

NAPS News

Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship
"Northumberland is going to grow. Let's help it grow with order and beauty."

Winter 2018

Volume 27 Issue 1



Welcome to the Winter 2018 Edition of NAPS News.

Here's what happened this season, but first, please mark your calendars for these important events:

Monday, April 9: NAPS Highway Cleanup, Wicomico Church (see page 4 for more info)

Saturday, April 21. NAPS Earth Day Festival, Heathsville (see page 4 for more info)

ALSO: NAPS will have a booth at several events this spring – see the Calendar on page 6

'Earth Day in February' Symposium Recap: >>>

Students Launch School Courtyard Beautification Project: Northumberland Middle School's Community Problem Solvers are renovating an outdoor space, adding shade, native plants, benches, artwork, and an outdoor classroom.

Join the NAPS Spring Highway Cleanup, Monday, April 9: Help your community for a couple hours, and meet some fellow NAPS members.

NAPS Holds Annual Meeting, Elects Board Members: Three new Board members were elected at the Feb. 10 meeting.

Visit NAPS at Farm & Field Day, April 14: Stop by our booth to say "hi" – and get a free NAPS reusable grocery bag.

Save the Date: NAPS Earth Day Festival: Our 4th Annual festival on April 21 will include dozens of displays and activities, including an all-electric vehicle exhibit!

Meet the Newly-Elected NAPS Board Members: We welcome Sandy, Rita, Eliot and Martha to use their knowledge and skills to guide NAPS into the future.

NAPS Provides Technical Support to Planning Commission: The county enlists NAPS' Lee Allain to help update its policies on residential and commercial solar.

Financial and Membership Reports: NAPS Treasurer and Membership Chair Roger Gruben crunches the numbers.

Memo from Mike: After an active 2017, NAPS has a very busy 2018 planned.

NAPS Officers & Board Members

NAPS Calendar: Please join us at these events!

To keep up with NAPS on a regular basis, check out our website: www.napsva.org.

– Gena McKinley, Editor

'Earth Day in February' Symposium

By Jay Walker

Preservation and protection were the common themes at the Earth Day in February environmental symposium program sponsored by the Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship (NAPS), Saturday, February 10, 2018, at the Heathsville United Methodist Church.

The program featured 10 presentations by Northern Neck organizations representing a full range of objectives and projects. Representatives from a lineup of non-profits, a federal service, and a large Northumberland County business

gave attendees an overview of their environmental programs and initiatives. The message delivered over and over was similar. According to NAPS the objectives were to underscore the need for environmental groups to share information and as a result, make Earth Day every day.

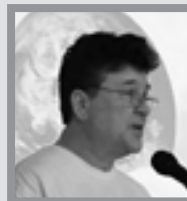
Early in the program the audience of about 60 people was treated to a performance of a skit written, costumed, and performed by fifth graders from the Northumberland Elementary



'Keeping our environment clean' was the theme of a skit by the NES Problem Solvers.

School Problem Solvers. Introduced by Shauna McCranie, head of NES Talented and Gifted Program, the plot set in a rain forest demonstrated how the good side solved the trash program against the bad side trash makers. Last year, the Problem Solvers practiced what they preached, cleaning up a beach and joining the NAPS creek clean-up, said McCranie.

The NAPS creek clean-up project was described by NAPS President Mike Ahart. He expanded on the theme by discussing the environmental harm of plastic bags that on average are only in use for 12 minutes before being discarded. He showed a slide of the reusable NAPS shopping bag that all of the attendees received at the event.



The message from Kim Schmidt, a Marine Biologist for the Reedville Fishermen's Museum, was how groups can take advantage of the museum's facilities and knowledge base. Noting that the museum is in its 30th year of honoring the Northern Neck's marine heritage, she listed the facilities on land and water, including an outdoor performance

(Continued on page 2...)

'Earth Day in February' Symposium (from page 1)

venue and an auditorium.

Schmidt stressed "Location, Location, Location." With docks, creeks, the Bay, and shoreline, environmental opportunities abound for groups to visit, including children. She announced that the museum will hold Clean the Bay Day on June 3, 2018. "Come visit us," Schmidt concluded.

An example of an environmental opportunity was provided by the next speaker, Deborah Marl, who described the Master Gardener's Shoreline Evaluation Program. The group analyzed and planted a demonstration shoreline garden at the museum. The program provides shoreline inspections, workshops, and a homeowner's guide to "Where water meets land." In all, the Shoreline Evaluation Program involves 12 to 15 members, she said.

Marl's message was simple: "No hard-escape."

Though not technically an advocacy organization, the Northern Neck Land Conservancy has achieved success with its Conservation Easement program, NNLC Executive Director Elizabeth Friel reported. In 2017 more than 2,000 acres of land were put in easement, 500 acres in Northumberland County. The Gascony and Ditchley estates, two quite different examples, were successes, she said, adding that conservancy activity has now expanded across the river to Essex County.

The Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge is managed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, but needs help from volunteer organizations, said Staff Biologist Lauren Cruz. She described projects ranging from eagle surveys to grassland and habitat management. Cruz supervises management activities including controlled burning and mowing.

"While national parks are mostly recreational facilities, our basic focus is on

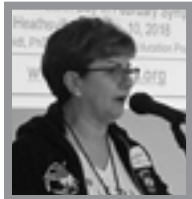
wildlife preservation," she remarked.

However, the refuge is not a wildlife monastery. Freedom Malik, who supervises outreach efforts, added that the refuge does indeed get support from joint activities with Virginia Native Plant Society, Audubon, and Master Gardeners. She said that volunteers from the Friends of the Refuge clocked 4,000 hours last year in a variety of tasks that included a popular public event. She made clear that some the refuge tracts are open for the public.

Jeff Wright, President of the Northern Neck Master Naturalists, reported on numerous projects undertaken in cooperation with the Virginia Departments of Conservation (DCR) and of Environmental Quality (DEQ), as well as other state organizations. There are 1,400 certified active Master Naturalists in Virginia. In the Northern Neck, which includes King George and Middlesex, 30% of Master Naturalists are in Northumberland County. "There's a lot going on here," he concluded.

"Protection and preservation" is how Kevin Howe, President of the Northern Neck Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society, described his organization. The group has an established annual plant sale that is its main source of funds and also spreads the native plant gospel. Howe pointed out that the Native Plant Society is working with the VDOT environmental protection representative to encourage saving native plants from mowing and spraying activities.

A major activity of The Wetlands Project, reported by Executive Director Kate Daniel, is to work with contractors, who represent a key factor in shoreline development. The Wetlands Project held a Contractor's Workshop and found that the contractors wanted more information. The result was a contractor's guide book with the environmental and regulatory factors in living shoreline planning. Daniel pointed out that as a small group The Wetlands Project depended on the Native Plant Society



and the Master Gardeners to complete the guide.

"Work with others. That's all we do—plan it, do it, and move on," she explained, adding that second-home owners in Northumberland County are a challenge, because they generally are not informed about wetlands protection and depend on, yes, contractors for advice.

Representing private sector projects, Burton Thrift, Environmental Regulatory Director for Omega Protein, described the nuts and bolts details of how the company has invested heavily in equipment and fishing vessel upgrades. These investments are both environmental improvements and money savers for Omega, he said. For example, he switched fuel from oil to propane for lower cost, cleaner burning, and easier handling. New driers are more efficient and reduce the familiar odor coming out of the Reedville stacks. New steam driers and a bay house serve the same objective of cleaner and better performance. Finally, Thrift said, Omega has switched to LED lighting.

After the end of the presentations, attendees were invited to visit with the speakers to gather more information and discuss projects.

The NAPS Annual Meeting was held after the program, including a recap of 2017 projects and events, plans for 2018, and the election of new NAPS board members (see separate article, page 4).



Speakers from area organizations spoke to dozens of attendees.

Students Launch School Courtyard Beautification Project

By Gena McKinley

When students at Northumberland Middle School walk into their courtyard now, they enter a place of pride. The bare space was once devoid of any color, artwork, or greenery. Thanks to the 7th-grade Community Problem Solvers (CmPS) group, it will soon have all of these, and much more. The students, members of the school's TAG program, have been working hard for months on a Courtyard Beautification project which they hope to complete this summer. By July, they plan to have a shade tent, garden beds with native plants, chairs and benches, art murals, and an outdoor classroom. The CmPS program involves students in identifying problems in their school or community and working together to come up with a solution.

Project director and NAPS board member, Shauna McCranie, is a firm believer in this kind of hands-on learning. "I think that Community Problem Solving is a learning tool that really invests students in real world projects-- problems that happen in their communities which they can solve with the help of each other," McCranie said. "It teaches them that there is no problem too big to tackle with the help of others and collaboration." The students launched their project by presenting a proposal to the school board and, not surprisingly, it was very well received by NMS principal Javornda Ashton and other school officials.

The students' first goal was to apply for funds to get the project up and running. Having received a grant for \$4,900.00, the students started right away on their courtyard make-over. Their first purchase was paint, and they got the entire middle school involved by having each student paint a rock to incorporate into an artistic installation: Spelled out with hundreds of colorful rocks is the word

P.R.I.D.E. (Politeness, Respect, Integrity, Determination, Excellence). They also painted rain barrels to collect water and formed a "Compost Crew" that will head up an initiative to collect scraps from the cafeteria and teach everyone at their school about the benefits of composting. For the students, it was important that their project be environmentally sustainable and edu-

cational, in addition to being beautiful.

To that end, they have enlisted the help of many community partners: Nancy Garvey and Kevin Howe of the NNK Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society have donated their time and expertise. After learning about the project, Jennings Boatyard donated plywood for the murals, and Allison's Ace Hardware employee, Alex Pridgen, has consulted with the group about their garden design and materials. NAPS has become involved as well, with board members Rita



Students work on a rock art project in the courtyard.

Johnson and Gena McKinley volunteering to help with the project.

In order to compete at the state level, the students had to write a six-page paper that included an outline of the project, a detailed plan of action and implementation, identification of challenges and resources, project outcomes, and a reflection. They also created a PowerPoint presentation, a website, two scrapbooks, display boards, a small-scale model of the courtyard plan, and a T-shirt design. They have accomplished all of this and more, meeting with Coach McCranie once a week and working many hours outside of school. The students learned recently that their hard work paid off: they won

first place for their division at the CmPS state level competition and will now head to the State Bowl in Powhatan. Meanwhile, there is still plenty of work to do. Now that the weather has warmed up, the students will be out in the courtyard soon, installing garden beds, digging in the dirt, painting murals, and planting native greenery, all with the goal of making their courtyard a beautiful, sustainable, and educational environment. As they put it in their report, "Finally our fellow students will now appreciate this beautiful outdoor space!" Look for before and after pictures of the courtyard in an upcoming edition of NAPS News.



Painted stones in a rock garden spell out "PRIDE" – Politeness, Respect, Integrity, Determination, Excellence.



The Community Problem Solvers present their proposal to the School Board.

NAPS MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The table presents the current membership status versus 2017 as reflected in the numbers of paid-up memberships this year to date.

Membership Level	2018 Paid	2017
Business	1	2
Family	30	49
Individual	16	24
Patron	2	2
Sustaining	18	21
Student	1	6
Total	68	104

Save the Date: NAPS Earth Day Festival

NAPS will be hosting the 4th Annual Earth Day Festival in Downtown Heathsville during the season's first Farmers Market – **Saturday, April 21, 2018, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.**, with dozens of exhibits and activities planned by NAPS and other local organizations.

Plans include the area's first "All-Electric Car" exhibit – check out the future of transportation!

The Earth Day 5K Run will start at 8 a.m.,

and this year's run will benefit area schools. Runners, walkers, and dogs (on leashes) are welcome, and there will be a free Tot Trot for kids 5 and under at 9:15. Visit runnnk.org to sign up and for more information.

Also on the Tavern grounds the same day, enjoy the Heathsville Wine Fest from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the Quilt Guild Show from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Hope to see you there!



Join the NAPS Spring Highway Cleanup, Monday, April 9

Join the NAPS Spring Highway Cleanup, scheduled for Monday, April 9, 2018 from 10am to approximately 12pm. We'll meet at the Wicomico Parish Church parking lot (5191 Jessie Ball DuPont Memorial Hwy). We will de-trash our section of Route 200 from Wicomico Church to the Great

Wicomico River (Tipers Bridge).

We work in teams of two to cover seven sections of the highway. To participate, please email or call Janice Mahoney at vervaville@yahoo.com or 580-3154.

NAPS Holds Annual Meeting, Elects Board Members

NAPS held its Annual Meeting, Saturday, February 10, 2018, at the Heathsville United Methodist Church following its "Earth Day in February" public environmental symposium (see separate article, pages 1-2).

President Mike Ahart called the meeting to order and welcomed the NAPS members in attendance. He listed a number of initiatives, programs and events NAPS conducted or sponsored in 2017, including:

- The "Tangier in Crisis" program
- Updated website and social media tools
- The 3rd Annual NAPS Earth Day Festival
- Community outreach at several events
- Sponsored students in the SeaPerch underwater robotics program
- STEM virtual/augmented reality technology project in the schools
- Scholarships awarded to five college-bound high school seniors

- Distributed free eclipse viewing glasses to hundreds of residents
- Bay Eco-Tour for 40 students in June
- Two Adopt-A-Highway cleanup events
- Dolphin encounter trip in September for over 100 elementary school students
- Beach cleanup at Kohl's Island
- Creek cleanup on the Little Wicomico R.
- Presented the Distinguished Citizen Award to Bill Estell at the NAPS Fall Social
- Published our quarterly newsletter
- Monitored and participated in county meetings of the county Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission
- Provided stewardship guidance to homeowners and communities

Ahart proposed that 2017 should serve as a road map for 2018, but to consider adding new programs, events, and initiatives. Several events are already in the planning phase, including the 4th Annual NAPS Earth Day Festival scheduled for April 21 in Heathsville, and another big creek cleanup in the fall.

Treasurer Roger Gruben delivered financial and membership reports. NAPS is financially in good shape and membership renewals have been coming in at a good pace so far this year.

Ahart thanked outgoing board members Greg Haugan, Myrtle Phillips, and Jay Walker for their work with NAPS and the community. He also thanked the previous co-presidents, Lee Allain and Lynton Land for their continuing efforts, and board member Janice Mahoney for chairing two committees.

A non-binding vote of confidence was held for board members Gena McKinley and Sandy Henbest, who filled vacancies during the previous term. The ayes were unanimous.

Three nominees were presented to the membership for the three board seats ending term, and no additional nominations were made from the floor. Martha Tallent, Eliot Levinson, and

Rita Johnson were voted to the board unanimously.

The annual meeting was then adjourned.

The election of officers took place at the NAPS monthly board meeting held March 9. The current slate of officers was reelected:

Mike Ahart, President
Janice Mahoney, Vice President
Shauna McCranie, Secretary
Roger Gruben, Treasurer

The following Committee Chairs were elected or reelected:

Fall Social Committee: Janice Mahoney
Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup Committee:

Janice Mahoney

Scholarship Committee: Martha Tallent

Communications/Publicity Committee: Gena McKinley

Educations Committee: (co-chairs) Rita Johnson & Eliot Levinson

Visit NAPS at Farm & Field Day, April 14

By Mike Ahart

NAPS invites you, your neighbors and friends to visit its display at the NHS Farm & Field Day, Saturday, April 14, 2018, at Northumberland High School from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The NAPS booth will be celebrating Earth Day a week early with a "Pledge Tree." Promise to do something new this year to help the environment, write the pledge on a "leaf" and stick it to the tree. Everyone who makes a pledge will receive a NAPS reusable grocery bag!

NHS Farm & Field Day marks the annual opening of the PAES greenhouse for the spring plant sale, and is an annual fundraiser. Visit the event Facebook Page for updates and more information.

NAPS FINANCIAL REPORT

Starting Balance 1/1/2018	\$11,325.35
REVENUES:	
Dues	\$3,490.00
Endowment	\$0.00
Other	\$15.00
Total Revenues	\$3,505.00
EXPENSES:	
Administration	\$483.96
Donations & Scholarships	\$0.00
Membership & Newsletter	\$27.00
Events	\$955.34
Projects	\$0.00
Other	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$1,466.30
CURRENT YEAR NET	\$2,038.70
Current Cash Balance	\$13,364.05
Other Assets	
Endowment	\$21,502.92
Total Other Assets:	\$21,502.92
Total Assets	\$34,866.97

Submitted by: Roger Gruben, Treasurer; Mar. 9, 2018

Meet Our Newly-Elected NAPS Board Members . . .

Sandy Henbest

Sandy Henbest describes herself as a "Campfire Girl forever." She credits her mother, the group's leader, for teaching her and her friends to camp, fish, hike, bike, boat, and cook over a fire. Sandy developed a love of the great outdoors at a young age and has been reluctant to come indoors since then, still an avid cyclist, kayaker, sailor, swimmer, and water skier. The Northern Neck provides plenty of opportunities for Sandy to enjoy nature and practice her strong sense of stewardship and protection of the environment. She is not new to NAPS, having served for many years in a variety of roles including participating in the roadside clean-up, organizing the NAPS fall social, interviewing NAPS scholarship students, among others. The Horsehead transfer station "Too Good to Throw Away" Shed Project, which NAPS helped fund and construct, was her brainchild and one of many recycling efforts she led. Before "retirement"--and we must use that term loosely when describing Sandy--she was an elementary school teacher first and then a real estate agent. She was born and raised in Grand Rapids, Michigan and earned her BA in Elementary Education at Michigan State University. We are grateful that Sandy now calls Northumberland County home and that she has joined the board of NAPS.

Rita Johnson

Also a retired educator, Rita Wright Johnson moved permanently to the Northern Neck in 2001 after retiring from Fairfax County Public Schools as a 7th grade science teacher. During that time, she took her students camping near Tangier Island with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Teaching about "Saving the Bay" drew her to this area and led to her decision to retire near the Bay. NAPS was the first organization Rita joined after moving to Mallard Bay in Heathsville. She became involved originally as the first webmaster after designing a web page for NAPS and gradually became more involved with school programs supported by NAPS. She also became very active in the Reedville Fishermen's Museum as a docent and general volunteer. Rita's other interests include singing with the Bethany UMC choir and the biannual concert of the Festival Hall Chorale. She rounds out her volunteerism in the NNK as a member of the Northumberland Lion's

Club and the Rice's Hotel/Hughlett's Tavern Foundation. Rita's three children and eight grandchildren remain her greatest joy. Her grandsons Brady and Teagan, 7th and 8th graders at Northumberland, helped inspire her interest in working with the school. She is eager to become more involved in NAPS as a board member and hopes to be able to write grant proposals to fund future programs.



Welcome to new NAPS Board members (from left) Martha Tallent, Eliot Levinson, Sandy Henbest, and Rita Johnson.

Eliot Levinson

NAPS also welcomes to the board Eliot Levinson, a retired school principal and, for the past 25 years, leader of an educational technology consulting firm. He has worked with hundreds of educators and is now focused on smaller schools that lack adequate access to technology. He is committed to bringing his love of science and technology into the schools and is planning to partner with Northumberland's new media center director Liz Hood on a number of STEM projects. He also serves on the boards of the YMCA and the Friends of the Library. A resident of the Northern Neck since 2006, Eliot lives on a farm in Northumberland County where he raises cows and trains service dogs.

Martha Tallent

Similar to Sandy, Martha's love of the outdoors began when she was a Girl Scout in Southern California where she was born and raised. Eventually, Martha made her way to the east coast, living in Bethesda, Maryland first and then Reedville full time for the past 20 years. Her previous affiliation with NAPS includes chairing the annual social, participating in creek clean-ups, and working alongside her husband, Steve, former NAPS president. Now on the board, Martha serves as the chair of the Scholarship Committee. Another former teacher, Martha taught high school physical education in California for 10 years and went on to earn advanced degrees in both education and social work. In addition to her work with NAPS, Martha somehow finds time to be active in the following local organizations: Northumberland Preservation Inc. (Shiloh School); Rappahannock Concert Association; Rappahannock Community College Educational Foundation; Reedville Fishermen's Museum; and the Greater Richmond Chorus of Sweet Adelines. Martha has traveled abroad extensively and remains an enthusiastic RV explorer.

NAPS Provides Technical Support to Planning Commission

The Northumberland Planning commission is currently updating County zoning regulations to include photovoltaic Solar installations. NAPS member, Lee Allain, has been requested by the Commission Chairman to provide technical support to this effort. During the planning cycle, Mr. Allain will attend all Commission meetings and work with the County Planner, Stuart McKenzie, until regulations are in place to support

this new technology. With his background as an Electrical Engineer and his personal experience in the Solar Energy field, Lee is well qualified to provide assistance. In fact, as part of recent NAPS STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) activity, Lee mentored a NAPS Solar Grant to our local high school. Under the Grant, senior math students actually built a 120 Watt solar panel that was subsequently used to charge

their cell-phones. He has also written articles on Solar collection for residences and is well familiar with Solar's application from home use to utility scale Solar Farms.

If you are interested in Solar Energy and its use and regulation within the County, watch the paper for County advertisement of a Public Hearing to review the final draft of proposed regulations.



Memo from Mike

What a great start to 2018 for NAPS! We kicked it off with a successful and enlightening “Earth Day in February” environmental symposium – and I sincerely thank all of the speakers and organizations who participated. We expect to be working even more closely with other

groups this year toward goals that we share.

I welcome our new members of the NAPS Board of Directors – Rita Johnson, Martha Tallent, and Eliot Levinson – as well as some new committee chairs. Plus a big “thank you” to outgoing board members Jay Walker and Myrtle Phillips, who have each served the maximum two terms.

NAPS has several outreach events scheduled already this year, including our 4th Annual NAPS Earth Day Festival on Saturday, April, 21. We have some new attractions planned, including an “All-Electric Vehicle” exhibit. We hope to see the whole community come out, including a bunch of NAPS members (wear a NAPS T-shirt if you can). This will be a great opportunity to meet your fellow NAPSters and other

environmentally conscious citizens, organizations and companies, as well as shopping at the first Farmer’s Market of the season. Don’t forget that there’s also the Earth Day 5K Run, the Wine Fest, and the Quilt Guild Show the same day, same place!

I want to thank all members who have already renewed their NAPS memberships – we have gotten a great response so far and are way ahead of where we were this time last

year. If you have not yet renewed, please do as soon as possible so that we can plan the budget for the rest of the year. If you lost your renewal notice, don’t fret – you can renew online with secure payment by credit card, debit card, or PayPal – just go to napsva.org/join-help... and please urge your friends and neighbors to help our community by joining NAPS! If you’d rather send a check, you can send the online form and mail a check to NAPS, P.O. Box 567, Heathsville VA 22473.

We hope you each enjoy this spring and we look forward to seeing you at events or helping with one of our many projects or programs. Best to you and yours...

Sincerely, Mike Ahart, President

NAPS Officers & Board Members

NAPS Officers

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NAPS Board of Directors

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NAPS Calendar

NAPS Board meetings will be held on the second Friday of the month at the Union Bank on Route 360 in Burgess starting at 10 a.m., unless rescheduled – see updates at www.napsva.org/naps-calendar

- Apr. 9, Mon.** NAPS Spring Highway Cleanup, 10am-noon, Wicomico Church
- Apr. 13, Fri.** NAPS Board Meeting, Union Bank at 10 a.m.
- Apr. 14, Sat.** NAPS Booth at Farm & Field Day, Northumberland High School
- Apr. 21, Sat.** Earth Day Festival, Heathsville Farmers Mkt., 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- May 11, Fri.** NAPS Board Meeting, Union Bank at 10 a.m.
- May 26, Sat.** NAPS Booth at the Strawberry Festival, St. Stephens, Heathsville
- June 8, Fri.** NAPS Board Meeting, Union Bank at 10 a.m.
- July 13, Fri.** NAPS Board Meeting, Union Bank at 10 a.m.