



# 2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT



LRNow.org

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### Administrative Assistant and SOS Program

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### SOS Technician

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### Event Coordinator

Terri Gorman



## DEAR MEMBERS,

Thank you for your interest in Lynnhaven River NOW and your support of our shared work. As we review 2016 and prepare to begin our 15th anniversary year, we have much to celebrate and much work left to do.

Taking care of our environment is not a luxury or an option. It is the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we eat. It is where we go for serenity and for recreation. And restoring and protecting our natural resources is intricately tied to our economic well-being as well.

Taking care of our environment is everyone's responsibility. To succeed, we need citizens who are knowledgeable and motivated to be good stewards — the kinds of citizens who participate in our Pearl Home programs. Citizens who come to workshops to learn more, and who are reducing turf, planting natives, and installing rain barrels. The kinds of citizens who are building living shorelines and oyster reefs, and volunteering for our monthly cleanups. The number of these committed water stewards continues to grow.

We need businesses and institutions that want to do the right thing and be part of the solution. This is exactly what our Pearl Faith Communities are doing and what we know our new Pearl Businesses will be. And LRNow is here to educate, guide, assist and motivate as we all learn and move forward to a more sustainable future.

And most importantly, we need to be developing the environment stewards on whom we will depend in the future. In 2016, LRNow staff and volunteers worked with our 78 Pearl Schools in Virginia Beach training teachers to provide excellent environmental education in our schools and providing meaningful outdoor activities for students. These students embody an environmental ethic that is inspiring and gives us all hope.

Over the past 14 years, LRNow and our many community partners working cooperatively have accomplished things that no one thought were possible. But our work is not over. Many important benchmarks have not been met and hard-won gains can be lost very quickly if we become complacent. I hope you will review our 2016 State of the River Report on pages 12 through 15.

Significant challenges lie ahead of us too as we deal with increased precipitation, more flooding, and sea level rise.



We need everyone to understand these issues and be a part of the solution.

Our members are the key to our success and our hope for the future. We appreciate all that you are doing. Together we are making a difference.

Taking care of our environment is everyone's responsibility and we at LRNow are eager to continue to move forward with you to make Virginia Beach the cleanest, greenest city on the East Coast.

Please enjoy our 2016-2017 Annual Report and know all that we have accomplished is because of you.

Sincerely,



**Karen Forget**  
*Executive Director*

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

—Margaret Mead

## 2016 VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION AWARDS



### Overall Volunteer of the Year

Barbara Imrich

### Oyster Restoration Volunteer of the Year

Larry Frauen

### Shorelines Committee Volunteer of the Year

Kevin DuBois

### Pearl Home Volunteer of the Year

Jackson Martingayle

### Outreach Committee Volunteer of the Year

Penny Moulis

### Office Assistant Volunteer of the Year

Carol Chewning

### Pearl Schools Volunteer of the Year

Maury Joy

### Public Policy Committee Volunteer of the Year

Ann Wright

### Pearl Faith Communities Volunteer of the Year

Anne Zobel and the Youth Group at  
All Saints Episcopal Church

### Stewardship and Access Committee Volunteer of the Year

Rich Boylan

**Special Award** to Steve Couri for all  
of his expert help with the  
Monthly Bird Walks

Beautiful cover photo provided by  
Chuck Guthrie

**THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR  
VOLUNTEERS WHO HELPED US IN A  
MILLION WAYS IN 2016.**

**WE COULD NOT DO THIS  
WITHOUT YOU!**







## WHY WE SUPPORT LRNOW

By Robert and Laney Brown

For years Laney and I focused our environmental support on sending money to regional, national and international organizations which we thought at the time were doing the most good. It turned out what was actually happening was that our donations were being reflected back to us in an avalanche of expensive, redundant fundraising mailings that increasingly clogged our recycle bin. We decided to make some changes. We decided to act locally and directly.

For a brief time I had done some volunteer work at the Marine Science Museum and had enjoyed that experience, but my erratic schedule made for a difficult fit there. Laney and I searched around for opportunities. We looked into the activities of LRNow which we had seen mentioned in Mary Reid Barrow's gold standard "Coastal Journal" column in the *Beacon*. I contacted Karen Forget by email with the idea of having Beach Garden Park added to LRNow's periodic river cleanup operations. Karen

**"To us these activities are among the higher callings of citizenship."**

immediately put me in touch with Stewardship & Access Committee leader Helen Kuhns and, following a little

planning, a few weeks later 30 or so people turned up at the park on a bright Saturday morning to clean it up. There were all ages and types of people

and some even brought canoes and kayaks to work in the marsh. The enthusiasm was amazing. We were hooked. This was the direct action we had sought and it included mud — what could be better?

One of the things we have come to realize is that volunteers willingly, enthusiastically and cheerfully undertake things for a meaningful cause that you could not otherwise pay them to do. Over the years of our association with the Stewardship and Access Committee we have worked with hundreds of diverse and wonderful people who have turned up and helped us remove many tons of debris from the Lynnhaven watershed. We have hauled out everything from mattresses and water heaters down to zillions of cigarette filters. To us these activities are among the higher callings of citizenship. But, in turn, we have been rewarded by our rich experiences in the field and by the commitment and warm friendship of our colleagues who also serve as volunteers on the committee. What we do makes a difference in our community and also, I think, amplifies and strengthens our relationship to it. LRNow turned out to be exactly the service we had in mind.



# EDUCATION PROGRAMS

“Must we always teach our children with books? Let them look at the stars and the mountains above. Let them look at the waters and the trees and flowers on Earth. Then they will begin to think, and to think is the beginning of a real education.”

– David Polis



**What do butterflies, turtles and quilts have in common? They are all part of new educational programs at Lynnhaven River Now that were launched in 2016 in partnership with Virginia Beach schools and our wonderful volunteers.**

## SCIENCE PRESCHOOL ACTIVITY TIME (SPAT)

Watching a butterfly emerge from its chrysalis, hunting four-leaf clovers, digging in the sand like a diamondback terrapin and seeing a screech owl up close were all highlights of SPAT (Science Preschool Adventure Time). This brand new program allows 3-5 year olds to bring their favorite adult out to Pleasure House Point and the Brock Environmental Center for an hour and a half of crafts, stories, music, outdoor adventure and sometimes a chance to see an animal ambassador. These wonderful programs are designed and taught by current and retired teachers and librarians. SPAT not only teaches about a specific piece of the ecological story at Pleasure House Point, but also gives the adults ideas and activities that they can do outdoors to more fully interact with nature with their special young person. The program runs the first week in June and again the first week in August, with different topics each day of the week. Young people and their special adults leave the classes with not only new knowledge about a special plant or animal, but also equipment like magnifying glasses, rearing cages and plant viewers to help them continue the learning in their own special piece of nature.



## BUCKET PROGRAM

Take the knowledge and imagination of dedicated volunteers, add to that real scientific equipment packaged in re-purposed red buckets, then add the curiosity of students and what you have is the new BUCKET Program. These “Bundled Curriculum Kits for Environmental Teaching” come with everything teachers need to give their students a real-world, authentic, place-based educational experience at Pleasure House Point.

Third- to fifth- grade students can come out and try their hand at being terrapin researchers. Through hands-on activities and data collection, they help to answer questions like, “Is this good habitat and nesting place for diamondback terrapins?” “Where would we most likely find nests?” and “What dangers do these creatures face and how can we help them?”



Older students can learn about beach wrack, erosion and sea level rise in the Shorelines Investigation BUCKET. Water quality testing as well as collection of critters are both important parts in understanding the complex interrelationships at Pleasure House Point. Through the use of Google Earth maps of the area, they learn the relationship between land use and water quality and how they play an important role in making sure the river is healthy.

To take advantage of this free program, teachers are asked to attend a half-day workshop to become familiar and comfortable with the activities in each of the buckets.



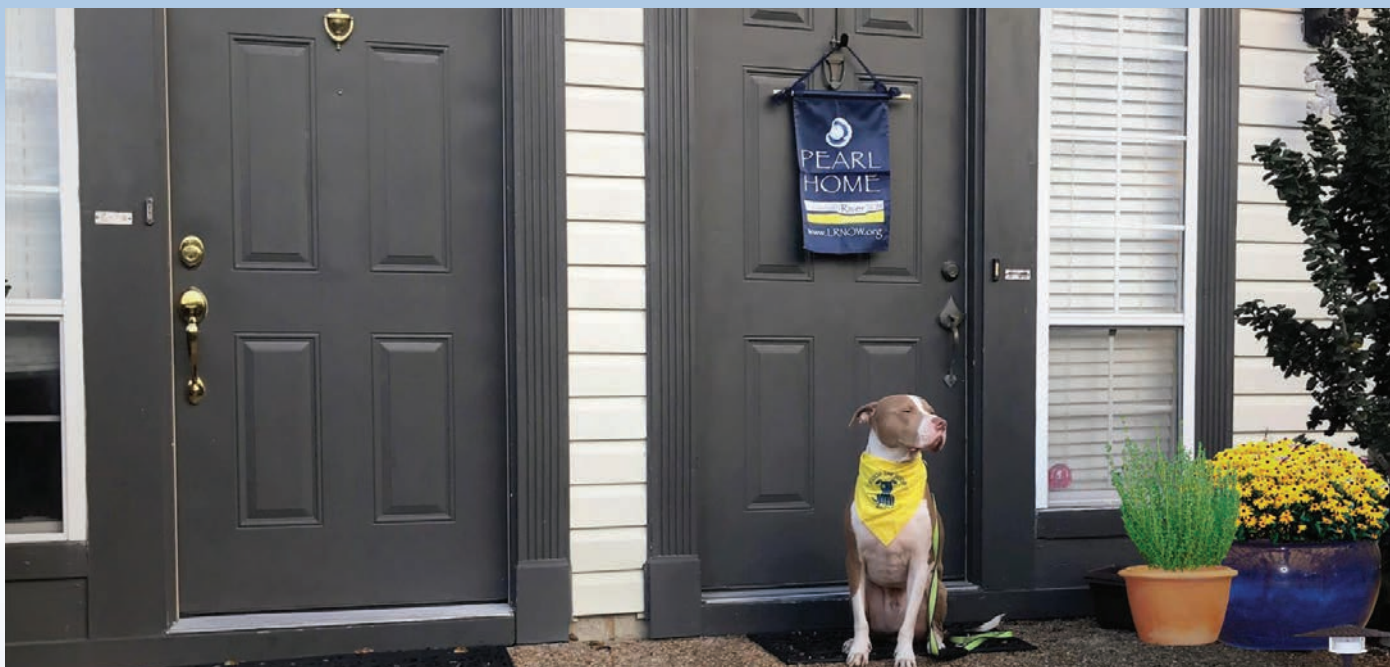
## ANNIVERSARY QUILT PROJECT

Lynnhaven River NOW is celebrating its 15th Anniversary in 2017. What better way to celebrate than to enlist children’s voices and artistic talents to express how they feel about their local watershed through an album quilt with the theme “Watersheds and Me.” Each school was invited to send no more than three quilt squares using this theme as their inspiration. Along with the quilt square, each student sent a written piece that explained the design they chose or expressed their feelings about the water. We received 120 quilt squares from pre-k students to high school students, enough to create not one, but two wonderful quilts! Some squares and written pieces were from the same person, while others were collaborations. Each tells a wonderful story of what the Lynnhaven River and all the other bodies of water in Virginia Beach mean to these students. Some talk about the beauty of the water and the marshlands, some highlight a particular plant or animal, and others depict the problems the rivers face from human interaction. All of them speak of a deep and loving bond between the students and the natural world and their wish to keep it healthy. Now that is something to celebrate.



**Note: The quilts will be on exhibit throughout 2017 at all major LRNow events.**





## PEARL HOMES:

### Working Towards a More Sustainable City

Several very exciting new programs set the tone for a busy and creative year. The Summer Adventure Series was a great success with many opportunities for Virginia Beach residents to get out in nature, get active, and maybe even get a little wet! Activities included monthly Bird Walks, an Eco Movie Night and a Summer Solstice Yoga Fest, and culminated with a Paddle Fest and Cookout. Paddlers had a great time learning about the rich history of our river, and afterwards enjoyed eating with friends along the banks of the beautiful Lynnhaven.



Also new and nearing full launch for 2017 is an innovative program for our Pearl Homes. RiverWise is a free and convenient way for current Pearl Homes to take the next step in their commitment to conservation landscaping. With this helpful program, homeowners may set up an appointment for an on-site property assessment. Afterwards, a report is provided that summarizes our observations and explains the recommendations for their property. Suggestions for different stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) and site designs will reduce stormwater runoff and pollution. Green infrastructure enhances the natural environment to manage rainwater where it falls, allowing water to soak into the ground, evaporate or collect in storage units. This will have significant environmental, social and economic benefits for the entire city and for preserving our river.

With our renewed agreement with the city, we now have a target goal of 600 new Pearl Homes by June 2017, so be sure you get your flag now. We even have new Pearl Home applications designed specifically for apartments, condos and townhomes. Due to popular request, specialty workshops will be offered in the new year including how to compost and install rain barrels.

# NEW PEARL HOMES

JANUARY- DECEMBER 2016

Thank you for joining our Pearl Home program. During 2016, all of these families joined the hundreds of other Pearl Homes in our program bringing our total number of Pearl Homes to 2,650. All of these people have committed to practices in their home that are protecting our rivers, lakes and beaches. They have also committed to continuing to educate themselves, learning more about what they can do in their homes and yards to be good stewards. We appreciate all you are doing.

## **Aragona**

Sarah Kelley

## **Aeries by the Bay**

Damon & Beth Osborne

## **Alanton**

Steve & Sally Herbert  
Kathleen Wakefield

## **Aragona Village**

Joe Milo

## **Bay Colony**

Patricia Baron  
Reilly Warlock  
Tracy Horan  
Jenny Dearmond  
Beth Mumfold

## **Bay Island**

Lee Belote

## **Baycliff**

Amy  
Elise Neubeck

## **Bayville Park**

Avery Emerson

## **Bellamy & Bellamy Plantation**

Avery Emerson  
Christina Fiedor  
Declan Smallwood

## **Bellamy Woods**

Tiffany Liu  
Valerie Frederick

## **Birchwood Gardens**

Justine & Woody Woodward  
Megan Starks

## **Brigadoon**

Kayla Brantly

## **Broad Bay**

Jim Sullivan  
Buyrn Farms  
Chrisie Baggerly

## **Camelot Chesapeake**

Kat Kaczka

## **Cape Henry Shores**

Lisa Remsing  
Karen Perkins  
Dianne Norwood

## **Cape Story by the Sea**

Elaine Weinbrecht  
Steven Fisher  
Ruth Harris

## **Carol Anne Farms**

Nathan B. Hall

## **Carriage Hill**

Meredith Pollard

## **Cavalier Shores**

Elizabeth Harrison  
Lesley & Ellye Carmody

## **Chancellors Walk**

Jessica Branham

## **Charleston Lakes**

Rick Brown  
Robert Dexter

## **Chelsea**

Kristen Yeats

## **Chesopeian Colony**

BJ McIntyre  
Lori Heyman  
Pat Wiersh  
Carol Taylor  
Sally Baker  
Frank & Gloria Gurdziel

## **Chesapeake Beach**

Bruce W. Husselbee  
Came Best Jones  
Pat Okerlund

## **Church Point**

Madison Longwater  
Jean Morris  
Adam Longwater

## **Courthouse Estates**

Steve Stedman  
Heather Brooks  
Tracy Mary  
Tami Dicken

## **Croatan**

John & Anne Mannarino

## **Crystal Point**

Jasmine LeClaire

## **Cypress Point**

Ben Miller  
Shelley & Jeff Loeb  
William Filbert

## **Eagle Nest**

Cal & Lynne Schone

## **Everglades**

Eric Portelli

## **Fairfield Forest**

Harper Schindler  
Bobbi Gribble

## **Fairfield**

Lincoln Mueller  
Cindy Blankenship

## **Fort Story**

Kasey Sronek

## **Gardenwood Park**

Kristi Rines

## **Grace Town**

Mary Beth R.

## **Great Neck Meadows**

Sherri Stephenson  
Mr. & Mrs. William M. Cryan  
Sandra Tuttle

## **Green Run**

Michelle Lawrence  
Tia Hayes

## **Harbor Point**

John Barney

## **Haygood Point**

Deirdre Conklin  
Judy Kuhns  
Joseph Rosenfarb

## **Highgate Greens**

JoAnn Abbott

## **Hillcrest Farm**

Liz Pascual  
Barbara Swilley

## **Hilltop**

Chelsea Demille

## **Holland Pines**

Cathy Andrews

## **Hunt Club Forest**

Christina Ramos Smith

## **Indian Lakes**

Robyn Hilliard  
Jessica Abbott

## **JC Hudgins Shores**

Maureen M. Loflin

## **Kempsville**

Eric Losescher

## **Kempsville Lake**

Lauren Truslow  
Barb Francisco  
Patty Worthy

**Kings Grant**

Michael Joseph Williams  
Carol Roll  
Courtney Porter  
Shelley & Dave Christenson  
Helene Silverman  
Yasemin Peynircioglu  
Becki Crawford

**Lake Christopher**

Isabella Isask

**Lake Shores**

Pamela Carrio  
John Skirven  
Kellie Zach  
Wesley & Katy  
Pamela Painter

**Lake Smith Terrace**

Jim Dunham  
Carol Gurioli  
Susan Barnes  
Mike & Paula Graham  
Julian Breitwieser

**Lake Trant**

Amy Walton

**Lakewood**

Cathi Laderberg

**Landstown Meadows**

Carol Sturdevant

**Larkspur**

Stephanie Wyman  
Jody Korman  
Kathryn & Tom Callahan  
Margaret Duffey  
Doris Wilgus  
Fran & Larry Dumville  
Amanda Tatus

**Laurel Cove**

Ginny Fox  
Linkhorn Point  
Jim Allen  
Bert & Betsy Reese

**Linlier**

Matthew Weinstein

**Little Neck**

Sue Nell Dufort  
Wallace Harrison  
Vaughn Family  
Lindberger Family  
Jim Kerr  
Lynne Murrell  
Thomas Skidmore

**Lynnhaven Colony**

Ellen Ruddock  
Johnson Family

**Lynnwood**

Jamie Bondurant

**Machipongo**

Melody Cooper

**Malibu**

Hunter Douglas  
Jennifer Prosser  
Kathryn Gunter  
Chase Klein  
Wendy Stevenson  
Julie Delgadillo  
Mary Ellen Bostjancic  
Heather Ramsey  
Christian Fenley  
Dias Family  
Sharon Grimstead  
Brandy Van Vorous  
Haley Hoyt  
Elizabeth Gonzalez  
Maeli Rawls  
Billie Horak  
Jennifer Smith  
Madelyn Gualdoni  
Mariah Hayslett  
Dias Family  
Anna Snyder  
Ryder Cooley

**Marsh View**

Sandra Nickenig

**Middle Plantation**

Laura Scheib

**Norfolk**

Cindy Florence  
Debbie Gravel  
Trey Campbell

**North Central**

Howard & Terry Dorfman

**North End**

Terri Gorman  
Donna Boyle  
Deanne Dabbs  
Boyd & Kellie Scarborough  
John Koehler  
Tom Ammons  
Suzanne Sofield  
Pam Pruden  
Colleen Ferros

**Ocean Lakes**

Allison Dickens  
Andrew Ryder & Erick Locher

**Ocean Park**

Armond Reid  
Victoria Cannizzo  
Carol Andolina  
Lyn Lantz

**Old Donation Manor**

Erling & Linda Tonnesen

**Princess Anne Hills**

Lori Dabul  
Madison Melissa Boone

**Park Place at Town Square**

Bill Dullaghan

**Pecan Gardens**

Julie Fink Keane

**Pembroke Manor**

Camm Boyd

**Pine Ridge**

Melissa Lord

**Plaza**

Eric Holden

**Point O' Woods**

Good Family

**Port Royal**

Seynabou Diop

**Quail Point Cove**

Lon Scofield

**Red Mill**

Ellie Cesario  
Deborah Cunningham

**River Oaks**

Stephanie Coffee  
Steve McCurdy

**Riverton**

McGovern Family

**Robin Hood Forest**

Amy Kelly

**Salem Lakes/Salem Woods**

Serenity Nichols  
Daniel Cioppa  
Ashley Fox  
Stephanie Swider  
Lallah Biedenbender  
Toni Rzepnicki  
Soledad Salinas

**Sandbridge**

Melissa Becerra

**Sandpiper Housing**

Jessica Hoffman

**Scarborough**

Jerry Fox

**Shadowlawn**

Jason Tomlin  
Andrea Tomlin  
Emily Archer

**South Shore Estate**

Debbie Scavone  
Barbara Ricks  
Manuel Noronha

**Southern Woods**

Casey Carpenter

**South Gate**

Terri McCallister

**Suffolk**

Toni Anderson  
Jennifer Surjana

**Talbot Park**

Anne Richardson

**Thalia**

Joseph J. Miller  
Scott Hetman  
Sandra Jacobs  
Shelley Cooper

**The Arbors at Cape Henry**

Abbey Pachter

**The Lakes**

Donna Vitovich

**The Landings**

Katie Oakley

**The Reserve**

RK Renukunta

**Thoroughgood**

Chris & Lane Mueller  
Elizabeth Moore  
Marvin Barnes  
Mary Robbins  
Liz Malnati

**Thoroughgood Colony**

Nancy Cantrell  
Carol Shrader





**Timberlake**  
Hope Prawon

**Trantwood**  
Arthur R. Lane

**Virginia Wesleyan College**  
Zachary Landis

**Villages of Great Neck**  
Alice Snyder

**Washington Heights**  
Ali McNaught

**Wellington Woods**  
Stephen Cupka

**Windsor Oaks West**  
Dana St. John  
Susan Reiser

**Windsor Woods**  
Norene Skiles

Chris Hakim  
Jansen & Heather McEntee

**Wishart Cove**  
Donald Bostic

**Wolfsnare Plantation**  
Jessie Tignor  
Amanda Justus

**Woodland Park Condo**  
Michael Teach

**Wynd Crest**  
Yaeko Bishop

**No Neighborhood Listed**  
Gabriela Valsquex  
Regina & Kelly O'Clair  
Jeff Sykes  
Dena Strong  
Tammy Cory  
Kathleen Heck  
Jacob & Sarah Anderson

Kathy Jeffries  
Mary Hood  
George Horvatts  
Chantal Dejou  
Destiny Dover  
Amber Inwood  
Jody Winter  
Marjorie Pedrick  
James Nicholson  
Stephanie Sanders  
Leonor Gubbart  
Jeffrey Joe  
Cameron Somers  
LaFrancis Francis  
Kathy Payne  
Melody Cooper  
Kelly B. Jennings  
Theresa Ratliff  
Beau Timmons  
Jennifer Scott Price  
Alison Vos  
Elizabeth Gonzalez  
Holie Kephart  
Destiny Marinchich  
Debra Infante  
Charleton McGraw



PEARL  
HOME

LYNNHAVEN River NOW

*Restoring a legend.*

[www.LRNOW.org](http://www.LRNOW.org)

Faith Wishaw  
Linda Hope  
David Lee  
Jane Roberts  
Smruti Kinariwala  
Cathy Marietta  
Maggie Hamby  
Marie Were  
Joshua Kelly  
Jordan Bodsford



## Program Partners

Two heads are better than one. So how much can be accomplished when 45 or 50 heads come together? Our program partners are critical to everything we undertake at LRNow and are the reason for our success. We hold four meetings every year that bring together representatives from all the groups listed here to learn more about our Virginia Beach sustainability issues and explore areas where we can work together for the betterment of our community. If your organization would like to join the dialogue and become a part of our Program Partners Committee, please contact Karen Forget, karen@LRNow.org. The four annual meetings are held at the Brock Environmental Center and are open to anyone who is interested in attending.

**Friends of Live Oaks**  
**Hourigan Construction**  
**Audubon Society**  
**City of Virginia Beach**  
**HRPDC Go Green**  
**Eastern Shore Chapel**  
**Chesapeake Bay Foundation**  
**Virginia Beach Restaurant Association**  
**Lynnhaven Marine**  
**Resort Advisory Commission**  
**Buy Fresh Buy Local Hampton Roads**  
**Bayfront Advisory Commission**  
**Council of Garden Clubs**  
**Broad Bay Island Community**  
**Ocean Park Community**  
**Shore Drive Community Coalition**  
**Virginia Beach Council of Civic Organizations**  
**Virginia Aquarium**  
**Old Dominion University, Coastal Resilience Research**  
**Garden Club of Virginia**  
**Virginia Beach Garden Club**  
**Princess Anne Garden Club**  
**Virginia Beach City Public Schools**  
**Central Business District Association**



## ADVOCACY

### Protecting Our Ocean

If we care about water quality and want to be good stewards, our responsibilities do not end at the bridge. Last year, LRNow worked on two issues related to the health of our Atlantic Ocean waters.

Preventing the sale of leases off our coast to oil and gas drilling is so important for healthy oceans and for the economic vitality of our resort. We worked with many other Virginia Beach groups to convince the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to halt the proposed sale of leases off our coast. Our City Council rescinded their support for off-shore drilling after they were briefed on the threats it posed to us in Virginia Beach, the possibility it would bring no new jobs or economic benefits to our community and the detrimental impacts experienced by other coastal communities, primarily in the Gulf, where drilling is present.

We were very pleased that the Obama administration heard our collective voices and stopped the sale of the Atlantic leases. It was a time of celebration. But the job was not done. Seismic testing permits were a separate issue that had to be tackled. Seismic testing has catastrophic impacts on marine life, especially marine mammals like our dolphin and migrating whales. We were pleased again when the Obama Administration halted the issuing of permits for seismic testing in the Atlantic.

During this past year, we also learned a lot about a special area called the Norfolk Canyon lying along the outer edge of the continental shelf off of the coast of Virginia. This is an area of incredible marine life. Large corals are present here that are not found in any other areas this far north, and it is the home to an amazing diversity of life that we are just beginning to explore.

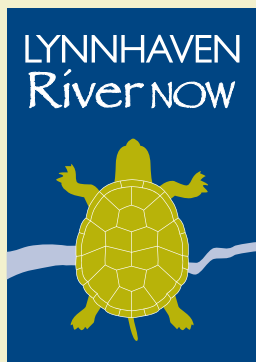
The Virginia Aquarium led the effort to protect this fragile area. Though the process did not follow the path that we predicted, the Obama Administration came through for us again in providing sanctuary status for the Norfolk Canyon and 29 other fragile and immensely important canyons along the eastern edge of the Atlantic continental shelf.

All in all, it was a good year for our ocean!

#### Clean Water is Good For Everyone



# LYNNHAVEN RIVER NOW PRESENTS THE 2016 State of the River Report



As we begin our 15th year, we are both looking back at our accomplishments and looking forward at the new challenges that lie ahead.

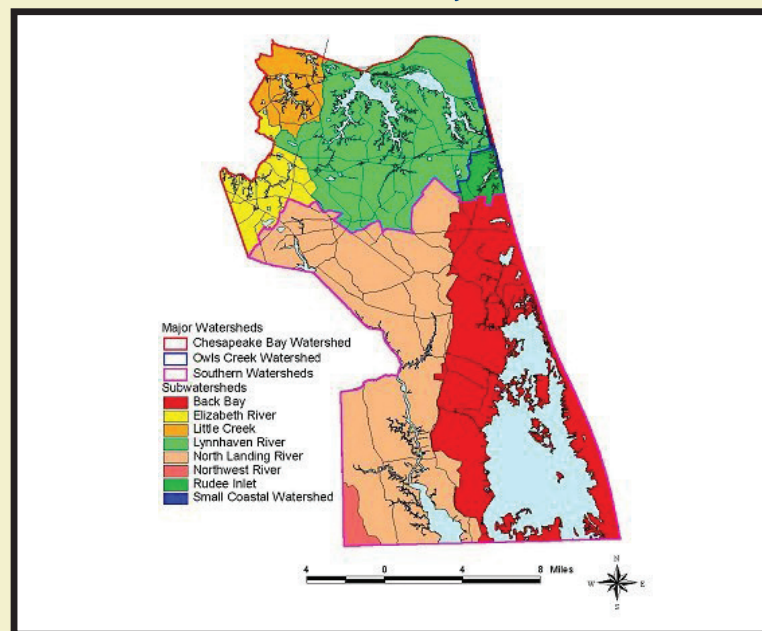
LRNow has been encouraged from the beginning by the support of our Virginia Beach community. During the 15 years of our work, you have supported us, learned with us, gotten involved, and done the work

that needed to be done. And you remain our greatest source of hope for the future.

We continue to make gains in shoreline management. More property owners are understanding the value of a living shoreline to protect their property from erosion, filter pollutants from their property's runoff, and provide habitat that is valuable and important to the health and vitality of the river ecosystem.

Building an acre and a half of oyster reef is a large and complex project. You need to secure the funding to do the project; obtain an area that will provide the maximum benefits; design the project; work with the state agencies to get the necessary permissions; do surveys of the river bottom; identify the materials needed; find a staging area for the materials; and contract with a company to do the actual construction. This many-stepped process is nearing completion, and we will be building an acre and a half of sanctuary oyster reef midway up the Eastern Branch of the Lynnhaven this spring. This is a very exciting project that will bring the multiple benefits of an increased native oyster population to the Eastern Branch of the Lynnhaven River. Over the next few years, we will be monitoring this reef and will bring you information about its health and how well oysters are settling on it.

Sanctuary reefs are vital to the restoration of our native oyster population. The sanctuary reefs in Linkhorn and Broad Bays and in the Inlet have helped to bring back our oysters, the oysters that you see naturally occurring in larger numbers all the time in many areas of the river. But there is also a place for oysters grown for harvest. These oysters are removing excess nutrients from the water and removing sediments that cloud the water during their growing time, then they are harvested for us to enjoy. We have worked hard with oyster growers, boaters, homeowners and others during the past year to find a balance that allows us all to enjoy the river and protect its health. There is still much work to do in this area, but we are talking and thinking about ways to find the balance that will work for everyone.



We have also worked hard during this past year to maintain many of our successful community education and outreach programs. Different funding processes threatened our core programs—Pearl Homes, Pearl Schools, and Pearl Faith Communities that have given us the opportunity to educate, encourage and reward those who are adopting new practices, doing good work on their own property and making a difference. Our new funding requires a one-to-one match, so we need your contributions to match our grant funding and maintain these important programs.

Our overall grade for the river this year is a B-. With some gains and some losses, our overall assessment is improving slowly. We are not discouraged by this. Maintaining the progress we have made is hard and important work. We can easily slip backwards without vigilance.

Hurricane Matthew caused a large sewage spill in Linkhorn Bay, the largest we have experienced in a long time. The recovery time of the river was shorter than anyone expected which speaks to the resilience of a healthier ecosystem.

But Hurricane Matthew also brought devastating flooding to many parts of our city, demonstrating to us again that we must be planning for climate change, different precipitation patterns, and increased flooding. This is our biggest future challenge and it is critical that we find ways to control flooding, which is also beneficial to our water quality. That must be a guiding principle of all of our work going forward.



Stormwater runoff is the main vector that brings **POLLUTION** to the Lynnhaven River. During rain events, pollutants are washed from the watershed and carried by rainwater into storm drains that dump directly into the river.

## BACTERIA

**B**

Bacteria testing is done regularly by the Virginia Department of Health, Shellfish Sanitation Division. In 2016, we gained an additional 197 acres that meet this rigorous requirement. This is a significant improvement in areas of the river that have been closed for a long time. It indicates that we continue to move in the right direction and is good news to all of us. 91% of the river continues to meet the swimmable/fishable standard.

***What you can do to help: always scoop the poop, even in your own yard; do not feed wildlife including ducks, geese and seagulls; regularly pump out your boat's holding tank; if you have a septic tank, have it maintained regularly.***

## DISSOLVED OXYGEN

**D**

The Virginia 303(D) list of impaired waterways lists 7.9 square miles of the Lynnhaven as impaired for dissolved oxygen. This constitutes approximately 90% of the river. The keys to increasing dissolved oxygen are to reduce sediment runoff, allowing our underwater grasses to return, and to reduce the excess nutrients entering our river and stimulating the growth of algae that both reduces water clarity and increases aquatic bacteria that consume oxygen. All marine animals require dissolved oxygen to live and thrive. A new 303(D) list will be issued later in 2017, and we hope for some improvement.

***What you can do to help: reduce or eliminate your use of lawn fertilizer; reduce sediment runoff by keeping the gutter area in front of your home free of soil, sand, leaves, and pine needles; never put grass clippings or leaves down the storm drain.***

## NITROGEN & PHOSPHORUS

**D**

Nitrogen and phosphorus are organic substances found in fertilizer, pet waste, organic debris like grass clippings and leaves, and human waste. In the water, these nutrients lead to algal growth, clouding of the water, bacteria growth, and possible toxins from algal blooms. Water clarity in the winter months is improving. However, we need to be able to maintain that clarity throughout the summer months for submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) to thrive.

***What you can do to help: reduce or eliminate your use of lawn fertilizer; reduce the turf area of your yard and replace it with planted beds; plant a buffer garden between your lawn and the street or waterway; use native plants in your landscape; plant a tree; never put grass clippings or leaves into a storm drain.***

## WATER CLARITY

**D**

You may have noticed that these health indicators are all connected. That is how things work in a biological system. Nitrogen and phosphorus levels as well as the amount of sediment in the water directly affects water clarity, and water clarity directly affects the viability of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV). Water clarity in the summer months is still too low to support the growth of SAV.

***What you can do to help: reduce or eliminate lawn fertilizer; handle sediments from any land disturbance properly keeping them out of the storm drain and our waterways; keep the gutter area in front of your home free of sand, soil, leaves and pine needles; plant a tree.***

Water quality can be improved through **POLLUTION CONTROL** measures that treat or reduce the sources of sediments, nutrients and bacteria before these pollutants reach the river.

## CLEAN BOATING

**A-**

Six pump-out facilities are available on the Lynnhaven, including a self-service pump-out at the City Marina that is free and available 24 hours. However, because of needed repairs to the bulkhead, the City Marina pump-out was closed during 2016. The gallons of sewage pumped out are reported from HRSD and totaled 6,574 gallons in 2016. This is a 30% increase over 2015. The No Discharge Zone designation requires all boats to pump out their holding tanks.

***What you can do to help: pump out your boat's holding tank regularly; never fill your boat's tank more than ¾ full to avoid spills; use only marine-approved cleaning products on your boat; have your boat motor/engine maintained regularly; adhere to no wake zones.***

## STORMWATER TREATMENT

**C-**

The City completed the construction of the Mill Dam Creek Stream Restoration Project in 2016. The City is working to meet its requirements under its MS4 permit and to meet the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL and other TMDL programs. In addition, they continue to work toward implementation of the US Army Corps of Engineers Restoration Plan.

***What you can do to help: be careful about what runs off your property; install a rain barrel, a rain garden or a buffer garden between your property and the street or creek; keep your gutters clear of leaves, grass clippings and litter; keep pollutants like dog waste, fertilizer, cleaning products and pesticides out of our stormwater.***

## NEW FUNDS FOR WATER QUALITY

**A-**

During this year, the total amount of dollars allocated to water quality improvements for the City was approximately \$3,011,762. Of that amount, the total amount allocated to the Lynnhaven watershed was approximately \$309,068.

***What can you do to help: become informed about legislation affecting our watershed; attend the Candidates Forum to see where our elected officials stand; talk to your city council representatives and your state delegates and senators about your interest in clean water. They need to know that you support efforts to restore and protect all of our waterways.***

## SANITARY SEWERS

**B-**

We have a mixture of good and bad news related to our sanitary sewers in 2016. The good news is that work was begun to provide sanitary sewer service to the Green Hill Farms neighborhood. And work was begun on a large project in the Thalia Manor neighborhood. This multi-year, \$6.3 M project is for rehabilitation/repair/replacement of over 17,000 linear feet of gravity sewer with accompanying manholes, replacement of 338 lateral lines, and replacement of over 1,200 linear feet of sanitary sewer force main. We had fewer overflows from our city system (8,680 gallons) and most of the gallons (8,625 gallons) were recovered. The bad news is that during Hurricane Matthew a major HRSD pipe on Laskin Road broke and spilled over 2,000,000 gallons into Linkhorn Bay. The City spent almost \$5M in 2016 on sanitary sewer improvements.

***What you can do to help: make sure the lateral line that connects your house to the sanitary sewer pipe in the street is in good condition; if you have a septic tank, have it maintained regularly.***

Protection and restoration of beneficial natural **HABITAT** is critical for a healthy Lynnhaven River. These natural habitats improve water quality in the river by filtering out pollutants, and they provide homes for marine life.

## OYSTERS

A-

Oysters are critical to the health of the river, and providing suitable habitat for oyster settlement is critical to support the growth of our oyster population. During 2016, we constructed 881 linear feet of new oyster shoreline through work with numerous homeowners on successful oyster castle projects. The students continue to do a great job of raising oysters for our sanctuary reefs. 176,042 oysters were transplanted this year. 170,000 of those were raised by our students. Work was completed this year on planning for the Eastern Branch Reef, and construction will begin in a few months.

*What you can do to help: if you have a waterfront lot, evaluate it for an oyster castle project; talk with your teacher about helping them become oyster gardeners; consider joining our SPAT catcher program; buy sustainably harvested local Lynnhaven oysters.*

## WETLANDS

A-

Wetlands are essential to the health of our river and our marine animals. Many species of fish, crabs and our Diamondback Terrapin depend upon wetlands as essential habitat during at least part of their lifespan. Though slower than we may want, progress continues to be made in shoreline management. In 2016, LRNow staff did 38 consultation visits to waterfront property owners to advise them on good shoreline management. Two new living shoreline projects were permitted and 7,726 square feet of vegetated wetlands were planted.

*What you can do to help: if you live on the water, please consider a living shoreline as an alternative to a bulkhead or riprap; consider installing oyster castles on your shoreline; make sure you are not mowing a natural wetland area on your property; support a strong Wetlands Board and a strong Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act Board and good regulatory processes.*

Lynnhaven River NOW is raising environmental **AWARENESS** in the watershed because community education is one of the only strategies for reducing pollution from private residential and commercial properties in the Lynnhaven watershed.

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

A

Community education and outreach is central to our work. Through our Pearl Home and Pearl Faith Community programs and our other educational events, we reached almost 15,000 people last year. We offered the informative and popular workshop series, Landscaping for Life, in 2016 and will be repeating it in spring 2017. Our bird and plant walks, paddling trips, cleanups and other events educate citizens and provide people with opportunities to both enjoy and learn about our natural environment. We held a very successful Fall Festival and a well attended Candidates Forum.

*What you can do to help: subscribe to LRNow's E-news letter; attend an LRNow workshop or event; volunteer to help with one of LRNow's events; attend the Candidates Forum or our Fall Festival; incorporate a new practice into your daily routines.*

## MEMBERSHIP & INVOLVEMENT

A-

In 2016, our members donated more than 6,000 volunteer hours of work to LRNow. That is phenomenal support and we are very grateful for this involvement. We could not do what we do without this support. Our committee system continues to work well to inspire new ideas and grow our various programs. We are also grateful for the membership fees and donations of all of the citizens who support the work of LRNow. Your financial support keeps us going and growing.

*What you can do to help: become a member and support our Annual Giving Campaign; join a committee; become a Pearl Home; encourage your faith community to become a Pearl Faith Community; volunteer to help with one of our events; attend an LRNow educational program; invite LRNow to do a presentation for your civic league, garden club or other community organization.*

## OPEN SPACE & PUBLIC ACCESS

B-

There were no significant changes to open space or public access in the Lynnhaven in 2016. LRNow did repairs to one of the trails in Pleasure House Point in 2016; held 10 bird and plant walks; and developed a new Flowering Plant Guide for Pleasure House Point. In addition, our Growing Wetlands students restored significant areas of shoreline and meadow at Pleasure House Point. LRNow Cleanup groups picked up more than 5,000 lbs. of trash from our public areas in 2016.

*What you can do to help: evaluate your neighborhood for available land that may be suitable for a public kayak launch site; support efforts to expand public access to the river; volunteer for one of our cleanups; use our natural areas responsibly by keeping your dog on a leash, scooping the poop, removing all trash and staying on designated paths.*

## UNDERWATER GRASSES

F

We still have no evidence of any significant underwater grasses (SAV) in the Lynnhaven. Water clarity, especially in the summer months, must be improved before our grasses will be able to thrive. SAV help sediments to settle, put oxygen into the water, slow erosion by slowing wave action, and provide habitat for many marine species.

*What you can do to help: reduce or eliminate your use of lawn fertilizer; reduce sediment runoff by keeping the gutter area in front of your home free of soil, sand, leaves and pine needles; never put grass clippings or leaves down the storm drain; handle sediments from any land disturbance properly keeping them out of the storm drain and out of our waterways.*

## MEDIA ATTENTION

A

Electronic media has expanded and is taking a larger and larger role in how we communicate. In 2015, we launched a new website, and throughout 2016 we continued to update and expand that website. We posted to Facebook more than 300 times and regularly post to Instagram and other sites. LRNow distributed 24 newsletters during 2016 to almost 6,000 residents. In addition, we printed and distributed 5,000 copies of our various handouts and printed and distributed our first Annual Report including our 10th State of the River Report.

*What you can do to help: subscribe to our E-News; follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram; subscribe to our blog; read our publications and pass them on to a friend; visit our website for more information.*

## SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

A+

When we began the Pearl School Program in 2007, we had participation from four schools. In 2016, we had participation from 78 schools including all of the schools in our Lynnhaven watershed. LRNow had 74 field trips and workshops for students and teachers in 2016 including a very successful Growing Wetlands in the Classroom program and a phenomenal Trashion Show. More than 7,000 students participated in programs through LRNow in 2016. We also launched a very popular pre-school science program, SPAT, and a new Junior Master Naturalist Program for young people.

*What you can do to help: encourage your child's school to become a Pearl School; volunteer to help with one of our school programs; participate as a family in a river cleanup or other event; attend our Fall Festival; sign your student up for the Junior Master Naturalist Program and enroll your pre-schooler in our SPAT program.*

POLLUTION	INDICATOR	2016 GRADE	2015 GRADE	WHERE WE ARE IN 2016	WHERE WE WANT TO BE
	BACTERIA	B	C+	48% of the river meets the shellfish harvest standards, 91% meets the swimmable/fishable standards	100% of the river meets the shellfish harvest standard and 100% swimmable/fishable
	NITROGEN & PHOSPHORUS	D	D	Nitrogen and phosphorus levels bring about summer algal blooms and prevent SAV	Nitrogen and phosphorus levels that meet SAV habitat requirements
	DISSOLVED OXYGEN	D	D	7.9 impaired square miles (approx. 90% of the river)	Zero impaired square miles
	WATER CLARITY	D	F	Water clarity in the winter months has improved, but it is still inadequate in the summer months to support the growth of SAV	Sediment and algal levels that meet SAV habitat requirements
POLLUTION CONTROL	CLEAN BOATING	A-	A-	NDZ in effect, 4 certified marinas, 30% increase in gallons pumped out.	NDZ in effect, 8 certified marinas, annually increasing gallons pumped out
	NEW FUNDS FOR WATER QUALITY	A-	A	Total City funds for water quality projects was \$3 M. Total allocated to Lynnhaven watershed was \$309,068	\$3 million per year
	STORMWATER TREATMENT	C-	C-	25% of the stormwater in the Lynnhaven watershed benefits from stormwater treatment	100% of total watershed treated with stormwater management
	SANITARY SEWERS	B-	C	5 city overflows, 55 gallons not recovered. 193 septic tanks remaining. \$4.9M spent on upgrades. 2M gallon HRSD spill	Zero sewer overflows per year, 0 gallons spilled, and 0 septic tanks remaining of 11,600
HABITAT	OYSTERS	A-	A-	176,042 oysters transplanted, 64 acres of sanctuary reef, 881 linear feet of new oyster shoreline	250,000 oysters per year transplanted, 100 total acres of sanctuary reef, 300 linear feet of new oyster shoreline per year
	OPEN SPACES & PUBLIC ACCESS	B-	B-	3,104 acres of open space, 5 public access site. No changes in 2016	Open spaces: 4,000 acres, Public Access: 15 Public Access Sites
	WETLANDS	A-	A	6,068 sq feet of loss of non-vegetated wetlands; 7,726 sq feet of new vegetated wetlands. 2 living shoreline projects.	Zero permitted losses per year, increasing number of living shoreline projects each year
	UNDERWATER GRASSES	F	F	Zero acres of underwater grasses	175 total acres
AWARENESS	EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	A	A	100 programs for residents; 12 new participating faith communities, Successful Fall Festival; Successful Candidates Forum.	80 programs per year, 10 Pearl Faith Communities (five new this year), Annual Fall Festival, Candidates Forum
	MEDIA ATTENTION	A	A-	24 Newsletters distributed; Annual Report printed and distributed. Website regularly updated and enhanced; over 300 Facebook posts; 500 new E-News subscribers.	Coverage 18 times per year, 10 new publications per year, Facebook followers: 400 new per year, E-News Subscribers: 400 new per year
	MEMBERSHIP & INVOLVEMENT	A-	A-	Membership: 8,000 Involvement: 15,000 Volunteer Hours: 6,400 Pearl Homes: 455	Membership: 5,000 Involvement: 30,000 3,000 Volunteer Hours Pearl Homes: 500 new per year
	SCHOOL PARTICIPATION	A+	A	78 Pearl Schools, 55 schools in the Growing Wetlands program; 74 programs for students & teachers. Participation from all watershed schools.	50 Pearl Schools, 10 Teacher Trainings per year, Participation from all watershed schools





# Pearl Faith Community:

## Caring for Creation

Faith communities are making a difference. The mission is to be faithful stewards of creation by making improvements in the buildings, grounds and hearts of our congregations. Congregations work to make buildings more energy efficient, and manage their grounds to provide natural stormwater management and improve wildlife habitat. We educate the congregation with fun and interesting presentations, film discussions, green picnics, etc. For one shining example, Ohef Sholom Temple ran a "Stewardship at Home" campaign this year beginning with their Carpool Café. They hosted a panel discussion for adults on "Repairing Our Earth," while LRNow had fun activities for the Sunday school children. They worked with local talent to create a landscaping plan with native plants and a community garden. They even brought hundreds of folks out to the Brock Center for their annual picnic where, along with great food and fellowship, they gave away native plants, taught composting and so much more.

Several congregations officially became a part of the Pearl Faith Community and received their beautiful banners. St Aidan's Episcopal Church hosted a lovely Earth Day celebration and banner presentation after completing many improvements from low-flow toilets, to river cleanups in their own backyard. Old Donation Episcopal Church had a family-friendly day with children's and adult educational activities, before a special service centered on the gifts of creation. Not only do they have a garden, labyrinth and honey bees, they have even included their preschool, which is now a Pearl Award School!

**If you would like to become a part of the Pearl Faith Community, it is easier than ever. Just fill out the simple online form located at [Lynnhavenrivernow.org](http://Lynnhavenrivernow.org), or contact the LRNow office.**



## PEARL FAITH COMMUNITIES

Eastern Shore Chapel Episcopal Church  
 Bayside Christian Church and Children's Learning Center  
 Church of the Holy Family Catholic Church  
 Community United Methodist Church  
 Lynnhaven Colony Congregational Church UCC  
 Old Donation Episcopal Church  
 Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church

## AFFILIATED CONGREGATIONS

Saint Nicholas Catholic Church  
 Ohef Sholom Temple  
 Bayside Presbyterian Church  
 Grace Bible Church  
 All Saints Episcopal Church  
 Christ And St. Luke's Episcopal Church  
 Temple Emanuel  
 Francis Asbury United Methodist Church  
 Unitarian Church of Norfolk  
 Annunciation Orthodox Cathedral  
 Virginia Beach Friends Meeting  
 Congregation Beth Chaverim  
 First Baptist Church of Norfolk  
 The Episcopal Church of the Advent  
 Calvary Presbyterian Church  
 Emmanuel Episcopal Church  
 Prince of Peace Lutheran Church  
 Baylake United Methodist Church

# Pearl Schools 2015-2016

## Pre-K/Elementary

Alanton Elementary School  
 All Saints Episcopal Day School  
 Barefoot Kids Christian Day School  
 Bayside Elementary School  
 Brookwood Elementary School  
 Centerville Elementary School  
 Christopher Farms Elementary School  
 College Park Elementary School  
 Cooke Elementary School  
 Corporate Landing Elementary School  
 Creeds Elementary School  
 Dey Elementary School  
 Fairfield Elementary School  
 Glenwood Elementary School  
 Hebrew Academy of Tidewater  
 Hermitage Elementary School  
 Kempsville Elementary School  
 King's Grant Elementary School  
 Kingston Elementary School  
 Linkhorn Park Elementary School  
 Lynnhaven Elementary School  
 Malibu Elementary School  
 New Castle Elementary School  
 Newtown Elementary School  
 Norfolk Academy Lower School  
 Norfolk Christian School-Beach  
 Lower School  
 North Landing Elementary School  
 Ocean Lakes Elementary School  
 Old Donation Episcopal Day School  
 Parkway Elementary School  
 Pembroke Elementary School  
 Pembroke Meadows Elementary School  
 Point O' View Elementary School  
 Princess Anne Elementary School  
 Providence Elementary School  
 Red Mill Elementary School  
 Renaissance Academy School  
 Rosemont Elementary School  
 Rosemont Forest Elementary School  
 Salem Elementary School  
 Seatack Elementary School  
 Shelton Park Elementary School  
 Strelitz Early Childhood  
 Education Center  
 Strawbridge Elementary School  
 Tallwood Elementary School  
 Thalia Elementary School  
 Thoroughgood Elementary School



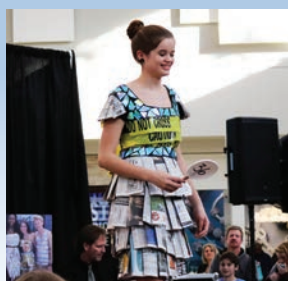
## The Pearl School Program: A Decade of Change

In the spring of 2007, the first four schools were awarded the Pearl School Award—King's Grant Elementary, New Castle Elementary, Plaza Middle School and Virginia Beach Friends School. This past spring we are proud to say that now 78 schools, both public and private, have achieved this coveted award for Excellence in Environmental Education, Sustainability and Stewardship. Throughout the years, we have seen the addition of beautiful gardens, an increase in new recycling programs, new innovative interdisciplinary units dealing with watersheds, natural resources and climate change, reduction in runoff at the schools through the use of rain barrels and rain gardens, increase in the urban canopy around schools, and so many more wonderful programs and projects that have benefited the Lynnhaven River and all the watersheds in Virginia Beach. This award encourages schools to look carefully at their schoolyard, habits and policies and find ways to become better stewards of the Earth. Our goal in the next year is to add the remaining 14 public schools and several private schools to the list of Pearl School Award winners. If your school is not a Pearl School, please contact Jody Ullmann, Education Coordinator ([jody@LRNow.org](mailto:jody@LRNow.org)) to see how easy it will be to become a Pearl School and help us reach our goals. Below, three of our wonderful schools are featured that have made a difference in their community.

### Strelitz Early Childhood Center / The Hebrew Academy of Tidewater

So many of the Principles of Judaism are centered on sustainability and stewardship, so becoming a Pearl School was a natural fit for these two schools. To reach this goal, the two schools formed a committee of parents and teachers to look at what the schools were already doing that would lead them to the Pearl School Award. From there, they brainstormed what they could do to make their schools even more earth-friendly. The result of this





collaboration is a hoop house and amazing children's garden that not only nourishes the children's bodies, but also their curiosity and imagination. The gardens teach not only about plants and insects, but about their faith and history as well. In addition to the garden beds, the schools found new ways to recycle and re-purpose materials, switched from styrofoam to bamboo bowls and developed a garden club. Together they worked to make changes to "green" their schools and earn the Pearl School Award. However, they found that in the end they each had enough points to become separate Pearl Schools. Congratulations to both Strelitz Early Childhood Center and the Hebrew Academy of Tidewater, for taking on the challenge and helping us clean up the Lynnhaven River.

### Salem Middle School

Like many schools, Salem Middle School works hard to reduce, reuse and recycle materials every day, but three students took the three Rs to a new level when they created incredible outfits for the 2016 Trashion Show. Participation in the Trashion Show is just one way Salem Middle School earned the 150 points necessary to become a Pearl School. Other points were earned by hosting a Clean the Bay Day site, sponsoring the Chesapeake on the Display Night in May and building and maintaining gardens. They also participated in the Growing Wetlands in Classroom program, helping to restore the habitats of Pleasure House Point. Thanks to their efforts, the river will be cleaner.

### Salem High School

For the first time all three Salem schools achieved the Pearl School Award—Salem Elementary, Salem Middle and Salem High School. Along the way they learned it takes more than just the efforts of the green club, it takes the entire school working together to achieve this award. The National Honor Society Green Committee is just one of the many organizations working to make Salem High School a "greener" school. This year the Catering and Special Education Classes built raised beds to grow organic vegetables and herbs for use in their classes and catering events. The school enlists the help of the NJROTC to help with the weeding and maintenance of the gardens, as well as keeping the grounds free of trash. The oceanography students maintain the Lynnhaven River aquariums and the biology classes grow grasses to be used in restoration projects. Together they are working to not only learn about sustainability and stewardship, but to put into practice what they have learned.

### Pearl Schools 2015-2016 (continued)

Three Oaks Elementary School  
Trantwood Elementary School  
White Oaks Elementary School  
Williams Elementary School  
Windsor Oaks Elementary School  
Windsor Woods Elementary School

### Middle Schools

Bayside Middle School  
Brandon Middle School  
Corporate Landing Middle School  
Independence Middle School  
Kempsville Middle School  
Landstown Middle School  
Lynnhaven Middle School  
Plaza Middle School  
Princess Anne Middle School  
Salem Middle School  
Virginia Beach Middle School

### High Schools

Bayside High School  
Cox High School  
First Colonial High School  
Green Run High School  
Kellam High School  
Kempsville High School  
Landstown High School  
Ocean Lakes High School  
Princess Anne High School  
Salem High School

### Schools with Multiple Levels

Cape Henry Collegiate  
Old Donation School (aka Brickell Academy)  
Renaissance Academy  
Virginia Beach Friends School

**Our Pearl School program began in 2007 with four schools. Over the past nine years, it has grown very rapidly. In 2016, we had 78 participating schools.**

# Restoration

## SIMPLE PROJECTS

This year, we met the Bradley family, homeowners on the Lynnhaven River and longtime oyster gardeners. Like many homeowners on the water, they were starting to see signs of erosion along their shoreline, including exposed roots and bare soil, and they were concerned about their property (and providing habitat for their oysters!).

**After meeting on-site with the family, we quickly determined that it would be a perfect candidate for a 50-foot living shoreline restoration, so we set to work with Bay Environmental to complete Virginia Beach's very first Group I General Permit!**

The new General Permit was created as a way to incentivize installation of living shorelines as the state's preferred shoreline management method. As opposed to a bulkhead or riprap permit, it has no permit fees, does not require going before the wetlands board, and has a shorter turnaround time for qualifying projects.



We had lots of eager volunteers to help with installation, including our Shorelines Committee and the Virginia Aquarium's Mentoring Young Scientists (MYS) group. With a near constant flow of wheelbarrows to get the sand back to the site, a chain of volunteers pushing sand down a constructed wooden flume, and another group spreading

the sand along the shoreline, we managed to knock this project out in a couple days! Then came a quick sprigging of native wetland Spartina grasses, some goose fencing, and voilà! The Bradley family is really excited to watch their marsh fill in, and see the crabs, oysters, birds and fish that come to enjoy it. In fact, they're so excited about it, they're already in the process of planning oyster castles for next year!



If you're interested in having a free shoreline consultation to see what you can do to improve your own property, call our office at **(757) 962-5398**, or email our Restoration Coordinator at **[trista@lnow.org](mailto:trista@lnow.org)**.





## OYSTER CASTLE SHORELINES

Oyster reefs provide incredible habitat, water filtration, nitrogen removal, and shoreline protection in the Lynnhaven River. For the past several years, LRNow has worked with environmentally minded waterfront homeowners to install oyster castles along their shorelines. These structures can be built into any configuration and they protect the shoreline by baffling wave energy while concurrently providing habitat for oysters, crabs, shrimp, fish and other river species.

In 2016, LRNow and our wonderful volunteers went out to add additional castles to a homeowner's shoreline who had started the project with us in 2015. This gave us the opportunity to see and appreciate the astounding number of wild oysters that had settled on last year's castles! We also observed sand accumulating behind the castles, potentially providing new area for marsh grasses to thrive on the back side of the castles. Everyone walked away that day feeling proud to be a part of such a positive and successful project.

Oyster castles truly provide a fantastic opportunity for homeowners who love the Lynnhaven because they benefit both the river and the property owner alike. If you are interested in creating castles along your shoreline, LRNow can help you with the design, permit and installation. Call or email us to start the process.

Picture taken during castle construction in 2015 (**Right**) and close-up of the astounding oyster settlement we saw when we revisited the castles a year later in 2016 (**Below**).





## SOS PROGRAM PARTNERS

We appreciate the efforts of all of our SOS Partners. These restaurants participate in the program:

**21st Street Seafood Company** 2106 Pacific Avenue

**Abbey Road Restaurant** 203 22<sup>nd</sup> Street

**Bay Local** 972 Laskin Road

**Blue Seafood and Spirits**  
2181 Upton Drive, Suite 420

**Bubba's** 3323 Shore Drive

**Captain George's** 1956 Laskin Road

**Coastal Grill** 1427 N. Great Neck Road, #104

**CP Shuckers** 1400 Atlantic Avenue

**CP Shuckers** 3232 Shore Drive

**Croakers** 3629 Shore Drive

**Croc's 19th Street Bistro** 620 19<sup>th</sup> Street

**Dockside** 3311 Shore Drive

**Fin McCool's** Landstown Commons,  
Princess Anne Road

**Five 01 City Grill** 501 North Birdneck Road

**Harpoon Larry's** 216 24<sup>th</sup> Street

**Hot Tuna** 2817 Shore Drive

**Lucky Oyster** 2165 General Booth Boulevard

**Mahi Mah's** 615 Atlantic Avenue

**Ocean Eddie's** 1506 Atlantic Avenue

**Rockefeller's** 308 Mediterranean Avenue

**Sheraton Oceanfront Hotel**  
3501 Atlantic Avenue

**Steinhilber's** 653 Thalia Road

**Swan Terrace** Founder's Inn

**Tautog's** 205 23rd Street

**Yukai Seafood Buffet** 1952 Laskin Road



## SOS : Save Oyster Shells

In 2007, a small part of the Lynnhaven River was opened for oyster harvest again after many decades of being closed because of high bacteria levels. With the opening came a celebration of our native Lynnhaven oyster, and many of our local restaurants were again serving the local delicacy.

When these restaurants shucked the oysters, the shells were going into the trash. LRNow decided to try to make these shells useful again and received grant funding to design a shell collection program and conduct a three-month pilot project. We enlisted seven restaurants, trained the restaurant staff, distributed collection cans, and hired a college student to do the pickups. We also set up two public drop-off locations and began telling our members about the program. As soon as the pilot was completed, we knew this was something we wanted to continue, and soon the program became year-round and began adding new restaurants.

Today, we have 25 restaurants and five public drop-off locations. We also collect shells from as many as 20 special events throughout the year. During the past year, we have collected 4,200 bushels of shells that are not going into the trash; instead they're available to build sanctuary reef and restore our native oyster population.

This spring 2017, we will be building an acre and a half of sanctuary oyster reef in the Eastern Branch of the Lynnhaven River using 20,000 bushels of those shells saved from the trash and doing the work they were meant to do—providing habitat for more oysters.

If you shuck oysters for your own use at home, you can take your shells to any of these Virginia Beach public drop-off locations:

**Lynnhaven River NOW office**, Brock Environmental Center, 3663 Marlin Bay Dr. (Near the parking lot entrance from Marlin Bay Dr, set atop a wooden platform.)

**VA Aquarium**, Satellite Parking Lot, 717 General Booth Blvd. (This is the parking lot ACROSS General Booth Blvd. from the main Aquarium building.)

**Welton's Seafood**, 940 Laskin Road (our newest drop-off location!)

**Virginia Beach Landfill**, 1989 Jake Sears Road (ask for directions at the gate.)

**Satellite Lynnhaven River NOW office**, 1608 Pleasure House Rd.

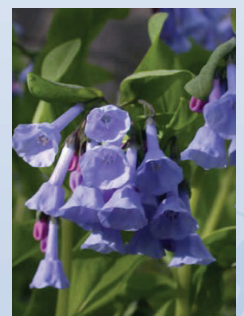
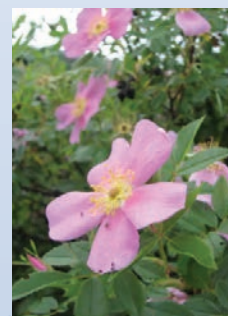
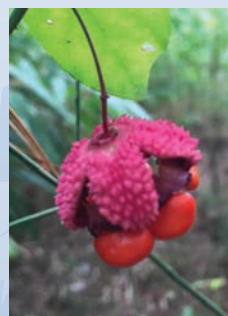
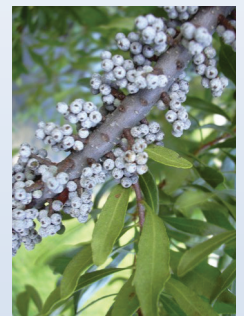
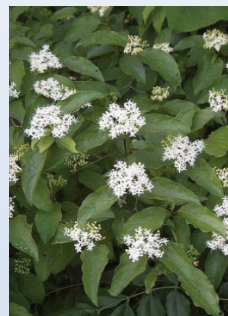
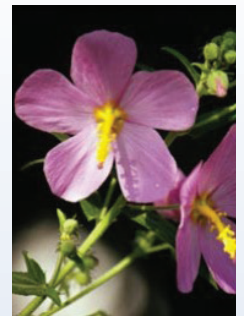
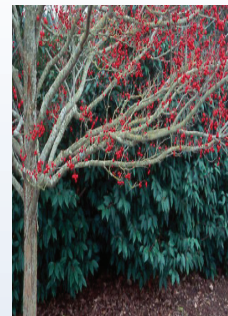
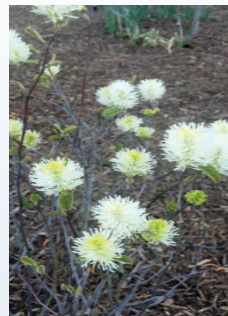
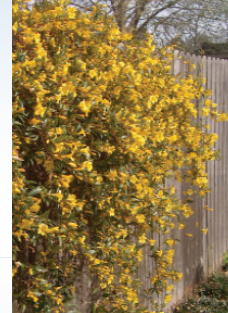


# Native Plant of the Month Program

Planting natives at home is increasingly important as residential and commercial properties continue to encroach on our woodland and open space—at a rate of 6,000 acres per day in the U.S.! Insects, bugs, birds and reptiles still need to live somewhere, and their options are becoming limited. Monarch butterflies are an alarming example of how quickly a species can suffer when key habitat plants, like milkweed, are lost. As insect and butterfly larvae are less available, this loss can quickly spread up the food chain to songbirds, raptors, reptiles and amphibians. Many species, like monarchs, are specialists and rely heavily or even completely on one source of food. When this food source disappears, so do they.

Native plants can be defined in many ways, but for our purposes, they are those that are naturally present (at least since written history), and have adapted to life in our climate. This means, in addition to providing habitat to the critters they have co-evolved with, they also tend to be relatively low-maintenance once established, requiring little to no fertilizer or irrigation, and helping to maintain our local water quality. This is in direct contrast to invasives, which are typically introduced (accidentally or intentionally) by humans and have rapid growth and spread. Invasives will often overtake native plants because there are no native predators or pests to control their growth and spread. Common invasive plants include: English Ivy, Common Orange Daylily, Bradford Pear, Burning Bush, Japanese Barberry, Miscanthus, Tree of Heaven, Butterfly Bush, and Liriope.

Each month LRNow provides you with the opportunity to order one of our native plants for your landscape. We take orders throughout the month and those orders are filled at the end of the month. We purchase our plants from local native plant nurseries.



**The pictures on this page illustrate the 2017 Native Plant of the Month selection. Watch our E-News for your opportunity to place an order and gradually add more natives to your landscape.**

# Eastern Shore Chapel Episcopal Church, Care of Creation Committee

## "A LYNNHAVEN RIVER NOW PEARL FAITH COMMUNITY"

By Jim Deppe



"The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers." Psalm 24: 1-2 NRSV

Eastern Shore Chapel's Care of Creation mission is to increase our collective awareness of God's creation around the 32-acre grounds of Eastern Shore Chapel and gently lead us towards practices that reduce our impact on the environment. We are also committed to educating the congregation about our stewardship responsibilities and helping us learn to live (collectively and individually) in greater harmony with the land, the Lynnhaven River, the Chesapeake Bay, the Atlantic Ocean and "this fragile earth, our island home."

2016 was a busy and productive year for Care of Creation. We have built on the early successes of the committee in fostering a congregation-wide awareness of our environmental stewardship responsibilities and opportunities. We combined a balanced mix of education and action, all the while communicating with the congregation via a weekly Care of Creation segment in the E-pistle e-mail from our Rector. We have found it valuable to talk about our actions in the context of ancient texts from the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, thereby gently reminding our congregation that environmental stewardship is deeply rooted in our tradition.

### TOP FIVE FOR 2016:

1. **Landscape Master Plan:** We received final approval from our vestry and have begun moving forward with individual projects in the plan, emphasizing environmentally sound practices every step of the way.
2. **Work Project Template:** Working with the Building and Grounds Committee, we helped formulate and finalize a project template for every future project at Eastern Shore Chapel. This template will enable a disciplined approach to project planning and will help us to streamline projects and optimize the impact of scarce fiscal resources. Additionally, Care of Creation will be included in the review process to ensure environmentally sound practices as well as compliance with the Landscape Master Plan.
3. **Wetlands Cleanup:** Working with Lynnhaven River Now, we are conducting bi-annual cleanups of our wetlands, including more than 1,000 yards of estuarine shoreline along Wolfsnare Creek, a tributary of the Lynnhaven River.
4. **Saint Francis Week Activities:** Our committee put together an Iona Abbey-style service, which emphasized our deep and enduring relationship with God's creation. Additionally, we put out a series of email blasts to the congregation addressing a range of environmental issues that we can all play a role in addressing.
5. **Labyrinth Project:** We have begun a labyrinth project as Phase 1 of our Landscape Master Plan. The finished project will be a Chartres Cathedral-style labyrinth, beautifully integrated with our outdoor chapel.



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JANUARY 1, 2016 - DECEMBER 31, 2016

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## 15TH ANNIVERSARY

The Art of Saving the River Festival  
in the ViBe Creative District  
May 12, 13 and 14



You will not want to miss this wonderful event. LRNow is joining forces with the ViBe Creative District and the Virginia Arts Festival to bring you our 15th Anniversary Art Festival. Watch for more details in our E-News as the date gets closer.



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