



**Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship**

*"Northumberland is going to grow. Let's help it grow with order and beauty."*

# NAPS News

Fall 2006

Volume 15, Issue 4

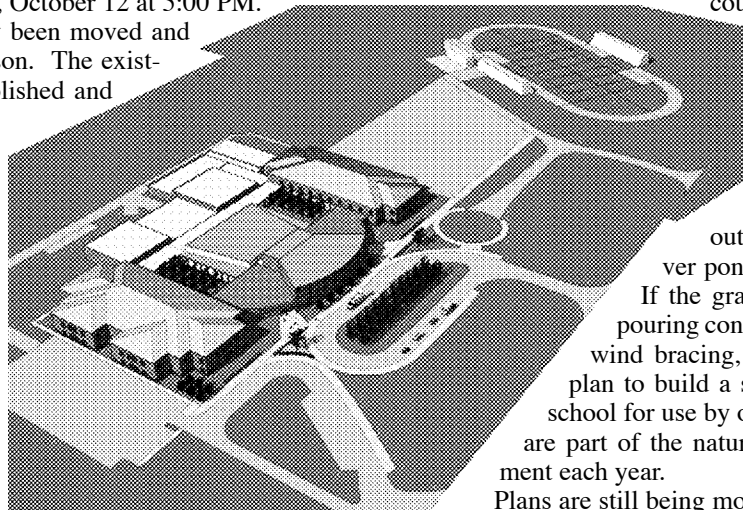
## Groundbreaking For School Campus This Week

By LYNTON LAND

The campus east of Heathsville is becoming a reality. Ground-breaking for the new building, to house both the middle and high schools, is planned for Thursday, October 12 at 5:00 PM.

The baseball fields have already been moved and will be ready for the spring season. The existing middle school will be demolished and replaced by soccer fields.

A 500-seat auditorium is at the front center of the new building. Fine arts classrooms and a media center/library are located behind the auditorium, and the ground-level hallway separating the auditorium from the other facilities is the only connection between the two schools. Both facilities are adjacent to internal courtyards. Two cafeterias with a single kitchen between them are next, proceeding toward the rear of the building, and two gymnasiums with locker rooms and training rooms form the back center of the building. On either side of the auditorium, at the front,



administrative offices are located along with areas designated for fine arts and vocational training, both of which border on internal courtyards. The two story classrooms also border the internal courtyards and all classrooms have natural lighting and will have windows that can be opened. State-of-the-art wired and wireless communication will be installed.

A grant has also been submitted to build a pavilion or outdoor classroom above the beaver pond behind the elementary school. If the grant is funded we will need help pouring concrete footings, erecting posts and wind bracing, and roofing the structure. We plan to build a second pavilion behind the new school for use by older students and both pavilions are part of the nature trail that undergoes improvement each year.

Plans are still being modified, so citizens with concerns or who have experience or ideas about what works and what doesn't work in a school building/campus should express their *(See "Campus" on page 3)*

## Potomac Dreaming – Be Careful What You Wish For!

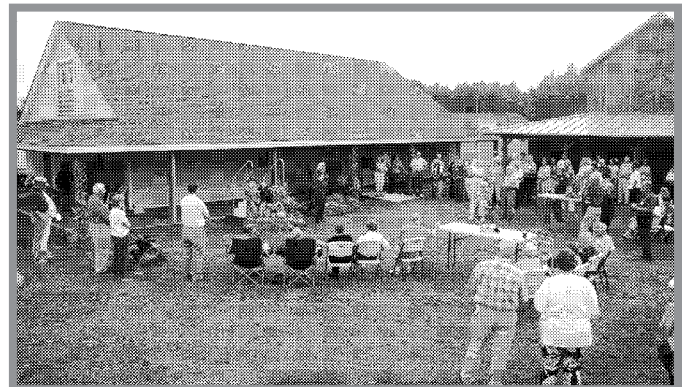
By MARTHA TALLENT

Saturday, September 23 dawned a bit iffy and sported a forecast of showers late in the day. The NAPS Fall Social Committee needed a hand here. Already, Ernesto had dealt a blow by causing our party site at Bay Quarter Shores to be rendered useless four days before our event. All you party planners out there know that you can't drop a dinner party for 100 plus just anywhere!

Faster than a speeding bullet the committee networked and discovered the new transporta-

tion museum building at the Rice's Hotel/Hughlett's Tavern complex in Heathsville. It had everything – an interesting site, a great kitchen, room for parking, shelter if the rain came, and it was available. Thanks to Ellen Hollows, RH/HT Foundation director, a miracle had happened!

A second amazing piece was already in place, thanks to incoming Social Chairman Sandy Henbest's foresight. She had updated the e-mail addresses of all the members earlier in the summer. Asking for a response, *(See "Fall Social" on page 4)*



*Change of Venue – Despite Ernesto, the NAPS Fall Social finds a new location at the last minute – the new transportation museum building.*

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# Winning the War Against Phragmites

By LYNTON LAND

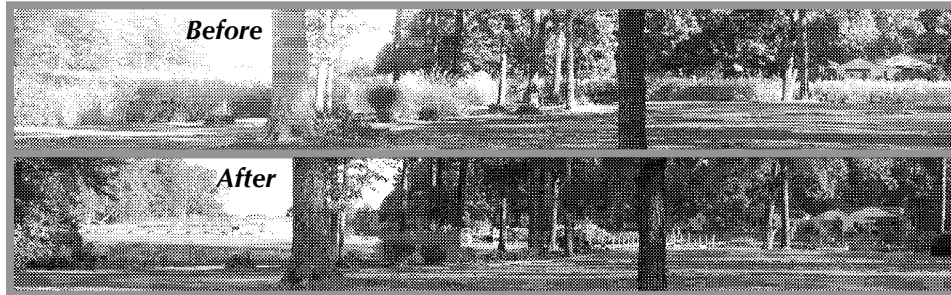
Our Phragmites eradication efforts began in 2002 at 14 sites using hand-held one-gallon sprayers. Seven of those sites are cured, a cure being declared only when no Phragmites can be found for two years in a row. Three sites will almost certainly be declared cured next year, three will require further treatment, and one was buried by Ernesto. We purchased backpack sprayers in 2003 when our list of clients had expanded to 28 sites. In 2004, 52 sites were treated, increasing to 69 sites in 2005. This fall 86 sites are being visited. All the sites are measurably improved, although the largest ones improve slowly. Backpack sprayers do not have enough range to apply herbicide to the center of large infestations. All we can do is to beat the patch back from the perimeter and crisscross it with trails unless the marsh is too soggy. The mature plants

at the center of the big patches combat this strategy by shooting out rhizomes the next year into the area treated the previous fall. Isabel and Ernesto haven't helped, and this fall the anomalously high tides associated with and after Ernesto have kept the marshes saturated and made the footing difficult. We considered buying a power sprayer but decided against the investment because it would not help with many of the infestations (unless we bought a marsh buggy, too) and because of maintenance and storage issues.

Plants that extend out into the marsh are sprayed individually,

attempting to keep the herbicide off the other plants as much as possible. Although this is time-consuming, it is better than broadcast spraying with larger equipment. Phragmites infestations in our pocket marshes are relatively small and, with a few exceptions, occupy less than a few thousand square feet. Unfortunately, these small stands are extremely widespread. Many stands exist on undeveloped property, where access from the water across a marsh is difficult and there is no access by land. Treating these stands will be a challenge for the future, and at the moment we ignore them.

One of our best success stories is from Northumberland Plantation, where there are five property owners side-by-side on Flag Pond (Swan Lake) with infested marshes. One house sits on a small point and was surrounded on three sides with so much 8-12 foot high Phragmites that the owner could not see the water



(see "before" photo). I was able to spray from the marsh side and from the lawn in September 2005 and the owner had the dead stalks removed during the winter, as I requested. The difference this year is like night and day. Almost no Phragmites is visible from her house ("after" photo) and she has an unobstructed view of the water. The small plants that survived were all sprayed this fall and will probably require additional attention for several years, but each year will require less effort and a complete cure is only a matter of time. \*

## Broadband Available In Northumberland...Somewhat

By MIKE AHART

When my wife and I decided to escape Northern Virginia in 2004, we went hunting for the exact opposite – lonely country roads, open landscapes, unspoiled shorelines, laid-back neighbors. But in our quest for a slower life, we still needed speed – internet connection speed. Al-

though disappointed that no high-speed connection was available from phone or cable companies, we made sure we could get satellite internet before we closed on our house.

Being "late boomers," we are not typical of Northumberland full-time transplants, who are mostly retirees, some of whom do not use computers, e-mail, or the internet. However, younger weekenders and the new crop of baby-boomer retirees are much more likely to demand broadband, especially with the trend toward semiretirement. These folks are much more likely to want to continue consulting part-time for companies in the D.C., Richmond, or Tidewater metros, or anywhere in the world, while living in their seaside dream home.

But what does broadband have to do with NAPS? Why would an organization promot-

ing responsible growth want to shoulder a cause that will clearly make development more in demand? It's the same reason NAPS supports efforts for every Northumberland home to have clean drinking water, electricity, and telephone service. Some may believe that the lack of broadband service affects only property values, and then just for us "come-heres," but the health of local economies will be more and more tied to its connectivity to vendors, customers, and other businesses. Economic health is the key to a locality's ability to protect its resources, environment, and way of life. Today's students who do not have access to the world might never find their place in it. Conversely, today's Northumberland students could very well develop the new businesses of the county, or support what could be a burgeoning "brain trust" of consultants and think tanks. These businesses could provide a roaring stream of revenue for the county, taking pressure off of property

(See "Broadband" on page 4)

### NAPS 2006 Calendar

The NAPS Board meets at the Northern Neck State Bank in Burgess at 9 a.m. each month on the Wednesday immediately preceding Northumberland Board of Supervisors meetings (second Thursday). NAPS members and prospective members are always welcome. Join the group and find out about all that NAPS accomplishes.

- October 11.....NAPS Board Meeting
- October 16.....Adopt-A-Highway Clean-up
- October 28.....Oyster "Taste-Off"
- November 8 .....NAPS Board Meeting
- December 13.....NAPS Board Meeting
- January 10.....NAPS Board Meeting

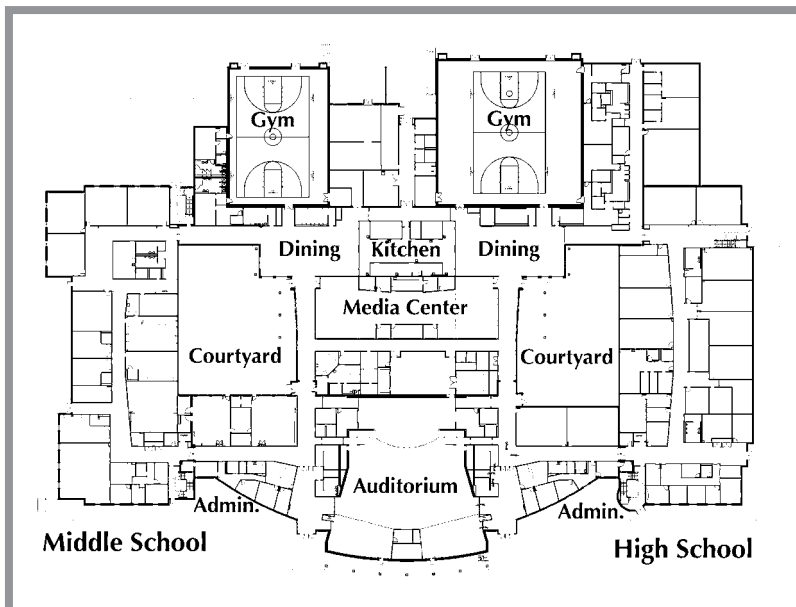
## Campus *(continued from page 1)*

views to Clint Stables, School Superintendent. Obviously, there will now be more opportunity for citizens to assist in student education in much better surroundings.

The primary purpose of the campus is to educate our students. But there are now many new opportunities to enrich adults. New sports facilities such as a track will be available, and the opportunity exists to add other facilities. For example, there are no plans or funds for tennis courts, but if a group of citizens were to propose building them, and identify funding, there is plenty of space on the campus. Similarly, if citizens want to add some kind of facility to the campus (say a cluster of badminton/volleyball courts, horseshoe pitches, etc...) they should discuss their proposal with Mr. Stables. Adult education classes can probably be organized if we know what the community wants.

The auditorium will provide a unique opportunity for entertainment, but citizens must take the initiative to ensure that the auditorium is used to advantage. It is not the school's responsibility to provide entertainment for the community. We need a group of citizens to take responsibility for scheduling a variety of different kinds of events that will benefit the entire community and at least be self-supporting.

Ask yourself: How can the campus best serve as many citizens of Northumberland County as possible...and how can I help? \*



## Fall Social *(continued from page 1)*

she e-mailed all with the change in location. That left only a few to be contacted by phone.

Voila! Our "moveable feast" slipped seamlessly to the new site.

The Chesapeake Bay Garden Club performed the second miracle. Rebecca Elston, Barbara Yinger, Patsy Sylvia, Lorraine van Wickler and Wonda Allain did an absolutely beautiful job of transforming the "canvas" into a theme with color, design and verve. They answered their own question, "What the heck is a 'Potomac Dreaming?'" They are amazing!

You who so graciously donated the beans, salads and tomatoes to make such a bountiful and beautiful table are the third miracle. The food was delicious and, as always, the perfect amount. Without you there would be no party!

To all of you, may I offer my thanks and the thanks of the entire NAPS Board. You make the NAPS Fall Social an event that we look forward to with pleasure.

Special thanks to Mike Ahart for helping move a lot furniture twice, ex officio committee members Jack Blackwell, Kathy Roletter and Ted Tallent for four years of bartending, and to my wonderful husband Steve. He was everywhere—lugging, shopping, running errands,



**Distinguished Citizen Awarded** – Lake Cowart, Sr. accepts the award for his son, Lake Cowart, Jr., in recognition of his leadership in responsible farming and aquaculture practices.

filling holes—doing all those things that help create the illusion of seamless ease.

On a personal note, I wish to thank the marvelous Fall Social Committee. You are an amazing, can-do, magical group of women — fun, creative, enormously capable — an absolutely fabulous combination. It has been my pleasure to work closely with Sandy Blackwell and Judy Burgess for four years, Diane Cichowicz for three, Elizabeth Stokes for two. Moira Nalls was not an official member until this year, although she worked shoulder to shoulder with us last year at the event. Wonderful Jan Ahart joined us this year as well as Wonda Allain (two hats for her) and Sandy Henbest, our incoming Social Chairman. Thank you, my friends.

The last miracle? It didn't rain! \*

## Angels In Our Midst

We have members each year who contribute to our Angel Fund to help defray NAPS costs for special projects. They want to be with us "in spirit" at the Fall Social, they want to remember someone else or they just believe in the work of the organization. Thank you, wonderful Angels, for your faith!

- Jane H. Blackwell**
- Lynn Broaddus & Marc Gorelick**
- Susan Christopher**
- Fred and Carole Cole**
- John Cooper**
- A. C. & Charles Davis**
- F. B. Harrington, Jr. M.D.**
- Barbara Hensler**
- Burris F. Husman**
- Alice & Don Imbur**
- Linda Jamison**
- Bill & Millie Koehler**
- Ralph Millar**
- Lew & Moira Nalls**
- Joe & Laura Peters**
- E. E. (Chip) & Nancy Rohr**
- Elizabeth C. Travers**
- Edward J. Wiley, Jr. M.D.**

**NAPS ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY – MONDAY, OCTOBER 16*****Volunteers Needed For Trash Pick-Up***

By ANNE BÉLANGER

**Date:** Monday, October 16, 2006 (with rain date of Thursday, October 19)**Time:** Meet at 8:30 am to get organized (coffee and fruit breads available). Set out on the road by 9:00 am. (Usually takes about 2 hours, depending on how many turn out to help)**Meeting Place:** Parking lot behind Wicomico Episcopal Church on Rte. 200 in Wicomico Church**Special Instructions:** Wear sturdy shoes, Gloves and a hat recommended. Orange safety vest provided.**RSVP:** Anne Bélanger – **580-8905** or e-mail to [blngr@skyelink.com](mailto:blngr@skyelink.com)***More About the NAPS Adopt-A-Highway Group***

- We are responsible for Rte. 200 (Jessie Ball Dupont Memorial Hwy.) from Wicomico Church to the Great Wicomico River bridge.
- We do the trash pick up at least 2 times a year, spring and fall.
- We average 30-40 bags of trash each pick up.
- We currently have a roster of 24 people to call on but the actual turnout tends to be only 10 or 12.
- We need a minimum of 10 people so that 5 teams of 2 people cover no more than 1 mile per team. Time commitment is 1-2 hours.
- We need more people to call on so that we can increase the turnout, resulting in less work and less time for all of us.
- And if we can get more people involved, we could consider lengthening our route or adding another one.
- Oh, and did I mention? Coffee and “donuts” served before. Bottled water is provided at your “work site” during the pick up. \*

**Broadband** *(continued from page 2)*

taxes as public needs grow, and provide resources for protecting – and restoring – the Northumberland way of life.

The time will come when an affordable broadband data connection will be as or more important to a typical family as a telephone or a TV. The Virginia legislature recognizes this issue as one which requires its help, but progress is slow. Luckily, technology and local business is pulling some of the weight.

Now back to our story. Direcway Satellite Internet (now Hughes.net) was installed almost immediately after we moved in. This is like a 2-way “DirecTV” or “Dish” connection to a satellite orbiting around the earth. Apparently we got a very good deal (\$45.99/mo.), and a premium speed, from a third party provider, but we were happy enough with the service...not even close to the speed we had with DSL in Northern Virginia, but an “always on” connection that brought up web pages pretty quickly. The hefty \$650 charge for equipment, shipping, and installation was staggering, but it was either this or nothing.

Now Hughes.net wants to charge us over twice what we were paying, or we can lower our service level and pay \$69.99 plus buy new equipment and pay a new installation fee.

When Kaballero.com installed a transmitter at Athena Vineyards for its fixed wireless broadband connection, we jumped to get the service. Although we paid \$225 for equipment and installation, \$34.95/month sounded great (1-year prepaid rate. Normal monthly rate is \$39.99). This service is like a 2-way radio connection to a nearby transmitter. A small antenna is mounted on our deck, with cable running into the house. We have had the service for only a couple weeks, but are pleased so far. Our tests of the actual connection speed has been between 500-600 kbps download, and 100-150 kbps upload. At this speed, web pages come up within a second or two, and downloading a 1MB photo or attachment takes about 15 seconds. Web surfing seems much quicker and more consistent overall than our Hughes.net satellite connection, even though the speed tests were much faster download but slower upload with Hughes.net.

The only other option I found was a new satellite internet company available locally, Wild Blue, and at a lower price than Hughes.net; however, its web site states that new service is currently unavailable due to high demand.

Dial-up, in comparison to any of these options, is a frustrating

***NAPS Board Retiring 3 Members***

As of February 2007, three NAPS Board members will have served their maximum consecutive terms, including the Treasurer and the President. You may recommend a candidate by contacting any Board member (contact info on p. 6). \*

crawl. If you're online any length of time each day, you really need an additional phone line, and, with the monthly charge for the ISP, you may end up paying \$50/month or more.

For those interested in using a broadband connection to replace your residential phone service (VoIP: Voice-over Internet Protocol), the Kaballero.com wireless connection is rated fast and consistent enough to work, but I have not found any VoIP provider with availability yet in this area (911 compliance issue). The savings from this type of telephone service can greatly defray the cost for the connection. For less than \$25/month, many VoIP companies offer unlimited local, long distance and even most international calls to Europe, Canada, and Puerto Rico, and very low rates to other countries. This includes voice mail, caller ID, call waiting, and call forwarding. That could save \$10-25/month compared to land line phone service. Plus, you can take & make calls anywhere you have an internet connection – not just your home. One down side is that you will not be able to make or take calls if your internet connection is down for any reason, such as during a power outage. (VoIP is not recommended for satellite internet (like Hughes.net and Wild Blue) because of the signal delay to the satellite and back).

Kaballero.com is expanding by adding more transmitters. The one at Omega Protein is near completion, and Horsehead is next in line. If you live within a mile or so from a transmitter you may be able to get service. If you are interested in getting service in your area, call Kaballero.com at 436-9428 and let them know. The owner, Graylend Horn, states that if 20-30 homes in an area are interested in service, and Kaballero.com can find a location for a transmitter they will make it happen. Usually the location is a business willing to let Kaballero.com erect a 65-foot “telephone” pole with an antenna atop. The one at Clegg’s Diesel in Wicomico Church can be seen easily from Route 200.

Neither I nor NAPS officially “endorses” Kaballero.com. We do encourage the efforts of any company, and any government help, to make affordable broadband connectivity available to everyone...and we've got a long way to go. Hopefully demand will expand the coverage area, and economies of scale will allow for lower prices to those who could not otherwise afford it. We have all either come here or stayed here because of Northumberland's way of life. Broadband is needed to help us preserve it. \*

# Get Involved With Zoning Issues

By LYNTON LAND

The Northumberland County zoning ordinance dates from 1974, with a few subsequent changes. This county has changed this past 1/3 of a century and more change is inevitable. It has become a retirement community dominated by full-time retirees and part-time weekenders attracted to the abundant waterfront. The 3 "Fs" no longer dominate the economy of the county: Forestry, is in slow decline and will continue to as land is lost to development and as recycling decreases the need for pulp. Fishing is dependent on the water quality in Chesapeake Bay, which is unsatisfactory and is not improving, with oyster aquaculture seeming to be the only opportunity on the immediate horizon for jobs associated with fishing until water quality improves. Farming is also in decline as land is lost to development, equipment gets bigger and requires less labor, and international commodity prices cut into profits. Sadly, it is agricultural fertilization practices that are responsible, more than any other source of pollution, for the dismal water quality in our local waterways and in the Chesapeake Bay.

Big-box stores will never come to Northumberland County, in my opinion. They cluster like flies around a pile of dung, and the dung is already located in Kilmarnock. Growth of light industry is also a myth. Why should somebody import raw materials to the Middle of Nowhere (as my son commented when he first visited our property), build something, and then export it to civilization? The future of the county rests with waterfront property, and new jobs will revolve around the waterfront and the needs of property owners and tourists. Full-time and part-time residents require services from skilled professions like plumbing, electrical, and boat repair and maintenance. Jobs requiring fewer skills include grounds maintenance (not just cutting grass but competent landscape maintenance), domestic help, and hotel/restaurant work. We have one excellent museum and another under development. Tourists will only be drawn here if we have something unique to offer them. If we offer them wall-to-wall condos and Route 360 and 200 that look like Gloucester Point or Route 360 where it enters Richmond, why will they come? We need to offer tourists, and ourselves, a unique rural atmosphere. Planned Growth with Order and Beauty is necessary, to use NAPS byline.

In order to keep our highways rural, we must concentrate commercial development in Villages and the Support Areas surrounding Villages. In order to retain open space we must limit housing density, including multifamily dwelling density, and mandate the principles of Low Impact Development. If we don't do these sorts of things, as the new zoning ordinances demand, we will wind up looking like everywhere else and the unique qualities of the county will disappear into the sameness that characterizes most of America's waterfront.

All citizens should get involved in the process. Read the ordinances and the proposed changes. They are available at the county web site; [www.co.northumberland.va.us](http://www.co.northumberland.va.us) and at the library. Make written suggestions to Luttrell Tadlock ([ltadlock@co.northumberland.va.us](mailto:ltadlock@co.northumberland.va.us) or P. O. Box 129, Heathsville VA 22473) so they become part of the record. Summarize your comments briefly at public meetings. For the next several months the Planning Commission will be occupied with zoning reform the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM in the new courthouse. Shortly, articles of the ordinance approved by the Planning Commission will be presented to the Board of Supervisors for additional public comment and adoption. The Board of Supervisors meets the second Thursday of each month, beginning at 5:00 PM, but the zoning issues will probably not be heard until 7:00 PM.

Reading the zoning ordinances carefully, thinking about them, and making useful comments is hard for many people. But the devil is in the details. Vague comments and non-specific emotional diatribes against some proposed modification of the ordinances are not useful. Change is inevitable and zoning ordinances dictate what kinds of changes are permitted. In an overpopulated world it is not possible for everybody to do anything they want with their land. Zoning ordinances must be fair to property owners, but they must also protect all citizens from inappropriate land use. What is appropriate for one person may not be appropriate for somebody else. The zoning ordinances should reflect what is appropriate for the majority of local citizens, and that is why all citizens should be involved in this contentious process. The upcoming months will likely dictate the economic and aesthetic state of Northumberland County for the next 1/3 century. Get involved! \*



## NAPS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please fill out application, cut page at dotted lines, place into No. 10 envelope with a check made out to "NAPS," and mail to:

NAPS  
P.O. Box 567  
Heathsville, VA 22473

(Please pass this application along to interested parties.)

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Category\* (check one):

- Individual \$15     Sustaining \$100
- Family \$25         Patron \$250
- Student \$1          Business \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (min. \$50)

\* The Internal Revenue Service has determined that NAPS qualifies as a tax-exempt organization under section 501 (c) (3) of the code. As such, dues and contributions to NAPS may be deductible by donor for tax purposes.

**I would like to participate in:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Adopt-A-Highway
- \_\_\_\_\_ Environmental Education
- \_\_\_\_\_ Finance
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fund Raising
- \_\_\_\_\_ Grass Planting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Monitoring County Boards
- \_\_\_\_\_ Membership
- \_\_\_\_\_ NAPS Exhibits
- \_\_\_\_\_ Phragmites Problems
- \_\_\_\_\_ Publicity and Newsletter
- \_\_\_\_\_ Special Events Coordination
- \_\_\_\_\_ Any Project Assignments
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

***BATTLE OF THE BIVALVES*****Taste-Off to Pit Native Virginia Oysters Against Imported Asian Species**

By LEE ALLAIN

A unique taste-off – setting classic native Virginia oysters head to head with imported Asian oysters – will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. Saturday, October 28, at Cowart Seafood Corp., in Lottsburg on Virginia's Northern Neck, where the seafood industry is a major part of the area's economy. Actually, both oysters are good, so this will be a win/win situation for oyster eaters.

The event, organized by the Northumberland County Economic Development Commission in cooperation with Cowart Seafood, also is being co-sponsored by Vision 2048-Northumberland Partnership, the Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship, and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in Gloucester.

"We want Virginia's tried and true oyster lovers, with their experienced palates, to taste our beloved native oysters and the new disease resistant Asian variety," Lee Allain, NAPS Director, and chairman of both the Northumberland County Economic Development Commission and Vision 2048, said.

The Asian oysters (*Crassostrea ariakensis*) are believed to be resistant to diseases MX and Dermo that are attacking Virginia's native oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*). Reproductively sterile Asian oysters are being tested under strict controls for possible introduction into the Chesapeake Bay to supplement the estuary's declining oyster population and to bolster the seafood industry so vital to the watershed's economy. Of course, more oysters in the bay will also lead to a cleaner bay.

Sale of tickets for the taste-off, priced at \$15 each, will be limited to 150 persons on a first-come, first-served basis. They can be purchased at EVB Banks in Heathsville, Burgess and Callao, and at the County Administrator's office in the Old Courthouse in Heathsville. There will be no ticket sales at the gate. Beer, Soft drinks and fried chicken will be provided as part of admission. Beer will be on sale for those who believe that oysters and beer should not be separated. There will be drawings for door prizes.

Cowart Seafood Corp. is located at 755 Lake Landing Dr., near Lottsburg. In April, Cowart Corp. won permission from the Virginia Marine Resources Commission to grow 4 million genetically engineered native oysters in steel and mesh cages submerged on 24 acres of the hard bottom of the Coan River, a tributary of the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay.

**CONTACT:**

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