



NAPS News

Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship

Helping preserve the "Northumberland way of life"

Fall 2023

Volume 32

Issue 2

NAPS Awards \$6,000 in Scholarships

Three college-bound Northumberland High School seniors received scholarships from NAPS during the Senior Recognition ceremony at the school auditorium, May 22.

Scholarships of \$2,000 each were awarded to Mykel Cox, Camden Sisk, and Quinton Jones in recognition of their academic achievement and service to the community.

Cox is pursuing a career as a filmmaker and arts administrator and has been accepted to Temple University, Maryland Institute College of the Arts, and Virginia Commonwealth University.

Sisk is pursuing a career as a Naval Aviator and has been accepted to Embry-Riddle Aeronautical Univ., Virginia Tech, and Auburn Univ.

Jones is pursuing a law degree and a career in public service. He has been accepted to the University of Virginia, University of Richmond, Georgetown Univ., Howard Univ. and the College of William & Mary.

The NAPS Scholarships were presented by Martha Tallent, Chair of the NAPS Scholarship Committee, and NAPS president Mike Ahart. Of the 17 scholarship appli-

cants, 11 were interviewed by the committee. "It was very difficult to decide among the applicants...so many skills, so many strengths and such academic achievement. How proud I am to be in a county with such high-caliber students," said Tallent.



NAPS Scholarship Chair Martha Tallent, Quinton Jones, Mykel Cox, Camden Sisk, NAPS President Mike Ahart

NAPS Scholarship Committee members include Wonda Allain, Ian Brownlee, Roger Gruben, Nancy Millar, Ralph Millar, LaVar Rich, Alice Steve, Keese Williams, and Tallent. Selection of awardees was based on a combination of environmental and community service, academic achievement, college interest, and need.

To donate to the NAPS Scholarship Endowment Fund, visit napsva.org/join-help – or mail a check payable to NAPS to P.O. Box 567, Heathsville, VA 22473. Please write "Scholarship Fund" in the memo line.

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NAPS Highway Crew Clears 21+ Bags of Trash

A crew of 14 volunteers cleared the roadsides and gullies during the Spring 2023 NAPS Highway Cleanup, Sun., April 23. Twenty-one large bags of trash plus several oversized items were disposed of or recycled from Route 200 between Wicomico Church and Tipers Bridge.

“What a perfect day for it,” said team leader Alice Imbur. It was clear and in the mid-sixties, although heavy rains the day before left some soggy ditches.

“NAPS has led highway and creek cleanups for decades and hopes some day the litter problem will be solved,” said Mike Ahart of NAPS. “Drivers need to tie down their loads, stop throwing trash out of vehicles, and make sure loose trash doesn’t blow out of their pickup beds. It is not just an eyesore – roadside trash washes down into our creeks and rivers, adversely affecting wildlife and the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and tributaries. Trash also clogs up drainage gullies and pipes, making flooding worse. If you have an idea on how to solve this issue, email stewardship@NAPSva.org and let us know,” he added.

Join the crew for the next NAPS highway cleanup, Sun. Oct. 8, 2 p.m. – contact Alice Imbur at 580-4922 or donandally@gmail.com. We meet at the Wicomico Parish Church parking lot, and we’re done by about 3:30 p.m..

Want to adopt a stretch of roadway? Contact Stacy Messenger at 333-7930 or send an email to Stacy.Messenger@vdot.virginia.gov.



Highway clean-up volunteers (from left): Janice Mahoney, LaDanion Thomas, Alice Imbur, Don Imbur, LaVar Rich, Martha Tallent, KJ Ball, Karen Baker, Caroline Neale, and Mike Ahart. Volunteers not pictured: Ny’Kasia Carter-Rice, Samantha Johnson, Amiya Lee and Arnett Taylor.

NAPS Calendar

NAPS Board of Directors meetings are scheduled for the 1st Wednesday of each month, subject to change. All members are welcome to attend – submit agenda items to Stewardship@NAPSva.org – and please us know when you plan to attend so we can alert you of any changes.

- Oct 8, Sun. **NAPS Highway Cleanup**, Wicomico Church, 2pm-3:30pm (see article above)
- Oct 20, Sun. **Eco-Tour for Ninth Graders**, Belle Isle State Park
- Oct 26, Sun. **Eco-Tour for Fourth Graders**, Potomac River/Chesapeake Bay, from Lottsburg
- Oct 29, Sun. **NAPS Fall Social/Annual Meeting**, Tavern Meeting Bldg., Heathsville, 4-7pm
- Nov 1, Wed. **NAPS Board of Directors Meeting**, Tavern Meeting Bldg., Heathsville, 3:30-5pm
- Dec 6, Wed. **NAPS Board of Directors Meeting**, Tavern Meeting Bldg., Heathsville, 3:30-5pm
- Jan 3, Wed. **NAPS Board of Directors Meeting**, Tavern Meeting Bldg., Heathsville, 3:30-5pm

Smith Point Sea Rescue Selected for 2023 Northumberland Distinguished Citizen Award



Smith Point Sea Rescue provides a safety boat and essential volunteers for NAPS Creek Cleanup events including the Oct. 2022 cleanup of Cockrells Creek (pictured) – always “there when needed”

NAPS has selected Smith Point Sea Rescue to receive the 2023 Northumberland Distinguished Citizen Award. The formal presentation will take place at the NAPS Annual Fall Social on Sunday, October 29 at the Tavern Meeting Building in Heathsville, VA, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Smith Point Sea Rescue, Inc. was officially organized in 1974 as an all volunteer sea rescue service. Its members comprise the last remaining Volunteer Sea Rescue unit on the Chesapeake Bay.

Smith Point Sea Rescue had its origin in the heart and mind of Dr. Robert E. Beatley and his wife, Vera. The desire to form this squad followed the successful rescue of a father and two young children. This threesome had spent a chilly November night hanging onto the bow of a sunken boat in the bay near Reedville. In the fall of 1973, Dr. Beatley’s dream came true. Smith Point Sea Rescue was born.

Members share duties year round, 24 hours a day to maintain equipment, conduct training, and respond to search and rescue missions. Smith Point Sea Rescue covers the middle Chesapeake Bay between Potomac River and the Rappahannock River and the Potomac River from Ragged Point to the Bay. All members are volunteers.

Smith Point Sea Rescue does not charge for rescue services and receives no regular monetary support from any state or governmental agency. Funds are derived from donations and fund raising events such as the Spring Oyster Roast and the annual fall mail solicitation. Smith Point Sea Rescue has a tax-exempt status [501 (c)3] from the Internal Revenue Service.

Smith Point Sea Rescue is pleased to help boaters in their time of need. It monitors VHF Channel 16. Sea Rescue may also be reached through the Northumberland Sheriff’s office at 804-580-5221 or 911.

The Northumberland Distinguished Citizen Award is presented by NAPS to honor an individual, team, organization, or business that profoundly contributes to our community. For a list of past awardees, visit NAPSva.org/awards-and-grants.

Come to the NAPS Fall Social & Annual Meeting

Please join us at the NAPS Annual Fall Social & Annual Meeting on Sun., Oct. 29 at the Tavern Meeting Building in Heathsville, 4-7 p.m. – information and reply envelope are enclosed in this mailing. You can also register online at NAPSva.org/Fall-Social.

If you have any questions, comments or ideas, please email Stewardship@NAPSva.org.

See you at the party!



A Celebration of Nature at the NAPS Earth Day Festival

A beautiful and calm day greeted hundreds of visitors to the 8th Annual Earth Day Festival in Heathsville, Saturday, April 15, 2023, with dozens of exhibits, demonstrations, displays and activities. The event was free and open to the public.

Hosted by NAPS (Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship) and Rice's Hotel/Hughlett's Tavern in conjunction with the first Heathsville Farmers Market of the season, the eco-friendly event celebrated the Northern Neck's natural beauty and showcased the area's environmental stewardship resources.



At the entrance to the festival area, attendees were invited to add a "leaf" to the "Earth Day Pledge Tree" by writing down their individual pledges to help the environment. Each person who made a pledge was offered a complimentary NAPS reusable grocery bag.



Members of Drive Electric RVA traveled from the Richmond area to anchor the festival with a display of six all-electric cars of different makes and models. Owners answered questions about EV travel and ownership.



The Northern Neck Electric Cooperative returned this year with its display comparing the energy use of LED and incandescent light bulbs of the same brightness. It also showcased other environmental and energy-saving programs.



The Virginia Bluebird Society promoted its conservation and education projects, including establishing and supporting a statewide network of bluebird trails, nesting boxes and protection of bluebirds and other cavity nesters from predators.



The Northern Neck Master Naturalists promoted their program of training volunteers as educators, citizen scientists, and stewards helping Virginia conserve and manage natural resources and public lands.



The Northern Neck Beekeepers Club educated visitors on the benefits of bees and beekeeping, including honey and beeswax products. Its display included a live bee hive with an observation window.



The Rappahannock Wild-life Refuge Friends' impressive display of wildlife attracted both human and canine visitors. The organization's mission is to raise awareness of the Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge through education and support.

tal and tax benefits of placing land into a conservation easement, preserving its beauty and ecological value in perpetuity. Its annual Boots & Barbecue event is scheduled for September 30, 2023, at historic Mount Zion Farm in Lottsburg, VA.



Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District returned this year promoting the stewardship of natural resources by offering educational materials and technical assistance.

Congress for a national bipartisan solution to climate change.



Citizens' Climate Lobby returned this year to inform and engage visitors on their efforts to build support in

TOGA (Tidewater Oyster Gardeners Association) featured its familiar tank demonstrating how oysters filter the water. Visitors to the exhibit also learned about classes on oyster gardening in Virginia and how to purchase spat, growing cages and other materials.

The Northumberland County Anti-Litter Committee urged visitors to create or join Adopt-A-Highway groups, and informed them on the committee's initiatives, including its "Free Tire Disposal" event to collect and recycle discarded tires Saturday, April 29.



The NAPS tent displayed several recent initiatives, including its campaign to reduce the use of disposable plastic straws and grocery bags. Visitors were invited to join its cleanup events and projects. Martha Tallent reinforced the anti-litter theme donning a "Duchess of the Ditches" robe covered with discarded bottles, cans and bags, and topped with a trash-laden crown.

"A wonderful day all around! We sincerely thank all the exhibitors for their fun and informative displays, and we thank everyone who stopped by," said NAPS Outreach Chair Mike Ahart. "Please put April 20, 2024 on your calendars for the 9th Annual Earth Day Festival, and I hope to see you all there."

Northern Neck Master Gardeners promoted their Shoreline Evaluation Program – a community service initiative informing waterfront property owners about shoreline protection and stabilization options. The program recommends installing and maintaining "living shorelines" whenever possible due to the environmental benefits.



The Northern Neck Land Conservancy discussed the environmen-



NAPS Sponsors Eco-Tour for Fourth Graders

NAPS will be sponsoring an eco-tour learning experience for a group of Northumberland Elementary School fourth graders, arranged by Katie Wilkins, Coordinator of Talented and Gifted Services for Northumberland County Schools.

Students will tour Chesapeake Bay waters aboard *Bay Quest* – a 43-foot Chesapeake Bay Deadrise captained by David Rowe, a life-long local waterman and expert on Bay ecology. The event is currently scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 26th, 2023.

The *Bay Quest* serves as a floating classroom where students learn about the Bay ecosystem, key species such as crabs, oysters and fish, and their relationship with the people living and working on the Bay, rivers and creeks.

NAPS has sponsored several of these events in the past, and often there is room on the boat for a few NAPS members. If you're interested in joining the crew, email Stewardship@NAPSva.org. For more information on *Bay Quest* tours and services, visit www.bayquestfishing.com.



Capt. David Rowe teaches students about the Bay during a NAPS-sponsored eco-tour in 2018

NAPS Co-Sponsors Canoe Exploration for 24 Ninth Graders

NAPS and the Reedville Fishermen's Museum are co-sponsoring a field trip for 24 students in Katelyn Oren's ninth grade Environmental Science Class at Northumberland High School, scheduled for Oct. 20, 2023.

The field trip is part of Chesapeake Bay Foundation's (CBF) Virginia Rivers & Streams East Environmental Education Program.

CBF educators will lead students and teachers on canoe explorations of the Rappahannock River and creeks near Belle Isle State Park.

Students will probe the Bay's biologically diverse tidal waters to learn about the effects of waterside land uses and study the area's plants and wildlife.



Students explore the lakes, ponds, and tidal rivers of eastern Virginia by canoe with the Virginia Rivers & Streams East Environmental Education Program (Photo credit: Kenny Fletcher)



NAPS Creek Cleanup a Success!

More than 50 students, watermen and other caring citizens teamed up for the NAPS Creek Cleanup of the Great Wicomico River, Sunday, Sept. 24, with land base at Mila Landing near Wicomico Church. Full article and details with slideshow will be available soon at NAPSva.org.

The cleanup was sponsored by NAPS and Omega Protein, with essential help from Smith Point Sea Rescue and the Reedville Fishermen's Museum. Special thanks also to Pamela Russell for providing the beautiful venue. To sign up for next year's cleanup, email Stewardship@NAPSva.org.



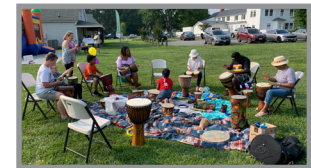
NAPS Out and About:

NAPS enjoys reaching out to the public at community events and festivals. In addition to the NAPS Earth Day Festival and other events earlier this year, we attended four more since Memorial Day Weekend.

NAPS' LaVar Rich & Julie Hendrickson greet Krista and Camden Sisk at the NAPS tent at the **Strawberry Festival**, May 27th (photo right) at St. Stephen's Church in Heathsville. Camden Sisk received a NAPS Scholarship this year.



Attendees formed a drum circle at the **Juneteenth Fair**, Sat. June 17 at the Heathsville Tavern grounds (photo right).



We enjoyed great weather at **National Night Out**, Tues. Aug. 1st at Northumberland High School (photo left, listed from left: NES Principal Martha Williams, NAPS' Katie Wilkins (also TAG



Coordinator for the schools), NMS Assistant Principal Dawn Taylor, and NMS Principal Shelli Lipton, National Night Out is held each year sponsored by the Northumberland Sheriff's Dept.

We thoroughly enjoyed the **Northern Neck Land Conservancy's Boots & Barbeque** Sat., Sep 30th at Mount Zion Farm in Lottsburg. Ignacio Angeles Coggin poses with NAPS' Mike Ahart donning the "Duke of Ditches" robe and crown (photo right).



Welcome New NAPS Board Members

At its May meeting, the NAPS Board of Directors elected Ian Brownlee and LaVar Rich to fill vacancies on the NAPS Board until regular elections by the membership at the 2023 NAPS Annual Meeting to be held during the Fall Social, Sun. Oct. 29 at the Tavern Meeting Building in Heathsville.

Ian Brownlee's 30+ years with the State Department's Foreign Service took him all over the world, and he is now ready to contribute to one of the world's special places – the Northern Neck. He and his wife Holly moved into their house on Hull Creek in 2015, and have devoted themselves to improving its shoreline, learning how to raise oysters, and expanding their pollinator garden so their bees have a food source.

Ian's work overseas showed him first-hand the importance of protecting our environment. He saw hills in Honduras stripped of trees to provide firewood, but also saw how carefully Mexican subsistence farmers worked their small plots so that they continued to produce generation after generation. He looks forward to continuing to learn here on the Northern Neck.

Ian is filling the board seat of Gena McKinley, who recently moved to North Carolina to take on a new role as professor in the English department of Cape Fear Community College and to care for her parents. Gena has been a member of NAPS for over 6 years and has served on the board since 2017, serving as president this past year. She has also served as Communications Chair and Creek Cleanup Team Leader, and has served on other committees throughout her tenure. She has also participated in most of NAPS' outreach events throughout the years. NAPS extends a hearty "thank you" for her leadership and dedication.



LaVar Rich

LaVar Rich is a Northern Neck native and a graduate of Northumberland High School. After receiving a B.A. in Sociology from Hood College, LaVar moved to the Washington D.C. area to start a career in hospitality at The Park at 14th restaurant & nightclub. LaVar later shifted his passion to real estate, helping clients navigate through one of the most important decisions they will ever make.

Although he is still in the real estate business, LaVar has returned to the beauty and tranquility of the Northern Neck to reconnect with nature and give back to the community. In his free time, LaVar enjoys spending time with family and friends, and helping people in need.

LaVar is filling the board seat held by Julie Hendrickson, who moved back to Northern Virginia with her husband, Ralph. Julie served on the board since 2019, shortly after they joined NAPS. She participated in NAPS' outreach events, school programs and other initiatives, including the creation of the "Duchess of Ditches" robe and crown which has become a symbol of NAPS' anti-litter campaign. We thank Julie for her years of service with NAPS and our community.



Ian Brownlee



NAPS News Extra

Fall 2023

NAPS to Hold Annual Meeting During Fall Social - Accepting Nominations for Board Members

NAPS will hold a brief 2023 Annual Meeting during its Fall Social, Sunday, Oct. 29, at the Tavern Meeting Building & grounds in Heathsville.

All NAPS members are welcome to attend the annual meeting even if they do not register for dinner. The annual meeting will be held between dinner and dessert (approximately 6pm). The Fall Social starts at 4pm and ends at 7pm. Those who attend the annual meeting only will be treated to NAPS' ice cream sundae bar!

NAPS is accepting nominations for Board of Directors seats to be voted on by the membership during the meeting. Please send your nominations via email to Stewardship@NAPSVa.org, or by phone or

message to 804-313-0274. If you cannot attend the meeting or social, you may request to vote via email or phone using the same contacts - we will reply with the names and bios of the candidates. Hope to see you there!



A few more photos from the **2023 NAPS Creek Cleanup**, Sunday Sept. 24, Great Wicomico River - see brief article in the enclosed "NAPS News" and full article and slideshow soon at NAPSVa.org



FINANCIAL REPORT

Total assets are \$1397 less than the September report. The endowment fund declined in value by \$637. After correcting data entry errors, dues for the year are lower by \$50, and endowment donations are lower by \$170.

Event expenses are up by \$550 due to a payment to Bay Quest Fishing Charter for the Floating Classroom program. Expenses for the Creek Cleanup and a few other items have not yet been accounted for.

Submitted by: Roger Gruben, Treasurer; 4-Oct-2023

Starting Balance (1-Jan-2022)		\$5,617.31
REVENUES:		
Dues	\$2,444.26	
Endowment	\$720.00	
Other	\$76.94	
Total Revenues		\$3,241.20
EXPENSES:		
Administration	\$479.00	
Donations & Scholarships	\$6,030.00	
Membership & Newsletter	\$0.00	
Events	\$550.00	
Projects	\$1,020.20	
Other	\$36.13	
Total Expenses		\$7,089.00
CURRENT YEAR NET		-\$3,847.80
Current Cash Balance		\$1,769.51
Other Assets:		
Scholarship Endowment:	\$26,468.99	
Total Assets		\$28,238.50

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

We sent out only one previous appeal in 2023 for membership renewal and have 20 less paid memberships than last year's total. We have nine new memberships for 2023.

Membership Level	2023	2022
Business	0	1
Family	26	33
Individual	16	16
Patron	1	5
Sustaining	15	20
Student	0	3
Total	58	78

Welcome New NAPS Members:

Robin Blake
 Noah Dockery
 Cassidy Lane
 Ted & Lee Ellett
 Sherri & Luke Geiger
 Lisa & Terry Murphy
 LaVar Rich
 Ben & Brenda Swecker

NAPS Officers & Board Members

NAPS Officers

President.....Mike Ahart804-313-0274..... michaelrahart@gmail.com
 Vice PresidentKevin Howe.....571-232-4592..... juniper@erols.com
 SecretaryLesley Newman520-343-9804..... newman.lesley@gmail.com
 TreasurerRoger Gruben.....804-435-1863..... rogergruben@gmail.com

NAPS Board of Directors

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 Ian Brownlee.....(Term Expires 2023).....301-767-7025 igbrownlee@yahoo.com
 Tommy Armstrong(Term Expires 2023).....804-453-4254..... tommarie870@gmail.com
 LaVar Rich(Term Expires 2024).....804-445-6888..... lavarich72@gmail.com
 Martha Tallent.....(Term Expires 2024).....804-453-6832..... tallent@va.metrocast.net
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