

LYNNHAVEN River NOW

New Canoe and Kayak Launch Site

Canoeing and kayaking are the best way to see the Lynnhaven River. There are so many shallow creeks and coves that can only be reached in a canoe or kayak. Each is full of surprises – the periwinkle snails on the marsh grass, the herons and egrets fishing in the shallow waters and the quiet beauty. You can be a mile from dense commercial and residential development and experience wilderness.

The new Birdneck canoe and kayak launch opened this fall. To reach the new launch, turn west on Old Virginia Beach Road off Birdneck Road between Laskin Road and Highway 264. You are launching into the Great Neck Creek area of Linkhorn Bay. You can go north under the bridge at Laskin Road and into Linkhorn Bay or south where the creek narrows and you are surrounded by marsh.



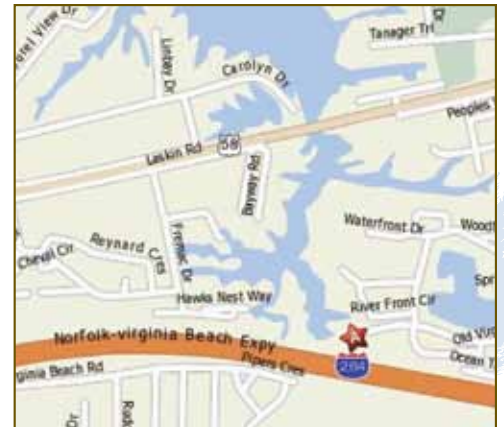
If you have only seen the Lynnhaven from the Lesner Bridge or from a motor boat in the broader deeper parts of the river, you owe it to yourself to experience these quieter parts of the river from a canoe or kayak. You may be surprised at the complex systems of life so close to us.



Now There are Four

With the new Birdneck Launch, we now have four public canoe and kayak launch sites on the Lynnhaven. They are: the City Boat Launch at the Lesner Bridge, the Narrows at 64th Street in First

Landing State Park, the Hutton Circle Launch Site on London Bridge Creek and the new Birdneck Launch. Our Stewardship and Access Committee continues to work hard with the City's Department of Parks and Recreation on the development of additional sites. There are several currently in the planning stage. We hope the next will be a public launch on Thalia Creek close to Town Center. If you are interested in working with this committee, contact Whit Peace at whitpeace.river@gmail.com, Lillie Gilbert at lillie@wildriveroutfitters.com or call our office. They meet the fourth Friday morning of each month at 8:30 AM at the Lynnhaven House Education Center.



LOCATION OF THE NEW BIRDNECK LAUNCH SITE.

LYNNHAVEN River NOW

Restoring a legend.



PHOTO BY: CHUCK GUTHRIE

DEAR MEMBERS,

Change is inevitable, growth is optional. I have had that little phrase in my office for a long time. Change happens. The weather changes; we change; our leaders change; the natural world changes; what we know changes; the questions we ask change and what we want changes. But whether that change brings real progress toward a better quality of life for all and a more sustainable future is truly optional. Sometimes we are ready for the changes, but more often we are not.

I looked back at this column in our first newsletters six years ago and it tells a story of positive change for the Lynnhaven River. Six years ago, we were envisioning beginning to bring our oyster population back from the brink of extinction, beginning the process of eliminating boat holding tank waste from our river, hoping to eliminate most of the septic tanks from our watershed, designing a "scoop the poop" box to put in our parks to emphasize to pet owners the importance of cleaning up after their pets and dreaming of accomplishing the water quality improvements that would allow us to again enjoy delicious Lynnhaven oysters.

With the help of our City and all of you, we have accomplished these things. In many respects, we have all changed our attitudes and our behaviors in many impressive and important ways in the past six years. But there is no time to rest because we may have even greater changes ahead.

Virginia Beach was one of 10 cities across the country chosen by the American Institute of Architects for participation in the 2009 Communities by Design Program. A team of experts from across the country has been studying our city, our assets and our challenges, our vision and our fears. For the past four days, they have been touring our city, meeting with city staff and listening to us, the citizens of Virginia Beach. They will provide us with a detailed report that will help us to better define our strengths and challenges and plot a course that will get us to the vision we have of our city in the future. They are only suggestions though and the decisions and the work will be our responsibility.

One of the most exciting parts of this process for me has been listening to the thoughtful comments and observations of the citizens of Virginia Beach. You want to see us protect the natural beauty that characterizes Virginia Beach, our beaches and waterways. You want transportation options and mixed-used neighborhoods. You want greater density in redeveloped central areas and an end to sprawl. You want us to protect the agricultural nature of the southern part of the city. You want green jobs and the types of neighborhoods that will attract and retain young professionals; neighborhoods where walking and biking to home, work, shopping and entertainment are all possible. You want greater access to the beach and to the Lynnhaven River. You want a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly city. You want to prioritize land preservation and protecting open space. And most of all you want us to prepare for the inevitable changes that are coming and be ready to take advantage of our opportunities. You are a talented, engaged group ready to share your energy and expertise to move our City into a more sustainable future.

Virginia Beach is at a crossroads. The decisions that we make today are going to set us on a path that will shape our future. We can choose the future that we envision for our city or we can choose to continue on the path we chose 50 years ago. It is hard work. But after listening to you, I am encouraged that we can do it. Virginia Beach can be the healthiest, most sustainable city on the East Coast. The choice is ours.

KAREN WILSON FORGET
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



A Rain Garden in Your Yard

Reducing the amount of water running off of your property when it rains is a major way that we all can contribute to improving water quality in the Lynnhaven. All of us can incorporate

a rain garden into our landscape design, add color and beauty to our yard and reduce the amount of water running off into the river through our storm water pipes when it rains. Lynnhaven River has an excellent publication available to help you design and build a rain garden or a buffer garden on your property. You can download a copy from our website under the River Resources tab (<http://www.lynnhavenrivernow.org/rain-garden>), stop by our office or contact us and we will mail one to you. Other rain garden resources are available from The Virginia Department of Forestry (<http://www.dof.virginia.gov/rfb/rain-gardens.shtml>) and the Virginia Cooperative Extension (<http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/waterquality/426-043/426-043.html>) or contact the Virginia Beach Master Gardener HelpDesk at 757-385-8156 for information on soil tests, spreader calibration and turfgrass.



EVERYTHING THAT GOES DOWN THE STORM DRAIN GOES INTO THE RIVER.



Lynnhaven River Now is partnering with Buy Fresh Buy Local Hampton Roads to encourage residents to shop for local produce and seafood and to eat seasonally.

Buy Fresh Buy Local is a national non-profit group that promotes locally grown and produced products. The Hampton Roads

Chapter started this summer with the goal of connecting consumers to farmers who raise the food, markets that sell the food and restaurants that serve the food.

Locally grown food is safer, fresher and tastier. Supporting local farms helps preserve open spaces and keeps money in the local economy. Supporting locally grown food also protects the environment by reducing the energy costs of importing food.

Upcoming Events

Please check our website www.LRNow.org for complete information on the many events coming up at Lynnhaven River NOW, or subscribe to our bi-monthly E-Newsletter for a list events and opportunities to get involved.

LRNow Public Meeting

Thursday, December 3rd at 7:00 PM
Renaissance Academy School
Witchduck Road, Virginia Beach

The New Renaissance Academy

The newest school in Virginia Beach, the Renaissance Academy, on Witchduck Road will surprise you with all of the innovations that make it the most sustainable school in this region — green roof, cistern, gray water system, solar panels. Get a pre-opening tour of this amazing place. Join us for our Public Meeting on December 3rd and be the first to hear the assessments in our 2009 State of the River Report and tour this surprising new school. Pre-registration is not required.

Want to Get More Involved?

Lynnhaven River NOW has a system of eight committees each focused on a different aspect of our work:

- STEWARDSHIP AND ACCESS
- PR AND MARKETING
- CLEAN BOATING & CLEAN MARINAS
- LANDSCAPE PRACTICES
- EDUCATION
- OYSTER RESTORATION
- PUBLIC POLICY
- WATER QUALITY

Committee work is the best way to get more involved and help to make a difference in restoring and protecting the Lynnhaven River. Information on our Committees is available on our website under the LRN Committees tab (<http://www.lynnhavenrivernow.org/main-committees>). Check it out and get involved today!

Why I Do River Cleanups



by Whit Peace

Friends who have worked with me on river cleanups over the years probably would say I like cleaning the river because I like getting muddy. I do enjoy river cleanups for the opportunity to get outside on the water with others, and I like pulling lots of trash and weird findings out of the river. It is fun. And at the end, looking at what some friends together did on a Saturday morning to make the river a little bit cleaner. There's nothing better to me. All those orange bags of trash, the tires and shopping carts, everything you can think of, piled there at the end, gives me a good feeling.

It goes back to when I was a little boy reading and learning about Native Americans and their view of the earth as sacred. I learned it is our calling to care for the Earth for the generations that follow. The "leave nothing but footprints, take nothing but memories" imprint was further instilled through my years of scouting. Working with older friends and leaders who "walked the walk" inspired me. And that Indian in the commercial, with the tear in his eye and all the trash around, left a mark.

When it was my turn to give back and I was serving as Scoutmaster of Troop 419 and also working with the youth at Virginia Beach Friends School and as the Friends Meeting's Community Service Coordinator, I met this remarkable lady, Lillie Gilbert. It wasn't long before I was teaming with Lillie and Wild River Outfitters and getting Scouts and Quakers and Friends School students involved in the cleanups at the Wild River Outfitters Adopt-A-Spot location on West Neck Creek.

Like a snowflake, no two river cleanups are the same. Though they all have some common elements: getting a crew together and making plans, meeting up and heading out on a Saturday morning, gathering at noon and helping each other haul out the bags and the findings, telling stories about what happened and what we found and taking a picture all together to help remember the day. Another common element is that strangers sometimes get assigned together in a canoe or kayak and after three hours paddling and working together, they become friends.



When I started out, the cool thing was when children my daughter's age got their parents involved. Now it's cool when kids my daughter's age bring their little brothers and sisters. You know where it goes next...

It has been very rewarding, working with the youth over the years and watching them grow into adulthood. And I'd like to think some of the love of the earth that was instilled in me in my youth and emanates from Lillie and the other adults who have helped steadily over the years with the river cleanups — that love of the earth and call to stewardship — has been passed forward in some way to the youth. Working together and making a difference.



Whit Peace has been organizing river cleanups for a long time. He now works with LRNow as the Co-Chair of our Stewardship and Access Committee and the Coordinator of our Adopt-A-Spot River Cleanups on London Bridge Creek at Hutton Circle. Join us for the next cleanup and find this inspiration for yourself.

Adopt a Waterway

PHOTO BY: ROBERT BROWN



Lynnhaven River NOW contracted with the City's Clean Community Program in 2006 to adopt London Bridge Creek at the Hutton Circle Canoe and Kayak Launch. With this contract, we accepted responsibility for conducting regular cleanups, four to six times per year, in this area of the Lynnhaven River. During the past three years we have pulled over 350 big orange bags of trash from the river and the marshes and all kinds of other objects—deck chairs, a hot water heater, tires, tires, tires, car batteries, exercise equipment and shopping carts. The most frequently collected object, by far, is the plastic beverage bottle. Many of those bottles of water and soda are ending up in the river and the marsh. Though there is always plenty of trash to clean up, we have seen a cumulative improvement over the three years.

We would love to see every mile of the Lynnhaven River shoreline in an Adopt-a-Waterway Contract. Wouldn't that be great? Your business, civic league, PTA, scout troop, garden club, church or a group of friends can adopt your own little area of the river. Here is the process:

1. Go to the City's website, www.vbgov.com and choose Parks and Recreation on the home page and then choose Clean Community Program or call Jeff Bass at 757-385-0424.
2. You will need to choose your site and program. You can adopt a waterway, a trail, street, highway, school grounds or park.
3. Someone will meet with you and provide you with supplies. The City provides all the supplies you need and orange vests if you will be working along a roadway.
4. You will be required to do four to six cleanups each year at your site. After each cleanup you fill out a report card and the City will send a crew to collect the trash.
5. After you complete your first cleanup, the City will install a sign with the name of our group.

It is pretty painless, helps out the entire community, sets a great example for our children and provides all who participate with a sense of pride in doing their part. Please contact our office if you need more information or decide to do an Adopt-a-Spot contract. We would love to thank you.

A Beautiful Street Buffer

You don't need an address to find the yard that prevents rainwater run-off from flowing into the street on Stephens Road in Virginia Beach's Alanton neighborhood.

The residence stands out from the others because a handsome hedge of Indian hawthorn lines the roadside perimeter of the property. For the most part other houses nearby have grass growing down to the road's edge.



Ever since Doug and Linda McDougal re-landscaped their yard six years ago, they don't look right at the street. From their front windows, they have a view of a lovely green lawn bordered by masses of pale blue catmint, a variety called Walker's Low. Red and white Knock Out Roses bloom behind the Catmint and are backed by staggered plantings of Snow White Indian Hawthorn on the road.

Dwarf Plum Yews frame either side of the walkway and a Kousa Dogwood and Butterfly Bush add other dimensions to the front bed. During various seasons, flowers such as bulbs and Russian Sage replace the Catmint blooms.

When the McDougals also re-modeled their home six years ago, they hired landscape architect Ann P. Stokes cq in Norfolk to transform the yard that had a lot of lawn in front like other yards on the street.

As a matter of course, Stokes said, she believes in designing a landscape that contains the rain that falls on the property. Otherwise, water runs off into the street where it flows into storm drains and eventually into waterways.

"We always think about where the water is going to go," Stokes said.

In the case of the McDougals' yard, water flowed off the grass into the Lynnhaven River, carrying fertilizers, pesticides and street pollutants with it. Shallow rooted grass is not an efficient pollution filter whereas beds of deeper-rooted shrubs and flowers capture a good deal of runoff.

"Planting beds at the street's edge to buffer the runoff, as the McDougals did, is one of the solutions," Stokes said. So are French drains that capture runoff from a roof. Ponds, rain gardens and rain barrels also can be used to collect water before it runs off into the street.

In Stokes' view, buffer beds on the street are not only important to prevent pollution of rivers and streams. "Less lawn means less mowing, which is good all around," she said. On the other hand, Stokes loves lawns and she thinks they can be an important design element if used well.

"The lawn should be a special place, a carpet you can stand on," she said, "but a lawn needs walls. You need to feel a sense of enclosure."

The McDougals' handsome green lawn has its colorful "wall" of blue Catmint, red Roses and the Hawthorn hedge beyond. Beds of Hydrangeas and other shrubs, as well as trees, also enclose the lawn on either side and around the back of the house.

Foundation plantings around the house are fairly sparse because foundation plantings are not as important as one would think. "If the house is beautiful down to the ground, it doesn't need too many plants to cover it up," Stokes explained. In addition, foundation plantings cause moisture build up around the house over time.

Stokes said. "Part of our mission statement is that good environmental design and good design are tied together."

Excerpted from the Virginian-Pilot, Mary Reid Barrow

Meet the Interns!

The LRNow office was very busy this summer. We had four interns working with us to further their understanding of our local environmental challenges while gaining some valuable personal experiences. Without further adieu, let us introduce you to our Summer 2009 interns.



RUSSELL DEPPE is a student at Vermont Law School and is interested in environmental law. Russell was home for the summer and decided to put his time to good use by helping LRNow do research on municipal nitrogen regulation in U.S. coastal regions. He

helped build a bank of information that will be a useful reference for years to come. Russell commented on his summer experience with LRNOW, saying, "Working with Lynnhaven River NOW was an extremely rewarding and educational experience. I now have a much greater understanding of the challenges facing our area, as well as a keen interest in water law and its implications."

MATT OSTROWSKI is studying at Virginia Wesleyan College and came to us after attending a LRNOW Public Meeting. Matt is passionate about protecting the local waters in which he enjoys fishing and surfing. He is performing water quality testing and phytoplankton monitoring at the Lynnhaven Boat Ramp's Crab Creek location. Matt has mentioned several times that seeing what is really in the water has changed his view of the water he so frequently uses. "I had a great time this summer learning how many and what species of phytoplankton are in the Lynnhaven." Matt's diligence to sampling has provided valuable data to LRNOW and NOAA and we appreciate his continued work, even as the school year has begun again.



HAILEY REID is a senior at Ocean Lakes High School, the Science and Math Magnet school for Virginia Beach. Hailey approached LRNOW at the end of her junior year, seeking a mentorship to complete senior study obligations. Hailey

enthusiastically tackled a number of areas of Lynnhaven River interest. She has sampled for water quality data and phytoplankton along Mill Dam Creek, has grown oysters, built rain barrels, planted rain gardens, attended teacher workshops and provided community education at public outreach, sharing all that she has learned throughout the summer. Hailey continues to help out as she moves into her senior year. She stated, "Working with Lynnhaven River NOW started off purely as my senior mentorship, but over these last couple of months, due to the experiences and dedicated individuals I worked with, my time here seems so precious and I hope to continue working with this organization." With an interest in Biology, Hailey's next step will be applying for early admission at Virginia Tech. She has been a tremendous help and a pleasure to work with this summer!

JIM PECSOK came to us through Norfolk Academy's Internship Program. Jim, now a junior at Norfolk Academy, came to us with no real sense of what he wanted to do with LRNOW, only that he knew he wanted to be here. Well,



not knowing exactly what he wanted to do meant Jim was able to experience it all! Jim worked tirelessly at copying, building notebooks, helping with oysters, planting and weeding native gardens, building oyster floats, entering data, attending workshops, cleaning out storage areas and organizing. Jim did it all, and we appreciated all that he did. Jim's flexibility and understated sense of humor made the inner workings of our small grassroots operation a breeze and when he had already completed his required hours in his first week, he decided to stay throughout the entire summer, finishing with over 125 hours. Jim sums up his experience with LRNOW by saying that "During my summer internship with Lynnhaven River NOW, I gained a better understanding of the interactions between a watershed and it's inhabitants." We hope to see Jim put that knowledge to work with us again next summer doing water quality sampling and phytoplankton monitoring.

A heartfelt thank you to each of our wonderful interns. You have made this summer exceptional and we thank you for your hard work and dedication helping us to restore the legendary Lynnhaven River.



Thank You!

5/29/09 - 9/09/09

INDIVIDUALS

Founding Members:

Floyd E. Kellam, Jr.,
Fund of the Virginia Beach
Foundation
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sasser

Reef Members:

Mr. Whit Peace
Mr. Gary Lakin

General Members:

Ms. Deborah Otis
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Drees
Mr. & Mrs. Reese Lukei
Ms. Mary Perkins Brown
Mr. Gary Copeland
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Bradlee
Ms. Mary Ellen Fidler
Mr. & Mrs. Carter Valentine
Ms. Lesley Hildreth
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Marroni
Ms. Mary Thompson

BUSINESSES & GROUPS

Founding Members:

Runnymede Corp.
DIA Inc.

Pearl Members:

Ocean Park Civic League
Thoroughgood Garden Club

General Members:

Pembroke Elementary School Students
(cell phone collection)
Nansemond River Garden Club
Lynnhaven Colony Civic League
May Farm Garden Club of Kingston
Virginia Beach Garden Club
July 11th Paddle Into History Paddlers
T.O.G.A.

MEMORIAL & HONOR DONATIONS

In Honor of Patti Nardone:

Her students in the '08-'09 A.M.
Kindergarten Class, Kingston E.S.

In Honor of Ms. Lesley Hildreth:

Students of Princess Anne H.S.
International Baccalaureate Middle
Years Program Art Foundation

In Honor of Angela Tonnesen, John
Floyd, Jean Snyder, Paul Ray, Kevin
Forehand, Linda Roper, and Joshua
Morton – following the purchase of
a rain barrel:
London Bridge Greenhouse and
Nursery

In Memory of Will Brown:

Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Doyle

In Memory of John L. Thomas:

Mr. & Mrs. Robert H. Wells

DONATIONS TO OYSTER RESTORATION FUND

Lynnhaven Middle School Students
Ana Penas, Janet Chung, and Andrea
Eichelbaum



2010 CALENDARS are available for holiday gifts

Our beautiful and unique 2010 Lynnhaven River NOW calendar is available again for holiday gifts. It is a perfect gift for your neighbor, co-worker, teacher or out of town relative. Place your order today, 757-962-5398 or lbaity@lynnhaven2007.com. The price has not changed from last year, \$12 each or \$10 each if you purchase 10 or more.

All of our photo contest winners are featured in the calendar and all proceeds support the work of Lynnhaven River NOW.

Check out our new website,
www.LRNow.org

Remember...when it rains, everything on your lawn and driveway washes into the river – dog waste, fertilizer, loose soil, pesticides, herbicides and other toxins. Thank you for keeping pollutants out of the storm drain and taking good care of the river.



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