

COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHT: PUBLIC POLICY

The work of Lynnhaven River NOW is centered around our various committees. Each committee has a different area of focus and offers volunteers an opportunity to get involved in the area that most interests them. A complete list of committees is available on our website. Check it out if you want to know more or are interested in getting more involved.

In each of our newsletters, we are doing a focus piece on one of our committees so you can learn more about their great work. In this issue, we are highlighting the good work of our Public Policy Committee.

As the General Assembly convenes in Richmond and the new year begins for our City Council, the Public Policy Committee is working hard to stay on top of the issues that can potentially affect Virginia Beach and the Lynnhaven River. Members of the Public Policy Committee maintain relationships with our elected officials and meet with them regularly to discuss issues, answer questions and promote positions that help us in our work to restore and protect the Lynnhaven River and the health of our natural resources in Virginia Beach.

In 2012, Virginia's lawmakers will be asked to decide whether or not to lift a 30-year moratorium on uranium mining and milling in our state. A newly released report from the National Academy of Sciences raised grave concerns about the state's ability to oversee a mine and guarantee the protection of drinking water for Hampton Roads. Nevertheless, Virginia Uranium, Inc. is pressing ahead with calls to lift the moratorium. This will be one of the most important environmental issues in this year's state legislative session and our Public Policy Committee members have researched this issue and provided information to our elected officials.

The Public Policy Committee maintains the Public Policy section of our website where you can find information on uranium mining and other issues of importance to LRNow. In addition, they sponsor the annual fall candidates forums giving you a chance to meet our potential representatives and hear their positions on important environmental questions.

The next regular meeting of the Public Policy Committee in February 16th at 4:00 PM at the Shore Drive Fire Station, close to the intersection of Shore Drive and Great Neck Road. See you there!

LYNNHAVEN River NOW

CELEBRATING OUR 10TH YEAR



Ten years ago a conversation began about the condition of the Lynnhaven River. How did it get so bad? Can we turn it around? Remember how good Lynnhaven oysters used to be? Three men, Andrew Fine, Harry Lester and Bob Stanton, decided to move beyond conversation and take some action. That is how the Lynnhaven River 2007 organization began. At that time, there weren't many locally focused river restoration efforts to use as models, but our founders gathered the most knowledgeable people they could find from our community and the region and set to work to develop a plan to reverse the damage that had been done to our beautiful river.

From that beginning to today, our mission remains the same: "to restore and protect the Lynnhaven River."

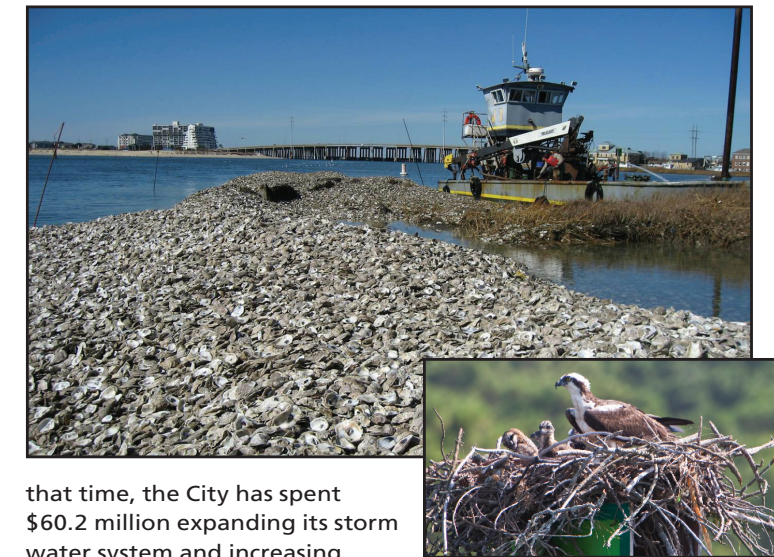
The primary strategies have also remained the same: to identify and reduce sources of pollutants; to educate and engage the community and partner organizations; and to restore critical habitat such as oyster reefs, wetlands and riparian buffers. Today, our varied programs from the Pearl School projects to oyster gardening and living shoreline efforts to our newest Pearl Home program all fit under this well designed umbrella.

In 2007, realizing that this is "forever" work but still wanting to emphasize the need to take action right now, we changed our name to Lynnhaven River NOW. But our mission and strategy remained the same.

Part of any anniversary is the opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments. Here are a few highlights from the past ten years.

Oysters were a symbol of the Lynnhaven River's history, bounty and cleanliness. From the beginning, we have measured progress toward our goal through increases in the portion of the river where oysters and other shellfish can be safely and legally consumed. In 2005, 1% of the river was open; in 2006, 7%, in 2007, 29%; and today over 42% of the river is open to shellfish harvest.

The City of Virginia Beach has been a major partner in all of the efforts to restore the Lynnhaven. In 2003, the City Council named the Lynnhaven River one of their highest priorities. Since



that time, the City has spent \$60.2 million expanding its storm water system and increasing public awareness about storm water pollutants. In addition, over \$71.3 million have been spent on Sanitary Sewer expansion and upgrades and we have reduced the number of septic tanks from 11,600 to 229.



In 2007, the Lynnhaven River became the first tidal river in Virginia to be established as a No Discharge Zone. This designation means that all boats in the Lynnhaven River are required to pump out their holding tanks and no overboard discharge of any kind is allowed. During last summer's boating season, almost 1,500 gallons of boat waste were pumped out.

We have built 58 acres of sanctuary oyster reef in the Lynnhaven and have transplanted almost six million baby oysters onto those reefs. We again have an exciting and growing oyster industry working the Lynnhaven River.

These are just a few of the highlights. But the most important one is the support we have experienced from the Virginia Beach community. From those three business men with a vision, our organization has grown to 5,000 members, nine strong committees, and four full-time and two part-time staff people. **Thank you for embarking on this journey with us. We have covered some miles and still have miles to go.**



1608 Pleasure House Road Suite 108
Virginia Beach VA 23455 • 757-962-5398

Restoring a legend.

LYNNHAVEN River NOW

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Thank You!

9-1-2011 – 12-19-2011

INDIVIDUALS

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Mr. & Mrs. Peter and Alicelynn Fisher
Ms. Oriana McKinnon
Mr. & Mrs. Macon Brock
Ms. Barbara Gunn

PEARL MEMBERS

Mr. & Mrs. Eddie Snyder
Ms. Marina Phillips
Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Thompson
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Prueher

REEF MEMBERS

Mr. & Mrs. Irvin Gentry, Jr.
Mr. Skip LeGault
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Herman
Richard E. Olivieri Family Foundation

GENERAL MEMBERS

Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Sitar
Mr. & Mrs. John Costenbader
Mr. & Mrs. John Litz
Mr. Glen Caldwell
Mr. Michael Spence
Mr. Duncan Thomson
Ms. Martha McKinnon
Mr. Stephen Reader
Ms. Aimee Curley
Ms. Kathy O'Keefe
Ms. Kathryn Peterson-Lambert
Mr. & Mrs. Howard Brantley
Mr. Rose Busetti
Mr. Bob Costello
Mr. Ola Krueger
Mr. Darcel Stephan
Mr. & Mrs. Rich Hildreth
Mr. Richard Boylan
Mr. Chris Bonney
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Kennedy
Mr. Whit Peace
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Barrett
Mr. & Mrs. Lee Entsminger
Mr. John Bryant
Ms. Lauren Beale
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Bradshaw
Ms. Nancy Smith

BUSINESSES & GROUPS

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Runnymede Corp.
DIA Inc.
Chesbay Distribution Company
London Bridge Nursery

PEARL MEMBERS

Kimley Horn Foundation
McDonald's Garden Center
Ecovative Energy
Holman's Photography
WPL Site Design

REEF MEMBERS

Central Business District Association
Mike's Rain Barrels/Michael Minor
Pro Craft Inspection Service

GENERAL MEMBERS

Croc's 19th Street Eco-Bistro
Country Gardeners Guild
May Farm Garden Club
Langley & McDonald, Inc
Wild Woods Farm/Vicki Shufer
Doodey Calls
Lowe's Home Center
New Earth Farms/John Wilson

MEMORIAL & HONOR DONATIONS

In Honor of Jeffrey Bailey, DDS by Howard Brantly
In Honor of Andrew Fine by Steve and Sally Herman

DEAR MEMBERS,

Winter's long dark hours are a good time for reflection. Couple that with our tenth anniversary celebration in 2012 and I have spent some time lately thinking about what has made this effort to restore and protect the Lynnhaven River successful and how we can keep that momentum as we move into the next ten years.

First, a great deal of credit has to go to the people who have been committed and involved in this effort from the very beginning. Many of you took a leap of faith back in 2002 and supported this new, fledgling group with lofty aspirations. Your faith was rewarded with action and the effects have multiplied for ten years and through many milestones.

Second, our founders knew that we, no matter how large our group, could do this work alone. From the beginning one of our primary strategies has been to form partnerships and pool the efforts and talents of many to this work. Some of our strongest partners, the City of Virginia Beach, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, VIMS, and the US Army Corps of Engineers have stayed with us for ten years now and are planning with us now for even more exciting joint projects in the future. Over the years, our partnerships have flourished to include First Landing State Park, the Virginia Beach public and private schools, the Aquarium, the SPCA, the Garden Clubs, the Civic Leagues and many more. These partnerships are the key to much of our success.

Third, it was the right time and Virginia Beach was the right place. Many of us chose Virginia Beach as our home because of its natural beauty. We hike in First Landing, take our dogs to the beach, kayak in the river, enjoy the great local seafood and the sunrises and sunsets over the water. As our population has grown, we have become increasingly aware of our need to protect the natural resources that we value so highly. We were ready to learn new ways of doing things and to adopt new practices and it has made a difference. Your openness to growth and change is evidenced in the hearty response to our Pearl Home program.

A central debate in the environmental world today is restoration or management. With seven billion people on this planet, is it even feasible to talk about restoring or protecting natural areas or are we at the point where we have to begin to think in terms of managing our planet like a spaceship. With 240,000 people living in our 64 square mile watershed and 38% impervious surface, we have to think about managing our impacts at the same time that we work hard to restore and protect our wetlands, riparian buffers, oyster reefs and other natural systems that keep the river in balance. We are learning more everyday about how to manage our human impacts. Your openness to learning with us and continuing to refine our practices is why we have been successful for these past ten years and why we are very hopeful about the possibilities in the next ten years.

KAREN WILSON FORGET
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Friends of Live Oaks

VIRGINIA BEACH RESIDENTS PLANT 216 LIVE OAK TREES
BY KAREN MURPHY

Friends of Live Oaks, a grass-roots citizen advocacy group formed this year by people who love live oaks, partnered with the City of Virginia Beach Environment and Sustainability Office to deliver 216 live oak trees to residents of Virginia Beach in October. Many of the trees were rescued from property adjacent to Bayvista Condominium on Shore Drive, when the land was cleared for construction. The saplings were delivered to the City Landscape Management Services lot and had been growing there for seven years.

The group developed a tree adoption form and made it available online, at public libraries, and in many civic league newsletters. The response was overwhelming. In order to fill all requests, 75 more live oaks were purchased from local growers to supplement the 140 rescued trees.



The group delivered trees to all areas of Virginia Beach from Pungo to Shore Drive, from the Oceanfront to Kempsville. The Lions Club planted a tree on the hill at the Old Cavalier during their fall conference. Girl Scouts planted a live oak at Hermitage Elementary School. The Thoroughgood Garden Club planted live oaks at the Thoroughgood House and Thoroughgood Elementary School. Adopted live oaks will be planted at five city parks, five condominium projects and four churches. The Leaping Lizard Cafe on Shore Drive is planting one. Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek - Fort Story planted live oaks to celebrate Arbor Day.

Many people requesting trees expressed a special feeling for live oaks, such as:

"I have always found live oaks such charming trees...I hoped I would be able to have one."

For further comment, contact Karen Murphy, at tomandkarenmurphy@gmail.com or 757- 961-4109.

The Friends of Live Oaks (FOLO) is a citizen advocacy group formed to plant, protect, preserve, and promote live oak trees in Virginia Beach.



"I am so enamored by these trees... They are quite majestic and deserve our admiration..."

It's obvious that live oaks, the official tree of Virginia Beach, have special meaning to the people of Virginia Beach. Their beauty symbolizes our coast. They help control flooding and storm water runoff. They provide shade and privacy for humans and habitat for wildlife. They are drought-tolerant, disease-resistant, and low-maintenance. They resist salt spray, storm surges, even hurricanes. They increase property values and reduce air conditioning costs.

Hampton Roads is very fortunate to have so many beautiful live oak trees, but they are disappearing quickly to development. While it's great to plant new live oaks, it takes hundreds of years for them to become the magnificent trees we love. When a live oak is cut down it is lost forever; preservation is essential.

The Friends of Live Oaks plans to sponsor annual live oak distributions and advocate for tree preservation initiatives. Anyone interested in joining the group may email Karen Murphy at tomandkarenmurphy@gmail.com.

LYNNHAVEN River NOW
Restoring a legend.

WWW.LRNOW.ORG