

NEW PEARLS IN VIRGINIA BEACH

This year, Lynnhaven River NOW is excited to introduce three new Pearl Schools—College Park Elementary School, Brandon Middle School and Tallwood High School. Each school worked hard to meet the requirements and provide their students with exceptional opportunities to become environmental stewards.

College Park Elementary School is a brand new school built to amazing green building standards that inspire teachers and students alike. Students are researching native plants to supplement the installed rain gardens. Early Discovery students sowed the seeds for the school's butterfly garden and each grade level participated in growing a salad garden in their square foot gardens.

This year, Brandon Middle School embraced a Green outlook and thought about stewardship every step of the way. BMS's National Junior Honor Society has officially adopted the area around the school to maintain through the City of Virginia Beach's Adopt-a-Spot program which they help keep clean with the BMS EnviroClub. These same students, with support from the custodial staff and TFC Recycling, did a huge trash audit on one year's worth of waste from the school. Students sorted the recyclable and compostable debris and weighed the amount of improperly disposed of trash. Classes were able to tour the results and data was compiled for future analysis and projects. Other activities at Brandon included a Green Dance and a Green Talent Show.

Tallwood High School and the Global Studies & World Languages Program at Tallwood High School have a unique opportunity to steer students towards a greater understanding of environmental issues. Several academy seniors at Tallwood High School took the opportunity to do their senior projects on topics that earned their school points toward the Pearl Award. Alea Duffie organized a Clean the Bay Day event and helped out LRNow at our April cleanup, too. Sally Pryor conducted her senior project research on the health of the local ecosystem and how that relates to watermen's livelihood. Rachael Njuki researched E-Waster and E-cycling. Austin Sutton focused on alternative energy options and aquatic systems with a focus on sea turtles. Besides these brilliant senior projects, the school supported battery, plastic bottle cap and cell phone recycling. Oyster gardening, vegetable and herb gardening provided a variety of opportunities for students. And, finally, an overall school beautification project was spearheaded by the SCA.

The new 2011-2012 Pearl Schools have done a great job at embracing environmental stewardship with their students. Lynnhaven River NOW is excited to welcome you as a Pearl School!!

THIS YEAR'S PEARL AWARD-WINNING SCHOOLS 2011 - 2012

Lynnhaven River NOW is honored to recognize 44 schools in Virginia Beach for their Excellence in Environmental Education. Schools denoted with * were recognized with a 5-year award this year; **schools in bold denotes the first year award winners.**

Arrowhead Elementary School

Baylake Pines Private School

Bayside Elementary School

Brandon Middle School

College Park Elementary School

Cape Henry Collegiate School

Christopher Farms Elementary School

W. T. Cooke Elementary School

Corporate Landing Elementary School

Corporate Landing Middle School

Frank W. Cox High School

Creeds Elementary School

John B. Dey Elementary School

First Colonial High School

Glenwood Elementary School*

Great Neck Middle School

Hermitage Elementary School

Kemps Landing Magnet School*

King's Grant Elementary School

Kingston Elementary School*

Landstown High School

Lynnhaven Middle School

Malibu Elementary School

New Castle Elementary School

Ocean Lakes High School

Old Donation Center

Pembroke Elementary School

Pembroke Meadows Elementary School

Plaza Middle School

Princess Anne Middle School

Providence Elementary School

Red Mill Elementary School*

Renaissance Academy

Salem Elementary School

Seatack Elementary School

Shelton Park Elementary School

Tallwood High School

Thalia Elementary School*

Thoroughgood Elementary School

Three Oaks Elementary School

Trantwood Elementary School

Virginia Beach Friends School

Virginia Beach Middle School

Windsor Woods Elementary School

TEACHERS ON THE LYNNHAVEN

An early morning in August found local teachers gathering at the beach at 64th Street eyeing the brightly colored kayaks lined up by Wild River Outfitters (WRO). Helen Kuhns and Laurie Sorabella of Lynnhaven River NOW (LRNow) and Oyster Reef Keepers of Virginia (ORKV) were excited to get the Estuarine Habitat Paddle started. The weather was overcast and the water calm. The lower temperatures had given the group a perfect day for paddling.

Lynnhaven River NOW in partnership with Wild River Outfitters and Oyster Reef Keepers of Virginia received a grant from Columbia and Grassroots Outdoor Alliance focused on getting people on the water. Teachers were invited to participate based on their involvement in the Pearl Schools program, Growing Wetlands in the Classroom and Oyster Gardening.

Teachers paddled to the oyster reef at the 64th Street boat ramp to explore the reef structure and oyster settlement on the reef. The ecology of the reef revealed small crabs, fish and an abundance of marine life. Paddling from the reef, the teachers were able to raft over the oyster grounds of the Lynnhaven Oyster Company and get a brief introduction to our local oyster aquaculture industry. The last stop took teachers to an open beach along the undeveloped First Landing State Park shoreline. Wetland studies and seine netting activities illustrated the



importance of the Lynnhaven's wetland edges by yielding an immense diversity and number of small fishes, crabs and jellies.

Excited to share this opportunity with our hard working teachers, the LRNow, ORKV and WRO staff were sorry to see the morning end. LRNow looks forward to finding more opportunities to get people on the water. As WRO founder Lillie Gilbert, with thanks to Norman MacLean, would say "Everything is connected and a river runs through it." Spending a morning on the Lynnhaven River provides a sense of connection that should be experienced by all.

LOCAL TEACHER RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Eighteen U.S. teachers received a Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators and one of those 18 is a Virginia Beach teacher and one of our Pearl Teachers – our very own Bob Carroll. The White House Council on Environmental Quality in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sponsors this prestigious award which recognizes outstanding K-12 teachers and their local educational agencies

across the United States for excellence in integrating environmental education into their lessons and connecting students with their communities and the natural world.

"To earn this award, each educator demonstrated teaching skills and innovative use of environmental education that connected students with the world around them in ways

that will strengthen their education for years to come," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. "Their lessons have put creativity and innovation, community engagement and leadership into practice, teaching students about civic responsibility and environmental stewardship. We are fortunate to have such educators in our schools today."

Bob Carroll was recognized for his work with oyster restoration; his participation in the Wetlands in the Classroom program; his multiple classroom aquaria and nutrient cycling curriculum that accompany them; and his innovative cafeteria composting project that teaches students about waste reduction, decomposition, and organic nutrient breakdown. In addition, his tree nursery, rain

water catchment system and organic garden that donates produce to a homeless shelter were applauded.

It is a huge credit to Bob Carroll and to the support he receives from the Virginia Beach City Public Schools and LRNow that he was selected as one of only 18 teachers from across the country who won!

Congratulations and a big thank you to Bob Carroll for his great work with our Virginia Beach students.

PEARL SCHOOL 101

FALL WORKSHOP FOR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Pearl School Planning 101
Monday, October 29th, 6:30-8:30 pm

Our schools are doing amazing things for our students. Lynnhaven River NOW wants to recognize you and your school for all of the environmental awareness you are bringing to your students. Come learn the basics about being recognized as a Lynnhaven River NOW Pearl School. Becoming a Pearl School is easier than you think. Listen to what other schools have done to make it happen. Bring your questions and uncertainties about the program and let LRNow help you become or continue to be a Pearl School.

2012-2013 Pearl School materials and will be available at the program. Register by contacting Kris@lrnow.org or calling 757-962-5398.

