

CRAFTS: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Delmarva Discovery Museum, Pocomoke City. The museum is hosting leaf and nature crafts each Sunday in July. Children of all ages can enjoy leaf painting and nature painting.



Saturday, July 4

■ **PARADE:** At 8:30 a.m. a Fourth of July parade will be held from Main Street to Atlantic Avenue in Wachapreague. Golf carts, cars, bikes, and groups of walkers and pets will parade through town. There will also be ice cream and games. Those who want to participate in the parade can sign up at the town hall or post office. There will be a post-parade picnic at the Wachapreague Fireman's carnival grounds.

■ **BIKE PARADE:** From 10 to 11 a.m. there will be a bike parade in downtown Exmore. Bikes, tricycles, wagons, strollers, wheelchairs, golf carts, and walkers are all welcome. Prizes will be awarded for the most patriotic entries. The parade will step off from the former Fresh Pride parking lot at the corner of Lankford Highway and Main Street.

■ **PARADE:** At 10 a.m. the town of Accomac will host its annual Fourth of July parade.

■ **PARADE:** At 10 a.m., the Chincoteague Island Library will host a family non-motorized Fourth of July parade around Robert Reed Downtown Waterfront Park.

■ **FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION:** Starting at 10 a.m., Cape Charles will hold its annual Independence Day celebration. There will be a parade on Mason Avenue at 10 a.m., a corn hole tournament at 11 a.m., and a screening of "The Sandlot" at the Historic Palace Theatre at 2 p.m. There will also be food vendors, artisans, face painting, a petting zoo, live performances, and fireworks at around 9:15 p.m.

■ **PARADE:** 11:30 a.m., Junior Street and Harborton Road, Harborton. Harborton is hosting a Fourth of July parade. The route will end at the Harborton boat ramp and there will be games and activities after the parade.

Sunday, July 5

■ **SCREENING:** 6 p.m., Historic Palace Theatre, Cape Charles. The theatre is hosting a free screening of the stage recording of "Piece of Eden." Donations are welcome.

Shore First | Entertainment calendar

Saturday, July 11

■ **COMEDY SHOW:** Doors open at 7 p.m., show starts at 8 p.m., El Soul, 225 Mason Ave., Cape Charles. Comedian Chip Chantry will perform. Tickets are \$25 and 10% of ticket sales will be donated to Friends of Animal Control Eastern Shore.

Wednesday, July 15

■ **COMMUNITY DAY:** From 10 to 11:30 a.m., the Cape Charles Memorial Library will host its Community Helpers Day in the lot across the street from the library. There will be meet-and-greets and opportunities to learn from those who serve the community.

Saturday, July 18

■ **GALA:** Doors open at 5 p.m., event starts at 5:30 p.m., Mary N. Smith Cultural Enrichment Center, Accomac. The Mary N. Smith Alumni Association is hosting a gala. Tickets are \$55. There will be music, food, and dancing.

Tuesday, July 28

■ **BINGO:** Doors open at 11 a.m., games begin at noon, Chincoteague Center, 6155 Community Drive, Chincoteague. The Museum of Chincoteague Island is hosting Buckaroo Bingo. The cost is \$20 for nine games; kids games are \$5 with the purchase of a \$20 board. Refreshments will be available for purchase, cash only. Tickets can be purchased at <https://tinyurl.com/5b6vd297>

Wednesday, July 29

■ **PONY SWIM:** The 101st annual Chincoteague Pony Swim will take place near Chincoteague Veterans Memorial Park. After the mid-morning swim, the ponies will parade down the streets to the carnival grounds.

Thursday, July 30

■ **PONY AUCTION:** The 101st annual Chincoteague Pony Auction will take place at the rear of the carnival grounds.



Thursday, July 16 | Cape Charles Library painting and social time

CHILDRENS ART: 2 to 3 p.m., Cape Charles Memorial Library, Cape Charles. Paint Misbehavin' is a group for children ages 12 to 15 to gather and explore different media, and socialize.



Friday, July 24 | Tasley No Limits Hot Dog cart

HOT DOG CART: 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., No Limits Eastern Shore, 24546 Coastal Blvd., Tasley. No Limits will have its hot dog cart open.



Friday, July 31 | Chincoteague Story Swap at the Cultural Alliance

STORY SWAP: 7 p.m., Chincoteague Cultural Alliance, 6309 Church St., Chincoteague. Share a story or enjoy listening to others during Story Swap. This month's theme is pony/pet/tails/tales. Admission is free.

Shore First | Chincoteague Pony Penning

Ponies ready for 101st annual swim, auction

BY TED SHOCKLEY
Eastern Shore Post

It might be hard to top last year's Chincoteague Pony Penning Centennial. But the event always gets bigger and better — and it is always one of the Mid-Atlantic's can't-miss events.

On Wednesday, July 29, the ponies will swim across the channel from Assateague Island to Chincoteague Island at an area near Memorial Park.

The swim, which is always held at slack tide, will take place between 9:30 and 10:30 a.m., although Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company Public Relations Office Hunter Leonard said a more exact time will be announced closer to the swim.

On Thursday, July 30, the annual Pony Auction will be held at 8 a.m. at the back of the carnival grounds. Seating opens at 6 a.m.

Last year at the auction, the 94 ponies sold raised just over \$1 million for the fire company. Buyback ponies — which are purchased by buyers but live their lives on Assateague to continue the herd — drew the overall highest bids, with one bringing \$100,000.

In 1925, after two devastating fires, Chincoteague leaders organized a fire company and authorized a carnival to raise money. The fire company then assumed responsibility of the annual penning and auction. The fire company owns and maintains the herd of ponies on Assateague Island.

Leonard said the event's large crowds can be easily accommodated because of the planning involved.

"Everything is so well managed," he said.

For those who want to get in on the excitement in other ways, here are some suggestions:

■ Buy a copy of the famous Marguerite Henry book "Misty of Chincoteague," or shop for other popular books about Chincoteague Ponies at Sundial Books on Main Street.



FILE PHOTO

Crowds line up to watch the Chincoteague Ponies rest after their swim to a holding area near Chincoteague Veterans Memorial Park.

■ The Island Theatre offers free showings of the movie "Misty" during the month of July. Be sure to check out Misty's hoofprints set in concrete on the sidewalk.

■ Line the streets with others after the Pony Swim and watch the parade of Chincoteague Ponies walk from the

swim area to the carnival grounds.

■ Enjoy the family-friendly Chincoteague Volunteer Fireman's Carnival, with its games, rides, and sweet treats. You might even see some ponies in the corral at the back of the carnival grounds.

■ Visit the Museum of Chincote-

ague Island and the Beebe Ranch to see memorabilia and photos about the Pony Penning's history.

■ The ponies' return swim to Assateague, set for the morning of Friday, July 31, is customarily less crowded and a smaller event, which could be better for children.



FILE PHOTOS

Above at left, Chincoteague Ponies swim the Assateague Channel from Assateague to Chincoteague near Chincoteague Veterans Memorial Park. After the swim, the ponies rest for about an hour before the popular parade through the streets of town to the carnival grounds. At right, the famous Saltwater Cowboys hold a pony during the Pony Auction. Last year at the auction, the 94 ponies sold raised just over \$1 million for the fire company. Buyback ponies — which are purchased by buyers but live their lives on Assateague to continue the herd — drew the overall highest bids, with one bringing \$100,000.



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Carmelita's cuisine shines through

Carmelita's is more than your average taco truck. The Cheriton spot on Sunnyside Road features a market packed with drinks, groceries, and snacks, as well as a taco truck.

Whether you need a large bottle of Valentina hot sauce, a slice

of tres leches cake, jewelry, or lunch, you'll find it at Carmelita's.

Orders for the delicious menu offerings and range of specials are taken inside the store, so there's no reason not to browse while waiting for an order.



Sarah Barban

However, it is the cuisine that takes the cake.

Carmelita Diaz works her magic in the kitchen while her daughter Sarai Diaz manages the store and keeps the orders moving.

This has been her mother's dream for a long time, Sarai said.

"Mom has always loved cooking," she said. "Her dream was always to sell her food. She had seven kids and loved feeding us. When we all moved out, I think she missed cooking for people. She always told me, 'It's my dream,' so I quit my job and we did it together. I helped her open up and here we are."

Carmelita's opened in May 2023, and with authentic specials, ingredients that are prepared fresh every day, and passionate cooks in the kitchen it is easy to see why Carmelita's is popular with everyone from



SHORE FIRST/SARAH BARBAN

Carmelita's offers a variety of tacos, as well as gorditas, burritos, quesadillas, and a variety of specials.

construction crews to tourists.

The tacos at Carmelita's are built on what appeared to me to be extra-thick corn tortillas that were beautifully leopard-spotted from being thrown on the grill. They were perfectly pliable and filled with incredibly generous portions of delicious proteins.

In my opinion chicken is the hard-

est taco truck protein to make well.

It tends to be drier and packs less of a punch than fatty slow-roasted pork or meaty grilled steak, but even the chicken shines at Carmelita's.

Moist, tender chunks of chicken are loaded into sturdy corn tortillas. The luxuriantly smooth green salsa adds a bit of kick, but the chicken itself is also perfectly seasoned and has

a bit of spice all on its own. It's not plain chicken by any stretch. The onions and cilantro on top round out the dish with freshness.

I also ordered the campechana taco, a combination of steak and chorizo. Like all of Carmelita's tacos, it was generously filled and featured a perfect tortilla. The steak was tender and

(Continued on page 7)

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 6)

the chorizo added a wonderful richness. The filling itself wasn't spicy, but the salsa verde added some heat.

Carmelita's salsa verde is perfectly smooth and has a heat that makes itself known but also slowly builds. It is perfect for adding a little something extra to the truck's already delicious tacos.

Carmelita's features a variety of specials and it is well worth checking their Facebook to see what is featured on any given day. Her mother's specialty is home cooking, and the spe-

cial reflect that, Sarai said.

"Mom wanted to cater to working men and make sure they can have a heavy meal to sustain them," she said. "We do really authentic plates like mole, enchiladas, or pork in a sauce ... Her specials are honestly what sets her apart. Tacos and gorditas are good, but the specials sell out in an hour or two most days."

On Fridays cochinita pibil is on the menu — tacos filled with pork that is seasoned and slow braised before being topped with a red onion and habanero relish. That's what I got for my third taco.

The pork was perfectly tender and

succulent without a hint of greasiness. It had a sweet, slightly earthy flavor that almost mimicked a char-cooked quality. The crunchy red onion and habanero relish added a nice hit of acid, as well as heat.

Don't be too afraid of the habaneros — the taco I had definitely packed a punch and had me sweating, but it wasn't so hot that I couldn't enjoy the balance of flavors.

The fattiness of the pork amped up the deep earthy flavor of the season-

ing, while the fresh relish added a high note of acid and heat.

For authentic flavors, hearty home cooking, and friendly service, look no further than Carmelita's. The charming shop and bustling food truck are worth a short jaunt off U.S. Route 13.

Carmelita's is located at 4297 Sunnyside Road in Cheriton. It is open from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.



SHORE FIRST/SARAH BARBAN

Carmelita's is located on Sunnyside Road in Cheriton. The taco truck and the store offer friendly service and delicious flavors.

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Enjoy beautiful blueberry margaritas this summer

Whip up a quick blueberry simple syrup, and use it to create a gorgeous cocktail

A few years ago I took a trip “down the county” with my best friend early on a Saturday morning. Our destination was Mason Beach Fruit Farm, about 45 minutes south of Chincoteague. It was the first time visiting for both of us, but it most definitely wasn’t the last.



Laura Davis

Blueberry bushes 10 feet tall – acres and acres of them. All the bushes I’ve seen in the past have been scrawny little shrubs. But these, they literally created shady groves – so the picking was rather pleasant! It’s situated right

on the Chesapeake, so cool breezes were plentiful, which also helps.

I picked about 10 pounds in just under two hours. At \$2 per pound, you can’t beat the price with a stick. I had plenty of fresh blueberries I had to use. What better to do with them than make blueberry booze?

A quick blueberry simple syrup is whipped up, then mixed with traditional margarita components to create this gorgeous cocktail. The flavor of the blueberries really shines through, not to mention the beautiful hue that it leaves the drink with. The syrup is also divine when mixed into lemonade or limeade.

(Continued on page 9)



PHOTO COURTESY LAURA DAVIS

Blueberry margaritas combine traditional margarita components with a flavorful blueberry simple syrup that gives the cocktail a beautiful hue.

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 WBOCTV’s DelmarvaLife show, where she showcases her culinary talents for viewers. Her work appears monthly in Shore First.

Blueberry Margaritas

What you'll need

For the glass rim:

■ 3 Tbsp granulated sugar

■ 3 Tbsp kosher salt

For the blueberry syrup:

■ 1 1/2 cups blueberries (fresh or frozen)

■ 3/4 cup sugar

■ 1 cup water

For the margaritas:

■ 1/4 cup blueberry syrup

■ 1/2 cup tequila

■ 1/4 cup triple sec

■ 3/4 cup margarita mix

■ ice

■ lemon or lime slices, for garnish

■ blueberries, for garnish

What you'll do

■ For the rim, combine sugar and salt on small plate and set aside.

■ To make the blueberry syrup, combine berries, sugar, and water in a small saucepan.

■ Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.

■ Reduce heat to low and simmer for around 8 minutes, until blueberries have burst.

■ Pour through a fine mesh strainer into a large measuring cup or bowl, pushing on the pulp to remove as much liquid as possible.

■ Let cool, then place in an airtight container and refrigerate. Syrup can be kept refrigerated for up to 2 weeks.

■ To make the margaritas, rim the edges of two glasses with a lemon or lime wedge and dip into the salt/sugar mixture. Fill glasses with ice.

■ Combine blueberry syrup, tequila, triple sec, and margarita mix in a carafe or large mixing glass and stir to combine.

■ Pour into ice-filled glasses.

■ Garnish with lemon and lime wedges and additional blueberries if desired.

■ Enjoy responsibly!



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September 12th at Vaux Hall Farm, Melfa,
to Benefit the Special Olympics

October 2nd Harvest Season Show at Vaux Hall Farm, Melfa, VA

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Cape Charles: The railroad's once-and-future Shore city

In Cape Charles, streets cross each other at perfect right angles to form regular city blocks, and houses stand close together as if transplanted from some more urban setting.

Cape Charles City, as it was once



Kirk Mariner

called, was at one time the largest and busiest place on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, the terminus of a railroad line that began in Manhattan, N.Y., a Yankee outpost on the southern end of the peninsula.

Over the years, the South domesticated this Northern intrusion, as

evidenced by the grand row of crepe myrtles lining today's main road into town.

But then the railroad declined, and the highway moved elsewhere. By the time Cape Charles celebrated its 100th birthday, the town had fallen into serious decline. Yet, in this town civic pride is strong, and even as its downtown emptied and its grand old houses slipped towards decay, there was always a strong insistence that Cape Charles would bounce back.

Today, that long-awaited renaissance is in full bloom, as once-sleepy Cape Charles has been rediscovered. Once again, the town is at the center of new development, and once again what is happening there is unlike what the rest of the Eastern Shore of Virginia has ever



SHORE FIRST/TED SHOCKLEY

This excerpt is taken from Kirk Mariner's "Off 13: The Eastern Shore of Virginia Guidebook."

Cape Charles was once the largest, busiest, and most prosperous place on Virginia's Eastern Shore

witnessed. What was originally true of Cape Charles at its founding is still true today: Cape Charles may be *on* the Eastern Shore, but it is not quite *of* it.

Cape Charles owes its birth to the railroad. In 1883, when it was known that this was to be the site for the southern terminus of the new railroad, Pennsylvania congressman and multi-millionaire William L. Scott bought the land for the staggering sum of \$55,000 and created a town from scratch.

He laid out roads that formed a perfect square, with avenues named for famous Virginians crossing streets named for fruits and trees. The neat city blocks contained space for a central park, a school, and 644 new homes.

In 1883, even before the railroad reached Cape Charles, the town began to take shape. The first building was a tavern on the eastern corner of Strawberry and Mason. Three years later, the town incorporated, by which time it contained two hotels, a tavern, a post office, a livery stable, several barrooms and stores, a growing number of homes, and a newspaper named *The Pioneer*.

The central attraction was the harbor, largest on the Shore between Norfolk and Maryland, where the rails ended right at the water. The railroad chartered the boat *Jane Mosely* to make the run to Norfolk. By 1885, the town had added the steamer *Cape Charles* to ferry passengers and the tugboat *Norfolk* to pull freight.

In 1886, another steamer line was opened connecting the town to Hampton. Whenever the train pulled in from the North, there was a steamer in the harbor

(Continued on page 11)

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 10)

waiting to shuttle passengers across the Chesapeake Bay.

By 1907, there were two round trips daily, and in Cape Charles the railroad employed almost 2,000 people in its machine shop, roundhouse, and network of trains and ships.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia had never experienced a town so prosperous, or one so oriented to the urban North, as Cape Charles City. Here, Eastern Shore natives and “come-heres” from the North mingled amicably. The town saw the first Roman Catholic and Jewish congregations ever assembled on the Eastern Shore.

For more than half a century, the town prospered simply because anyone who traveled up or down the Shore had to pass through Cape Charles.

The automobile ferry Virginia Lee went into service between Cape Charles and Little Creek in 1928. By 1930, there were three round-trip ferries daily and a second ferry line to Ocean View.

By the middle of the 1940s, as many as 2 million people were passing through the town each year, and during holiday seasons traffic would back up in two lanes to the town limits waiting for the ferries.

In 1947, the town was the location for a motion picture, “The Story of Mr. Hobbs,” which starred noted film actress and producer Nell Shipman.

The decline began at mid-century. In 1950, the ferry moved its terminal out of Cape Charles to Kiptopeke Beach, six miles to the south. Four years later, the railroad ceased to carry mail and passengers. Cape Charles, once the jumping-off place for virtually all the Shore’s travelers, found itself three miles off the beaten path. Commerce, and the population with it, began to dwindle.

A while ago, when most of old Cape Charles was designated a Historic District, fewer than 40 of the more than 500 buildings in town were less than 50 years old.

Today, Cape Charles is a town in transformation. As the old section puts on a new face, the new sections continue to arise, and once more, as in the beginning, the place threatens to take on the air of a small city.

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Shore's historians are living in the good old days

Computers and the internet have made researching Shore history easier than ever before

When it comes to Eastern Shore history, these are the good old days. Never before has local history been so easily accessed, so widely

shared, and so thoroughly examined. The reason, of course, is the gift of technology, the ability to compress time and space.

I can sit at my computer and read a story from a newspaper in Oakland, Calif.,

written in August 1873. With a few clicks of my computer mouse, I can see photographs of Hog Island taken in 1890 now stored in a vault in an Arizona museum. Technology has made history the medium of the masses. It has removed barriers real and imagined that once prevented us from visiting our past.

In the past, a study of local history was much like tackling a foreign language. It had its own vocabulary.

The information you sought was hidden in massive volumes stored in racks in the county clerks' offices, like great mausoleums where centuries of transactions and transfers were laid to rest.

Once you located the proper volume, you were then faced with



SHORE FIRST/TED SHOCKLEY

The Heritage Center at the Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Library is a great place to learn more about history on Virginia's Eastern Shore. The center hosts an impressive collection of records, manuscripts, photographs, and maps.

translating hand-written legalese, making it understandable to those of us who don't speak the language.

Historians of the last century were remarkable men and women who were somehow able to break through the barriers of time and tell us the story of our past.

Susie Ames, Ralph Whitelaw, Nora Miller Turman, Frances Bibbins Latimer, James Egbert Mears,

and many others spent so much time in the county clerks' offices that they could have used the zip code as an alternative address.

Today, much research dealing with the written word can be done from home. I can sit at my computer and read the court news from Accomac and Eastville in an 1890 issue of the Peninsula Enterprise. All I need to do is download Countryside Transformed, a treasure of

newspapers, legal documents, and photographs.

From a wider perspective, the website Newspapers.com provides access to the archives of hundreds of thousands of newspapers across the country and abroad.

Newspapers.com is a product of Ancestry, Inc., and a subscription is required, but the Library of Virginia has a database called Virginia Chronicle that includes many Virginia newspapers, including those published on the Eastern Shore.

If I want to study genealogy, I go to the MilesFiles, an ever-growing database of families who have lived on the Eastern Shore and beyond.

The transformative event in local history happened just recently when the Eastern Shore Heritage Center opened in concert with the new public library in Parksley.

The center has been open for less than four years, but it already has amassed an impressive collection of records, manuscripts, photographs, and maps. A full-time archivist is on duty to help you with research of your own.

The realization that history is now a do-it-yourself endeavor is a little bit like getting your first driver's license. You had always been depending on someone else to take you where you wanted to go, and now you're behind the wheel. And there is no telling where you might explore and what you might discover.

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.



COURTESY PHOTO

The 2026 Eastern Shore Community College Summer Car Show with the Eastern Shore Cruisers will be on Saturday, Aug. 29, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the campus at 29316 Lankford Highway, Melfa.

Custom cars and future healthcare stars

When Chester Jackson and the Eastern Shore Cruisers Car Club approached Eastern Shore Community College about hosting one of its local summer car shows on campus several years ago, a great tradition was started that has quickly become an August highlight each year at ESCC.

On the lot where the original ESCC Academic Building stood until 2020, a wide variety of vehicles converge from all over the Shore, including lower Delmarva from the north and Tidewater to the south.

It is an atmosphere of community and goodwill that follows the club at each stop through its very busy week-end schedule through spring, sum-

mer, and fall months.

Through registration, donations, and raffles, the club always manages to raise funds that are distributed to various organizations and causes tied to the shows on its calendar.

Annual dispersals are in the thousands of dollars, and at Eastern Shore Community College, this impacts many students who are pursuing careers in nursing and healthcare.

Students in registered nursing, licensed practical nursing, and certified nursing assistant programs, among others, stand to benefit from the support the car show produces.

ESCC also has classes and programs like healthcare fundamentals, phlebotomy, and electrocardiogram

technician, all offering pathways to healthcare careers.

Through the ESCC Foundation and fundraisers like the Eastern Shore Cruisers Car Show, students can get help covering the expense of their classes and training and position themselves to contribute to the community in a high-demand field.

The 2026 ESCC Summer Car Show with the Eastern Shore Cruisers will be on Saturday, Aug. 29, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the campus at 29316 Lankford Highway, Melfa.

All are welcome to attend and show their vehicles. Cars and trucks of all makes, models, vintages, and styles are enjoyed at the event. Prizes and trophies are awarded in a broad range

of categories by the club at the conclusion of the day.

Food trucks and DJ music bring it all together for a fun community day at the end of summer.

Whether you bring a vehicle or not, the event provides fun and enjoyment for the whole family and a great display of vehicles that represent much hard work and dedication, in addition to civic-minded owners who enjoy giving back to the community through the Eastern Shore Cruisers Car Club.

For more information, please contact Chester Jackson with the Eastern Shore Cruisers at 757-665-5672 or Bill LeCato at ESCC at 757-789-1797.

A landmark 30th anniversary ahead

The summer has been lively at Arts Enter, from the electrifying sounds of Jingo's Santana tribute at the Historic Palace Theatre to the beauty of Sailfest, captured by artists during Lemon Tree Gallery's plein air event led by Clelia Cardano Sheppard.

The joy of the arts continues with Stars on Stage Musical Theatre Camp, bringing together young performers who will spend two weeks creating a fully staged production of the Disney musical "Newsies, Jr."

Directed by Megan Cartwright, performances will take place on July 17 and 18 at the Historic Palace Theatre.

Fridays at Lemon Tree, offering free live music, continues with



PHOTO COURTESY CRYSTAL PIELA

"Jingo — The Heart and Soul of Santana" tribute band lit up the Historic Palace Theatre on June 27.

Tidewater Bluegrass Revival on July 3 from 6 to 8 p.m., kicking off Fourth of July weekend with an evening of classic American bluegrass.

The evening will also celebrate

the unveiling of a special addition to Lemon Tree Gallery's permanent collection.

Upcoming Friday evening performances include The Christian Mitchell Project (July 10), Two Bridges (July 24), and Boy Wells & the Originals (July 31).

Arts Enter launches its 30th anniversary season this fall with two inspiring new series.

The Candlelight Series, offering live music up close, begins with Virginia Opera Emerging Artists: Arias & Duets on Saturday, Sept. 26, at Lemon Tree Gallery.

The new Spotlight Series shines light on serious talent at the Historic Palace Theatre, opening with Boston-based Vladyslav Dovhan on saxophone presenting a ben-

efit concert for Ukraine on Sunday, Oct. 4, followed by "Waterwoman," a reading of the play by Lenore Hart and David Poyer, on Sunday, Oct. 18.

The Mainstage Series launches on Nov. 20 to 22 with "Present Laughter," Noël Coward's witty comedy about a celebrated actor whose glamorous life spirals into hilarious chaos. Auditions will be held Aug. 1.

Save the date for June 12, 2027, when the community is invited to a free 30th Anniversary Red Carpet Celebration featuring a retrospective of Arts Enter's first 30 years, a champagne toast to the future, and a dance party as the organization begins its next art-filled chapter.

HISTORIC PALACE THEATRE



STARS ON STAGE

MUSICAL THEATRE SUMMER CAMP

presents

Disney

NEWSIES JR.



Adults \$20
Students \$10

JULY 17 | 7:30PM & JULY 18 | 2:00PM



305 MASON AVENUE | CAPE CHARLES, VIRGINIA | 757-331-4327

for information about these and other shows visit: www.artsentercapecharles.org

Report: Bay's blue crab stock is down

The Chesapeake Bay blue crab stock assessment was officially released in June by the Chesapeake Bay Program.

The final report, which looked at over 20 years of blue crab data, provides fisheries managers a better understanding of the bay's blue crab population, scientists say.

There were roughly 50% fewer blue crabs in the bay in 2023 than there were in 2011. Overall, the bay is experiencing long-term declines in female, male, and juvenile crab populations.

The assessment looked at potential causes for the decline, including blue catfish predation, low-oxygen dead zones, and habitat loss. While no single culprit was determined, it is clear the bay's most iconic species is under immense stress.

Each year, Maryland and Virginia publish results from their annual winter dredge survey, which estimates blue crab abundance in both states.

It is normal to see these results vary from year to year because blue crabs have a short lifespan of only a few years, officials said.

For example, the 2026 survey released earlier this summer showed a slight bump in blue crab abundance. This was just one year after crab numbers hit a record low in 2025. While this year's bump was encouraging, the declining long-term trends are concerning.

To support a strong blue crab population, focus needs to remain on three fronts: preventing pollution (including wastewater, stormwater, and agricultural runoff), restoring important blue crab habitats such as underwater grasses, marshes, and oyster reefs, and tackling the growing threat of blue catfish, officials said.

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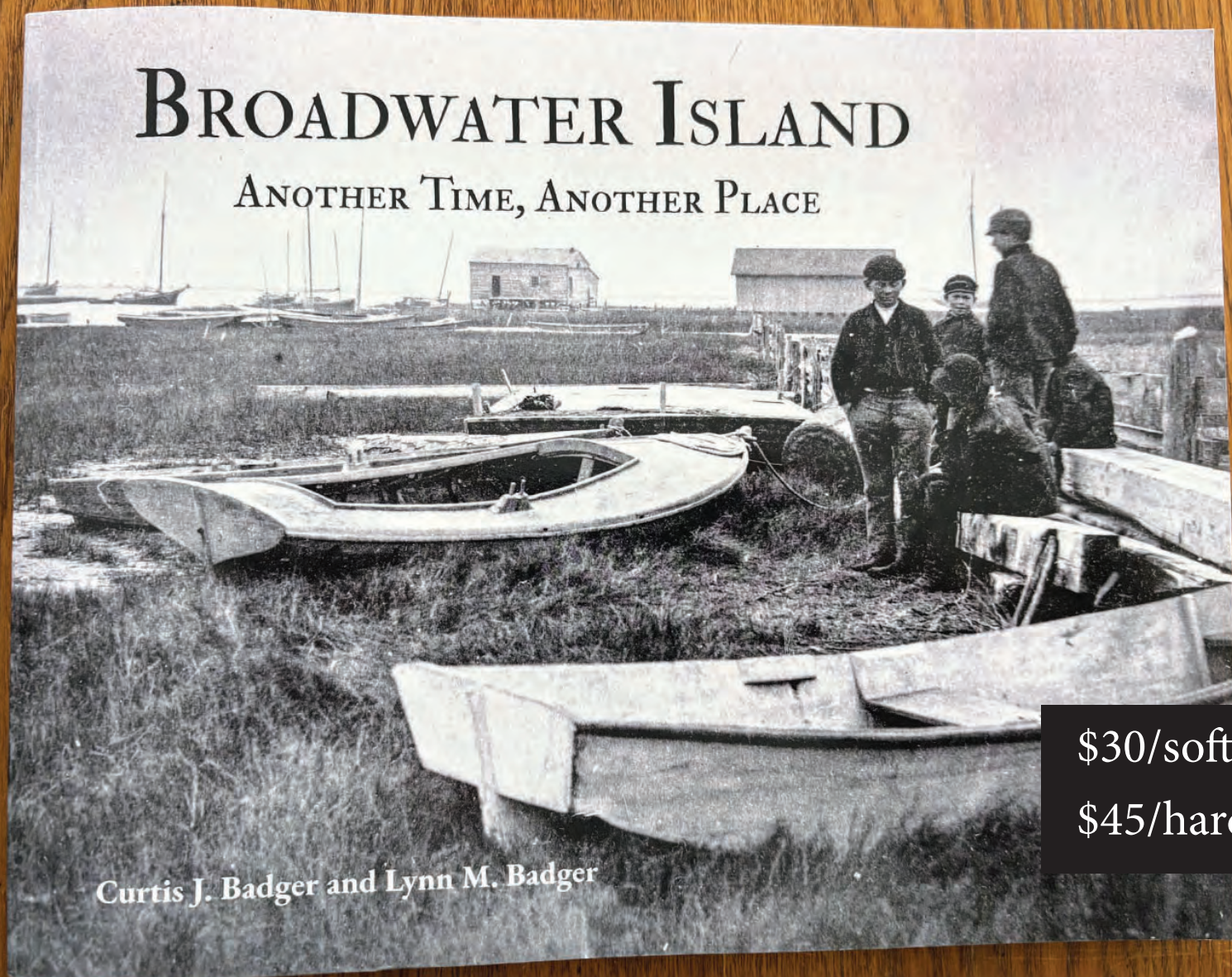


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BROADWATER ISLAND — ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE



\$30/softcover

\$45/hardcover

A Timeless New Look at the Eastern Shore's Past

Recently discovered photographs from the 19th century bring Broadwater Island back to life.

In the 1890s investors from Philadelphia bought most of Hog Island, changed the name to Broadwater Island, and began a coast-to-coast publicity campaign to sell beach property. They arranged presidential visits, the University of Pennsylvania football team came for summer practice, and a famous architect designed a beach cottage like none other.

What remains of Broadwater Island today lies under the sea, but a treasure of photographs has been found that brings the island development back to life. Curtis and Lynn Badger spent two years researching legal documents and newspaper archives, and they have created a written narrative that couples with the photographs to provide a fascinating account of another time and another place on Virginia's Eastern Shore.

Copies of *Broadwater Island – Another Time, Another Place* are available directly from the publisher, Salt Water Media in Berlin.

Visit the website at www.saltwatermedia.com. Copies also are available at local book retailers.

Softcover copies are \$30 and hardcover editions are \$45. Copies purchased online are personally signed by the authors.

100 years ago
July 1926

Cape Charles welcoming large number of tourists

With the opening of the new “Booster Club” pavilion on the beach front and the “Tourist Camp” that borders the Chesapeake Bay, Cape Charles has taken on the air of a seaside resort this summer.

Tourists and visitors to the city have filled the hotels and boarding houses almost to capacity during the last two weeks.

Ten tourist automobiles, bearing license plates of six different states, visited the tourist camp last week, and much favorable comment was made by the visitors during their stay here. Fishing, boating, and bathing along the bay shore was the chief attraction, and with many improved facilities for the comfort of visitors, the flow of tourists to this section is expected to increase throughout July and August.

The local railroad ferry reports the heaviest run of automobiles between Cape Charles, Old Point, and Norfolk of any season in the history of the company. Three steamers cross the bay from Cape Charles to Norfolk in each direction daily. Each boat carries from 10 to 15 automobiles on each trip, and almost every state in the union has been represented this summer.

— *Ledger-Star*

Machine gun to be used against Maryland crab poachers

Commissioner of Fisheries Harry R. Houston has been authorized by the Virginia Commission of Fisheries to equip the patrol boat Marguerite with a machine gun.

This step was made necessary by the recent clashes between the Maryland poachers and the Virginia crabbers, the commission explained. The Marylanders fired on the boat last week when she attempted to protect the interest of the Virginians, who seek to prevent the taking of crabs from Virginia waters by the Maryland watermen.

The fact that the patrol boat was not properly armed was pointed out, and the commissioner has been in communication with the Army regarding the acquisition of a machine gun that will enable the boat to cope with the alleged poachers. Other boats of the commission may be similarly equipped, and the armament of all of them is to be brought up

to date.

The commanding officers of the Commodore Maury, flagship of the fleet, which was sent to the scene of trouble last week to help maintain order, reported to Houston yesterday morning that quiet prevailed in the danger zone and that he and his assistants are making an investigation.

“There may be some arrests in this matter in the near future,” said Houston. “We are determined to get to the bottom of the trouble, and I believe that the law-abiding Maryland people are with us.”

The commissioner explained that it is against the law for a nonresident to take crabs or other shellfish in Virginia waters. Conviction for such an offense carries a fine of \$500 to \$2,000.

Wilkins Mathews, secretary of the commission, said yesterday that there has been trouble with the Maryland crabbers since 1924 and that this is not the first time the patrol boats have been fired upon. “We were able to handle the situation in the past, but this time it became so serious that the master of the Marguerite thought he had better ask for help, all his ammunition having given out and his arms being old and inefficient.”

— *Daily Press*

A red letter day for Chincoteague

Last Thursday was a big day in Chincoteague, indeed. The famous island has had 10 big days, staging a mammoth firemen’s carnival. But the big feature of the week was the visit of Governor Byrd on Thursday.

Chincoteague has done herself proud in the way of protection from fire by purchasing a big La France engine, an exact model of the one owned by Pocomoke City.

The new engine on the island has been called into use once since its purchase, and it is estimated that \$8,000 worth of property was saved, and this on a \$12,500 investment in the truck. At that rate it would not take long to pay for itself, and yet it is not to be supposed the citizens are hankering for fires.

The 10 days of carnival time, from the 21st to the 31st, have been filled with all sorts of diversions. Boat races, swimming races, and baseball games have been pulled off. Interest has centered keenly around the famous Chincoteague pony, and many were sold from their pens at each end of the island. It is entertaining to note how some of the little creatures are transported to their new homes. One Laurel, Del., buyer appropriated an old goods box, picked his purchase up and placed him therein, nailed a few protective slats to keep his ponyship

in, placed the package on the running board of his car, and went on his way. This particular pony was bought for \$15, a small specimen but wiry.

The good people of the island outdid themselves in preparation for the satisfaction of the inner man. Their widely known oysters were in evidence in all forms for eating; clams, fish, fried chicken, vegetables of all kinds, and fruit in abundance were to be had at many stalls arranged for the public comfort. These were sold at moderate prices, and nobody went hungry.

The residents vied with one another in making the crowds welcome. An air of good fellowship prevailed, and excellent order was in evidence. The Chincoteague people are to be congratulated on the preparation, handling, and success of their big event, and no doubt a goodly sum was realized toward the payment of their dandy fire pump.

— *Worcester Democrat and the Ledger-Enterprise*

75 years ago
July 1951

Cape Charles: A transient town

A railroad moved in in 1884, and Cape Charles began.

A ferry moved out in 1950. Cape Charles didn’t end, but it’s hurting.

More even than for most towns, transportation has written the ticket for this one on the bayside of Virginia’s Eastern Shore, a dozen miles or so north of the tip of the peninsula.

For years, the southern gateway to the Shore, Cape Charles has been self-styled a “transient” town and made a fair part of its living serving the neighbors who passed through.

As town officials expected, far fewer are passing through now since the Virginia Ferry Corporation moved its terminal from Cape Charles to Kiptopeke Beach on May 1 of last year.

Nobody is crying. The transient business wasn’t all. The town also has a humming small-boat harbor on its north flank on King’s Creek, to which sports fishermen flock. There is a town-owned commercial fishermen’s harbor on its south flank. It boasts the world record for size of both channel bass and drum-fish caught off its shores by sports fishermen. The waters serve up small fish of all kinds. Thousands of crabs and oysters go each year out of the commercial harbor, which is at its busiest in winter.

The railroad that gave Cape Charles being is also

(Continued on page 18)

Yesteryears

(Continued from page 17)

still the town's major industry. The Pennsylvania Railroad steamer Elisha Lee makes two round trips daily from Cape Charles to Old Point Comfort and Norfolk with passengers, vehicles, and mail.

Today the town has a number of distinctions, and nobody is prouder of them than Raymond M. Grimmer, the first "native-born" mayor of Cape Charles.

It is one of the few Virginia towns that are separate school districts in themselves, said Grimmer, and it has a combined high and elementary school of its own.

It was among the first towns in the South to have a Black policeman. Willis Mitchell, employed four years ago for the part-time position, is an excellent officer, Chief Jackson R. Jarvis declared.

The town fire department, composed entirely of volunteers, serves as first-aid squad, too. It has its own ambulance in addition to four fire engines, equipment worth \$55,000. Chief R.T. Barnes, who is also a councilman, noted they have used it for everything from putting out a fire on a ferry boat to filling the baptismal font at a church where the water pump wasn't working.

And one councilman noted, "We've got a million dollar beach out there if we just develop it."

— *Richmond Times-Dispatch*

Four unhurt in crash landing

A U.S. Navy transport plane on a routine flight out of Norfolk crash landed safely in a cornfield a mile west of U.S. Route 13 at Shadyside, three miles north of Eastville.

The accident occurred at 2:15 p.m. less than two miles east of where a U.S. Marine transport crashed in a driving snow in February, killing nine.

Sheriff George Turner, of Northampton County, said the four crew members in the Navy plane, an R4D-5E, walked away from the plane uninjured after it landed on its belly Friday.

The pilot told Sheriff Turner that both engines conked out. Spotting Edmond Underhill's heavy cornfield, he nosed the plane down. It slid 75 yards and came to a full stop.

"I never saw as little damage for a forced landing," Turner said. The plane was being dismantled and towed back to Norfolk today.

— *The Daily Times*

Illegal recruiting of farm labor charged

Northern farmers are using the promise of higher wages to lure migratory laborers away from their harvesting jobs on Virginia's Eastern Shore, the State Employment Service charges.

P.L. Bryan Jr., local employment service manager, says illegal recruiting of the laborers has resulted in the loss of more than 1,000 workers in Accomack and Northampton counties during the past week.

Farmers in the Eastern Shore area currently are employing the migrants in harvesting potatoes, tomatoes, and beans. Two months are left in the harvesting season.

The state appealed to farmers to report to authorities trucks bearing northern license plates that enter their property for the purpose of recruiting labor.

— *The World-News*

Tangier Island prepares for annual homecoming

A festive air will prevail on this quaint little island in Tangier Sound for three days in August when friends and former residents gather for the annual homecoming.

The three-day celebration will begin Aug. 9 and continue through Aug. 11.

The highlight on the first day will be a costume parade of Tangier's youngsters through the narrow streets bordered with neat little homes and white picket fences.

Along the same route on the second day, babies will be paraded by their proud mothers. Their strollers and baby carriages will be decorated with flowers and multi-colored crepe paper.

Sundays call for church services. There will be baseball games, an amateur hour with skits and all sorts of fun planned by the program committee, headed by Mrs. H.J. Jander.

Rep. Robeson, of the First Congressional District of Virginia, has promised to make every effort to attend and speak.

Judge Jeff Walter, of Accomack, a former school teacher on the island who holds a warm place in the hearts of Tangiermen, will be present.

Each night from 6 to 7:30 all festivities will cease while a religious service is held in Swain Methodist Church.

Mrs. Jander said there will be plenty of food for everyone. She predicted that this will be the biggest homecoming ever held on the island.

The Island Belle will leave Crisfield's dock daily at 11:30 a.m. to take visitors to the island. There will be transportation to the mainland each night after the program.

— *The Daily Times*

Roundup ends for ponies at Chincoteague

Today was pony penning day on Chincoteague, climaxing the 10-day carnival of the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company.

The more than 12,000 visitors on hand had almost perfect weather after two days of rain. Pony penning day is also homecoming day for the people of Chincoteague, and many natives, friends, and relatives were among the town's normal population of 3,000.

Sales of the wild ponies of Assateague Island began at 8 a.m.

The fire company sold 40 ponies. Colts brought \$75 to \$100, while full grown ponies sold for \$150 to \$200.

Those unsold today were branded and will be returned to the marshes of Assateague Island, which lies across a 100-yard channel from Chincoteague. There, they will roam through the marsh lands and along the sandy beaches undisturbed again until pony penning time next year.

The roundup of the ponies, their forced swim across the channel, and sale is the big event in the annual firemen's carnival. It predates the carnival, however, and is recorded as early as 1835. The ponies have been roaming Assateague for as long as history has been recorded in the area.

This afternoon there were pony races and major-ettes performances after a day of rodeo activities accompanying the sales. The carnival opened July 14 with a parade and will continue through Saturday night.

— *Daily Press*

50 years ago
July 1976

Captain John Smith mapped Eastern Shore

A year after the English explorer Capt. John Smith founded Jamestown in 1607, he left his

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Yesteryears

(Continued from page 18)

fledgling colony, and with a band of adventurers, he began to search for fresh water and an outlet to the South Seas.

The 14 men set sail on a barge that would eventually carry them up the Eastern Shore to “become the first Christian men to sail the waters of Maryland,” according to “Captain John Smith’s Early Exploration of the Chesapeake,” by Gail Anger.

The group also encountered both friendly and hostile Indians, accurately mapped large portions of the Eastern Shore coastline, and finally turned back after succumbing to poor food, exhaustion, and fear.

On June 2, 1608, the expedition began. The barge, 30 feet long, carrying two sails, was simply equipped with tarpaulin to protect the men from the rain and a meager food supply of corn meal and water.

At Cape Charles, they encountered their first Indians. Smith was introduced to the King of the Accomac tribe, whom the captain described as “a comely and civil man.” The meeting was friendly, and the chief showed Smith how to spearfish.

Proceeding northward along the peninsula Smith labeled as the “Eastern Shore,” they entered the first river they came to. Smith called it the “Wighcocomoco.” Today it is known as the Pocomoke River.

Unable to find fresh water, they continued up the peninsula.

Smith charted the island group that now bears his name, describing it as being “good to cut hay in summer and to catch fish and fowl in winter, but the land beyond them is all covered with woods, as is the rest of the country.”

At this point, the group met one of the terrific summer squalls that Chesapeake watermen dread. Only by constant bailing was the barge kept afloat. After two days of repair, Smith’s band started out again.

Traveling north, the explorers entered the Nanticoke River, where they encountered hostile Indians. They left. From here, they continued north some 70 miles.

The Eastern Shore was described as being “a succession of low islands or fingers of land, overgrown with woods filled with wild animals, yet no visible signs of mankind.”

“The barge was traveling into unknown lands, more hostile perhaps than the seas of Columbus’ shipmates — for land where no man lives is terrifying by its silence,” Smith wrote.

The fear of the unknown, mixed with exhaustion from rowing and poor food, finally forced the group to turn back towards Virginia.

— *The Daily Progress*

Wanderlust nonexistent in Shore folk

One of the most notable aspects of Virginia’s Eastern Shore is the absence of heavy industry. You can crisscross that strange peninsula from Birdsnest to Bullbeggar, from Machipongo to Greenbackville, without ever running across a factory or a stinking smokestack.

The only evidence of industry that I ran across last week on my exhaustive tour of the Shore was the commercial fishing business and a wooden decoy outfit that claimed to manufacture more wooden duck decoys than anybody else in the whole wide world.

Upon my return from that salty, windblown land, however, I was confronted with a news story announcing that a Texas construction firm has filed plans to develop 980 acres on the Eastern Shore for a heavy industrial complex for the manufacture of offshore oil equipment.

The plan has yet to be approved by the Northampton County Board of Supervisors, but if those supervisors follow the greedy lead of others around the state, the Eastern Shore is in for a serious jolt.

As it stands right now, the Eastern Shore is a place unlike any other in Virginia. The accent is different. The landscape is certainly different, and the people are still small town folks in a big city world.

Most of the folks you run into on the Shore are willing to chat with strangers, sometimes at great length. They do not seem to have developed any great sense of wanderlust, perhaps because they are virtually marooned from the continental United States.

Consider the couple running the fireworks stand 50 miles south of Tangier Island.

“Nope,” drawls the man behind the counter, “can’t say I’ve ever been to Tangier. Always meant to go over there, but we never got around to it.”

Or the shark fisherman lolling in a skiff near Wachapreague, 30 miles south of Chincoteague.

“I guess I must have been to Chincoteague when I was a little kid,” he muses, “but I don’t remember ever being there. I just never seemed to get around to it, I guess.”

Or the three loungers in the filling station fewer than 10 miles from Bullbeggar.

“Bullbeggar?” asks one in reply to a question. “What in the world you want to go to Bullbeggar for? Ain’t nothing over there but marsh grass and mosquitoes.”

And so it goes on the Eastern Shore. The fishermen know the offshore waters like a commuter knows his interstate, but if you set one of them down on dry land, he will not move any farther than a hermit crab.

— *The Daily Times*

25 years ago
July 2001

Chesser: Crape myrtle defender

Sue Chesser is a force to be reckoned with.

When it comes to protecting the thousands of crape myrtles along U.S. Route 13 on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, nobody outsmarts, outfoxes, or outdoes Chesser.

And nobody gets angry any faster than Chesser when she sees a tree or seedling mowed down, poisoned, crushed, or stolen. This personable, down-home woman is Queen of the Crape Myrtles.

Since 1986, when the late Rachel Hall of Soroptimist International of Accomack County proposed forming the crape myrtle committee, Chesser has been in charge. She began her crusade with “zero money” in the group’s account.

The group launched a crape myrtle memorial fundraising campaign, which is its sole source of income.

It was a rebirth of a crape myrtle planting project started in the 1930s, Chesser said, by the Woman’s Club of the Eastern Shore, which planted about 700 trees from Cape Charles to Exmore.

Not since that era have any trees been planted, she said.

Since 1987, the Rachel B. Hall Memorial Crape Myrtle Project committee has spent \$20,000 to plant 3,150 seedlings along the roadside and has extended the plantings from Exmore north to the Virginia/Maryland border.

The club raises the money to buy the trees, but it is the Virginia Department of Transportation that calls the shots. Because the trees are planted on state property, where they are placed and how close together is determined by the transportation department. But it is Chesser who becomes the mother hen of the crape myrtles.

“They are my babies. I ride up and down the road all the time looking at them,” she said.

Unfortunately, independent contractors have routinely cut hundreds of the trees to the ground over the years.

One mowing contractor met Chesser face to face. “He asked me what I wanted, and I said, ‘\$500.’ He said, ‘No, I can’t give you that.’ I said, ‘I don’t want any less and I’m not going to take any less,’” she recounted.

Don’t mess with Chesser. Sure enough, she got her \$500.

— *The Daily Times*



Captain and first mate, the wife, sailed into Onancock on a trimaran, in search of a home site with deep-water anchorage. We had just the ticket at Schooner Bay, a deep-water canal. They built a 2,149 sq. ft. home. 1st-floor bedroom en suite. Open concept, kitchen, dining, and sitting room, 1.2 baths, and 2 spacious bedrooms and a full bath on the 2nd floor. Bulkhead replaced, 100' of water frontage. 2- car garage and massive workshop. 10 minutes to the town center of Onancock.

\$498,000



Waterman's Cottage: Perched above the flood elevations with views of Chesapeake Bay tributaries, is this circa 1950 home. For well over 100 years, the neighborhood was well known for its crabbers. Independent folks, with respect for privacy. 1 1/2 acre conveys. A deck encompasses the home with a hot tub. Dining room, fully equipped kitchen, sitting room, full bath, 2 bedrooms and a full attic. Water views from the home. with boat ramp nearby.

\$225,000



Waterfront home, once part of Governor Wise Plantation, our first governor of Virginia. Massive views over Chesconessex Creek. This solidly built brick one-level home has a copper roof. 1.49 acres with an estimated 475' of creek frontage. 4' at MLW, within 50' of the bank. 3 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths, dining and sitting room open to kitchen, Sun room, utility room and 2-car garage, 1985 sq', full attic too. The previous owner rescued dogs and cats, and the home reflects that. A lot of cleaning and painting is needed. Ceramic tiles throughout with radiant heating. Rinnai hot water on demand as well. The grounds have mature trees, figs, and mulberry trees, too. Offered below the county assessment.

\$398,000



Circa 1930, renovated to make a proper family home. New windows, heat & air (split systems), freshly painted. The grounds are cleared with mature plantings, and a doll house, 12 x 16 garden shed. There is a small portion of forest that appears to have been cared for by an arborist. Few neighbors with the countryside all about.

\$225,000



Emerge from winter doldrums with a latitude adjustment at Long 75 degrees 34' 53 47 "W Lat 37 degrees 44' 01 47 N, home site 8 will breathe new life into your everyday. There are 9 acres, an estimate of 4' at MLW on Assawoman creek, with average tidal changes of 6.5'. Navigable to the Virginia Inside Passage.

\$250,000



Hog Ridge on the West Ridge, is this Island beach home. Circa 1920. Well-maintained stick-built, with 1st floor bedroom and bath. Custom kitchen with gas cooking, open to a spacious dining area. There is an office and a utility closet, too. 2 bedrooms on the 2nd floor, with all the windows updated. A proper shed and an attached furnace room too. The Ditches, a body of water is navigable by shallow-draft vessels from the canal that fronts the back portion of the property. Best of Island life is right here: fish, crab, stroll on the beach, and stargaze with a bonfire on the beach.

\$180,000



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