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 Bubba's Restaurant

Reef Members:
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 Mr. Michael Minor/ Mike's Rain Barrels

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 Cape Henry Women's Club
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MEMORIAL & HONOR DONATIONS

In Honor of Brother Rutter:
 Bill Overman

In Honor of Harry Lester:
 Mr. Paul Schellhammer

In Memory of Mr. Joseph T. Crosswite Jr.
 Mr. and Mrs. Mike Wilcox



NEW NO HARVESTING SIGNS FOR THE ATHEY ISLAND REEF.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTERS REGARDING NATIVE OYSTER RESTORATION. THE FINAL DECISION SHOULD BE ANNOUNCED BY EARLY SUMMER, 2009.

Order Your New 2009
 LRNow Calendars
 while supplies last!



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LYNNHAVEN River NOW

Check It Out — Our New Web Site!

Lynnhaven River NOW has a new web site! We are very excited about our new web site and the possibilities that it will give us to have all the information you might ever want or need to know about the Lynnhaven River and LRNow at your fingertips.

The first thing you will notice is how beautiful it is. We wanted our new web site to reflect the beauty of this place we call home by sharing as many of your great photographs as we can. In addition to the revolving pictures on the home page, which we will update regularly, we hope to have photo galleries throughout the web site. Thank you Kevin duBois for the donating the beautiful photograph that is the background for the web site.



PHOTO BY: KEVIN DUBOIS

The information about LRNow and community events—public meetings, workshops, lectures—that you have learned to rely on finding on our web site will still be available on the calendar page. In addition, there are new sections for teachers and students, regular updates on the work of our committees and how you can get more

involved, copies of our publications for download and much more.

You will now be able to renew your membership, make a donation or update your contact information on the web site. This should make life easier for you and keep our e-news coming to you regularly.

I hope you enjoy the new web site. It is a work in progress, so check back often for new updates.

First Bacterra Unit in Virginia at Mount Trashmore Park

In a watershed that is 95% developed and land is in great demand, innovative technologies are the answer for filtering storm water before it flows into the river. The City of Virginia Beach recently installed a new Bacterra unit at Mount Trashmore Park by the Skate Park to help filter harmful bacteria and other pollutants from the storm water runoff before it goes into Thalia Creek. This is the first Bacterra unit in Virginia and another testament to the City's commitment to doing what is necessary to improve water quality in our river.

Data will be collected from this Bacterra unit to determine its effectiveness in removing bacteria, sediments and nutrients from the storm water runoff. If it proves to be effective, further use of Bacterra units in our watershed will be explored.



LYNNHAVEN River NOW
 Restoring a legend.



LRNOW APPLAUDS THE CITY COUNCIL FOR PASSAGE OF THE NEW ORDINANCE PROHIBITING THE FEEDING OF WILDLIFE ON ALL CITY PROPERTY.

Upcoming Events

- January 26:** Rally for Clean Water in Richmond
- February 13-15:** Mid-Atlantic Home and Flower Show, Convention Center
- March 5:** Public Meeting – Thursday, March 5th, Cape Henry Collegiate School Dreyfus Auditorium, 7-8:30 PM
- March 18:** Kings Grant Community Meeting, March 18th, 7 PM, Kingston School
- Spring Garden Tour**
- April 18:** 7th Annual Oyster Roast, April 18th–Mark Your Calendar!
- April 22:** Earth Day, April 22nd

Watch for our bimonthly column starting January 2009 in the new publication, *Tidewater Family*.

For a complete list of our many events, please visit our new website, www.lrnw.org



DEAR MEMBERS,

Enclosed in this Winter Newsletter is a copy of our fourth-annual State of the River Report. We track 16 indicators of the river’s health to compile this report and average them for a final grade each year. Last year’s grade was a B.

This year, we have both good and bad news. I will start with the bad news. In two areas, we are losing ground. Our total net permitted wetlands loss last year was .68 acres. While this may seem small, our goal is no net loss of wetlands and this is a significant increase over our previous years’ total. Wetlands are critical to the river’s health and the fragment of our original wetlands that still remain must be protected. The second area of bad news is nutrients. Our nutrient levels, nitrogen and phosphorus, have increased substantially. One of the biggest contributors to excess nutrients in our waterways is fertilizer. We must use fertilizers more prudently and we will be providing you with guidelines and help in doing that over this next year.

Now to the good news. Our oyster population continues to grow and flourish. We have added 22 new acres of conservation reef in the Lynnhaven over the past year to reach a total of 58 acres of conservation reef. Just five years ago, we had five acres of conservation reef. Our water clarity is better, in part because of the increase in the number of oysters, and our bacteria levels continue to decrease. Not only did we hold onto the 1,462 acres opened to shell fish harvest last year. We increased it by 112 acres to a total of 1,574 acres. This is almost 1/3 of the river that now meets the rigorous shell fish bacteria requirements.

Overall, our grade is a B-, down a little from last year, but his should not be seen as discouraging. Environmental restoration is slow, hard work and we are definitely on an upward trend in the Lynnhaven. We have made amazing progress in only six short years.

Together we can tackle the fertilizer issue and do a better job of protecting our wetlands. What we have already accomplished is a model for other communities across our region. People frequently asked us in amazement, “What are you doing so right down there?” The answer is that we are working together. The City and the citizens are both doing their part and things are really getting better.

As we start this new year, we at Lynnhaven River NOW will continue to bring people together who can contribute to this effort and will work to guide you, our members, in your role in the restoration of our beautiful river.

YOU are the reason for our accomplishments to this point and YOU are our hope for continuing success.

HAPPY NEW YEAR,
KAREN WILSON FORGET
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Enjoying those Lynnhaven Oysters

Each month the Virginia Department of Health Shellfish Sanitation Division collects data on bacteria contamination in the Lynnhaven River. hey are tasked with making sure that no one is consuming shellfish from waters where the bacteria levels may be too high. Because shellfish, like oysters, are filter feeders, the standard is really rigorous. Annually, they average the data and distribute maps showing what areas of the river are open and closed based on this bacteria data.

As you know, last year, 29% of the Lynnhaven River, 1,462 acres, were opened, up some areas for the first time since 1930. This was an amazing accomplishment, but, as exciting as it was, much of the success was attributed to our drought conditions. That made this year the real test.



PHOTO BY: G. MICHAEL BROWN

This fall, not only did we hold onto the acres that were opened last year, we increased the total acreage by 112 additional acres to reach a total of 1,574 acres or 31% of the river. This is clear evidence that the things we are doing – cleaning up after our pets, eliminating septic tanks and pumping out all boats – is making a difference.

Thank you for your efforts that have contributed to this success!

World Water Monitory Day

With a grant from the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission’s HR3 Program, LRNow coordinated data collection at 36 different sites for World Water Monitoring Day. Kits and information folders were distributed to teachers, garden clubs, citizens, First Landing State Park, the Virginia Aquarium and Lynnhaven Marine.



PHOTO: FPO

The deadline to submit data was December 18th. Our data is combined with data from sites around the world and is available at www.worldwatermonitoringday.org.

Feedback about the program from teachers and organizations has been very positive. Participants expressed that the program has helped them better understand their local waterways and they are more aware of the importance of good water quality.

