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LYNNHAVEN River NOW



Celebrating the 1,000th Pearl Home

Virginia Beach is now home to 1,000 environmentally conscious "Pearl Homes!" On June 18th, LRNow presented the Suarez family of the Pine Meadows neighborhood in Virginia Beach with their brand new Pearl Home flag and a prize basket of river-friendly items, including: *The Lynnhaven, Restoring a Legend*, a reusable tote and water bottle, a few native plants, and many other goodies.

During the visit, the Suarez family toured LRNow around the house to showcase the many ways in which the family exhibits good stewardship toward our city's watersheds. At the front of the house, a lovely buffer garden greets visitors. The garden helps to slow stormwater coming from the property as it runs through the yard, toward the storm drains. Heading to the backyard, alongside a pathway of pervious pavers and gravel, it was easy to miss the compost pile, where microorganisms were working hard at turning refuse into valuable nutrients for the beautiful gardens.

The Suarez family has lived in their home for 20 years, slowly forming the outdoor area into their very own "oasis." The family planted many of the trees that now generate shade and help create a sense of privacy in the yard that is appreciated by both the family and local wildlife. They observe bunnies, songbirds (one of whom had made a cozy nest in a watering can hanging from the house), dragonflies, honeybees, and carpenter bees. In fact, when the family found the carpenter bees boring into their deck framing, rather than remove them with pesticides, they simply built the bees another, more desirable, habitat to move into nearby. To encourage wildlife, their yard also exhibits birdseed feeders, hummingbird feeders, and bird baths.



Throughout the garden many edible plants and herbs thrived, waiting for the family to enjoy. Solar-powered Mason jar lights decorated the yard, and the family even reused old tiles they had gathered from run-down buildings in Guantanamo Bay to make a unique outdoor table. What an inspiring 1,000th Pearl Home.

Before we left the Suarez homestead, the new Pearl Home flag was ceremoniously staked into the front garden, as a well-deserved symbol of commitment to continued sustainable practices, and a conversation starter for neighbors, who we hope will be inspired to strive for their own!

11TH ANNUAL OYSTER ROAST

The weather smiled on us for a wonderful day at our 11th Annual Oyster Roast.

Thank you for your support. It was a very successful day.

And with your help, we achieved our ZERO TRASH goal!



PEARL HOME TIP OF THE QUARTER

What is a Buffer? Why are They Important?



A buffer is a vegetated area, ideally with groundcover, shrubs and trees, that separates your lawn from the adjacent waterway, wetland, or paved area. Vegetated buffers can be the most functionally beneficial and biologically diverse system on your property. Buffers are complex hydrologic and ecological areas that are the transition zone between the wetland, or surface water if the wetland is no longer there, and the development in the upland area. And they are critical to water quality.

Buffers serve a direct water quality function by reducing excess sediment, nutrients, and potentially harmful toxic substances from running into our river. They also help to reduce the magnitude of periodic flooding and provide critical habitat for terrestrial and aquatic species. In addition, a buffer can help to stabilize your shoreline and provide aesthetic and recreational benefits.

Please consider removing lawn area and planting a buffer between your lawn and the wetland, waterway or paved area adjacent to your property. And remember that everything that washes off your property into the storm drain goes directly into the river no matter where you live in the watershed.

Thank You!

From February 27- June 7, 2013

Donations from INDIVIDUALS

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Mr. & Mrs. Hap Chalmers
Ms. Lyman Speckheuer
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Sasser
Mr. & Mrs. Louis Ryan
Mr. John Drescher

PEARL MEMBERS

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Mr. Bob Miller

REEF MEMBERS

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Ms. Terri Gorman
Mr. & Mrs. Ty Brown
Mr. & Mrs. Colin McKinnon
Ms. Sharon Breidert
Mr. Eric Hernandez

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Mr. Bob Martin



DEAR MEMBERS,

The first Green Ribbon Committee was appointed by the City Council in June, 2006, with the task of reviewing our city codes, ordinances and policies and advising the City Council on regulatory and other methods of improving water quality in the city's many and varied waterways. This was a big task, but the group divided into three sub-committees and set to work. After 18 months of work, the Green Ribbon Committee presented a report to the City Council with 54 specific recommendations including changes to codes and ordinances, education initiatives, and policy changes that could result in improved water quality in Virginia Beach. There was truly a sense of accomplishment and hopefulness when we presented our report to the City Council in November, 2007.

A Green Ribbon Implementation Committee was formed and city staff began the work of implementing these recommendations. In some cases, the result was an Administrative Directive like the directive that all new City buildings over 10,000 square feet will, at a minimum, meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification guidelines. In other cases, the result was ordinance changes such as reducing the parking requirements for new structures or reducing the width requirements for minor streets. Some of the recommendations resulted in training for city staff and the development of community education programs. All together, the changes that resulted from these recommendations put Virginia Beach ahead of the curve in dealing with the water quality degradation that had resulted from: too much impervious surface; loss of natural habitat like wetlands, buffers and oyster reefs; and outdated stormwater infrastructure that was adding to our water quality problems.

Today, with new federal and state stormwater regulations to implement and the goals of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) to meet, the stakes are even higher and the City Council has again looked to the Green Ribbon Committee to help chart a course. A new Green Ribbon Committee was appointed by the City Council in November, 2012. We have been briefed on the various programs underway within the city to restore critical habitat, improve stormwater management and help us achieve these higher goals. We are reviewing the success of implementation of the original Green Ribbon recommendations and beginning to look at innovative new ways of retrofitting older developed properties and incentivizing private property owners to go beyond the minimum requirements and help to create the solution.

Cities all over the Chesapeake Bay watershed and all over our country are tackling similar challenges. Los Angeles has undertaken an aggressive plan to redesign their city for public transportation and greatly reduce the amount their residents drive. Philadelphia has received accolades for their Green City Clean Waters Plan which includes rain gardens, green roofs, rain barrels, porous pavement and planting as many trees as they can. Chicago has made the commitment to integrate sustainability into every aspect of their planning and offers rebates to citizens for planting native plants and trees. And many cities around the country and in Virginia are offering rebates to citizens who install rain barrels and cisterns.

Virginia Beach still has some advantages over the other cities in Virginia who are also trying to meet the goals of the Bay TMDL and implement the new stormwater regulations. But the tasks ahead for us are complex and potentially expensive as we learn new development techniques, and try to retrofit our sprawling and low lying city to handle stormwater more effectively enabling us to reduce the sediments, nutrients and bacteria that runoff the land into our waterways every time it rains. We will need to think creatively. And we will need everyone's participation if we are going to meet these new, higher goals.

Thank you for your support and for all you do to restore and protect the Lynnhaven River.

Karen
Karen Forget
Executive Director

MEET THE LRNOW STAFF



TRISTA IMRICH-Trista is our **Administrative Assistant**. She helps with a wide variety of LRNow activities including our outreach activities and events. She may have registered you for one of our events or you may have met her at a clean-up or another LRNow activity. Trista also takes care of our merchandise and keeps our office running smoothly. Trista serves on our Wetlands and our PR & Marketing Committees.



JODY ULLMANN-Jody is our **Education Coordinator**. She coordinates all our programs for students, teachers and families. Your children may have worked with her on the Growing Wetlands in the Classroom program. She also facilitates our teacher trainings and our programming for families. She will be launching our new Nurturing Natives in the Classroom program this fall.



KRIS MCKINNON-Kris is our **Outreach and Communications Coordinator**. She manages the thousand details of our major events each year, the Oyster Roast and the Fall Festival, and helps to manage our Pearl Home program. She also organizes our monthly river clean-ups and our other outreach events like the kayak tours, bike tours and bird walks. She is a very busy person. Kris initiated our spat catcher program and does many of the updates to our website and facebook pages. Kris serves on our Stewardship & Access, PR & Marketing and Oyster Restoration Committees.



MICHAEL MINOR-Michael is our **Rain Barrel and Cistern Guru** and also our **Save Oyster Shell Technician**. Michael collects between 150 and 250 bushels of oyster and clam shells every month from Virginia Beach restaurants, our public dropoff locations and special oyster roast events. All of these shells are used for oyster restoration work in the Lynnhaven River. In addition, Michael has his own business, Mike's Rain Barrels, and has been LRNow's supplier of rain barrels and cisterns since we started the program in 2008. Michael serves on our Landscape Practices Committee.



LURIE SORABELLA-Laurie has been with LRNow since the beginning and is our **Oyster Projects Coordinator**. If there is anything you want to know about oysters, Laurie has the answer. She coordinates our sanctuary oyster reef projects and coordinates the spat catcher program with Kris. She is our liaison to the Citizen Oyster Gardener program with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and has her own nonprofit, Oyster Reefkeepers of Virginia, that runs the Student Oyster Gardener Programs in Hampton Roads. Laurie serves on our Oyster Restoration Committee.



MEREDITH MALONE-Meredith is our **Restoration Projects Coordinator**. She is available to consult with you on the best choices for management of your shoreline and coordinates LRNow's restoration projects. She plans and manages wetlands and riparian buffer restoration projects, reforestation projects and our oyster castle projects with Laurie. Meredith serves on our Wetlands, Oyster Restoration and Landscape Practices Committees.



PAM NORTHAM-Pam joined our staff this summer as our **Pearl Faith Communities and Business Program Coordinator**. She will be launching our Pearl Faith Communities Program this fall. Your faith community will want to get involved in this program to help green your building and grounds. She will also be helping us develop an outreach program for businesses including launching our Sea of Change program. Pam serves on our Landscape Practices Committee.



KAREN FORGET-Karen is the **Executive Director** of LRNow and oversees all of these programs. In addition, Karen serves on the city's Clean Waters Task Force, Sustainability Advisory Team, Green Ribbon Committee and the Board of Buy Fresh, Buy Local Hampton Roads.

Thank You!

From February 27- June 7, 2013

Donations from BUSINESSES & GROUPS

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

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Floyd E. Kellam Family Fund
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Troutman Sanders
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Smartmouth Brewery
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Kosmic Kameleon
Tautogs Restaurant
HLD Landscaping, Inc.
Great Neck Meadows Garden Club
Chesapeake Colony Garden Club
Doc Taylor's Restaurant



TURTLE EXCLUDERS Easy to Add to Your Crabpot

Turtle excluders, also called by-catch reduction devices, are easy to add to your crabpot and insure that a turtle will not inadvertently enter your crabpot and drown. They are free from LRNow and can be easily zip-tied to your crabpot. Get yours today at our office at 1608 Pleasure House Road, Suite 108.

