



NAPS News

Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship
Helping preserve the "Northumberland way of life"

Summer 2022

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NAPS Awards Scholarships to Four College-Bound NHS Graduates



NAPS 2022 college scholarship recipients (from left): Thomas Neale, Hallie Shackelford, Channing Reynolds and Jessica Lee.

Four college-bound Northumberland High School seniors received college scholarships from the Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship (NAPS) during the Senior Recognition presentation ceremony at the school auditorium in Claraville, VA, Wednesday, May 18, 2022.

Scholarships of \$1,500 each were awarded to Thomas Neale, Hallie Shackelford, Channing Reynolds and Jessica Lee.

The scholarships were presented by Mike Ahart, NAPS president, and Martha Tallent, chair of the NAPS Scholarship Committee. Ahart praised the students for their achievement and thanked the students for their contributions to the community. In addition

to awarding scholarships, NAPS encourages students to volunteer for its creek, roadway and shoreline cleanups. NAPS also sponsors STEM, nature and environmental stewardship projects, events and programs in coordination with the schools.

The NAPS Scholarship Committee considered financial need, academic accomplishments, community focus, clarity of vision, probability of success, and alignment with NAPS' environmental sustainability values, according to Tallent.

To donate to the NAPS Scholarship Endowment, 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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A Beautiful Day to Celebrate Nature at the NAPS Earth Day Festival

The 7th annual Earth Day Festival in Heathsville welcomed hundreds of visitors to enjoy dozens of exhibits, demonstrations, displays and activities Saturday, April 16, 2022. The event was free and open to the public.

Hosted by NAPS (Northumberland Assn. 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 this year. Each person who made a pledge was offered a complimentary NAPS reusable grocery bag. Young and old alike added a bit of art to the "Draw on Me" board.

NAPS' Julie Hendrickson reinforced the anti-litter theme donning her "Duchess of the Ditches" robe covered with discarded bottles, cans and bags, and topped with a trash-laden crown.



to convert energy from the sun into electricity. The NAPS-sponsored labs will be used year after year with new students to rebuild and reconfigure (see related article at NAPSva.org: Northumberland High School Students Build Solar Labs)

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. For more information about the courses and other outreach efforts, visit its website.

The Northern Neck Beekeepers Club educated visitors on the benefits of bees and beekeeping, including honey and beeswax products.

The Rappahannock Wildlife Refuge Friends' impressive display of wildlife attracted both human and canine visitors. The organization's mission is to raise awareness of the Rappah-



The Northern Neck Electric Cooperative returned this year with its display showing how little energy LED light bulbs use compared to incandescent bulbs of the same brightness. It also showcased its Cooperative Sunshare program, allowing members to purchase blocks of solar-generated energy.

The Northumberland High School Physics Solar Lab exhibit demonstrated the components needed

Busy Day at the Strawberry Festival

Strawberries, dozens of vendors, and perfect weather attracted crowds to the Strawberry Festival, Saturday, May 28, 2022 at St. Stephen's in Heathsville, VA.

Mike Ahart, Julie Hendrickson, Gena McKinley and Alice Imbur welcomed visitors to the NAPS tent to catch up on NAPS projects and programs, and the Duchess Of Ditches robe and crown put a smile on many faces. The outfit was created by Hendrickson using trash she picked up from the roadside, and is used as one of NAPS' exhibits about the litter problem in the county. "It's not just unsightly," said Ahart, NAPS president, "the trash eventually washes down into the creeks and rivers...it also clogs drainage which makes flooding worse," he added.

NAPS thanks St. Stephen's for a wonderful event, and each of the many visitors who stopped by to say hello.



Julie Hendrickson dons the Duchess Of Ditches robe and crown at the Strawberry Festival

annock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge through education and support.

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 environmental and tax benefits

of placing land into a conservation easement, preserving its beauty and ecological value in perpetuity. It has also announced that its Boots & Barbecue event is back and scheduled for September 17, 2022, at Waterloo Farm in King George, VA.

A crew from the Northern Neck Native Plant Society showcased a variety of plants recommended for area gardens and landscapes. The use of native plants not only protects beneficial pollinators and other plant and animal species native to the Northern Neck, but can save considerable time and money, as they tend to be hardy, low-maintenance, and require less water and pesticides.

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 Friends of the Rappahannock tent focused on the importance of a clean watershed to support vibrant wildlife and aquaculture. Visitors were encouraged to volunteer for future projects and programs.

The new Northumberland County Anti-Litter Committee urged visitors to create or join Adopt-A-Highway groups, and informed them on the committee's initiatives, including a "tire amnesty day" to collect and recycle discarded tires.

The NAPS tent displayed several recent initiatives, including its campaign to reduce pollution from disposable plastic straws and grocery bags. Visitors were invited to join its annual fall creek cleanup and other events and projects.

"We couldn't have asked for better weather or a bigger crowd of visitors," said NAPS president, Mike Ahart. "The exhibits were wonderful...I can't wait until next year's festival."

See more photos at NAPSva.org



Northumberland Schools and Anti-Litter Committee awarded grant for tire amnesty event

The new Northumberland County Anti-Litter Committee has hit the ground running with several initiatives. Northumberland Public Schools secured a \$4,800 grant from the River Counties Community Foundation for a Tire Disposal Project proposed by the committee to be scheduled for this fall.

Of all the trash recovered during NAPS creek and roadside cleanup events, tires pose a special problem – they cannot be thrown out with the trash. You must take them to a tire shop or tire recycling center and pay up to \$4 per tire. “Now there is a solution,” said Shauna McCranie who applied for the grant on behalf of the schools. The tire amnesty event will allow residents to dispose of tires free of charge. Volunteers will earn community service hours, a free lunch and a t-shirt. McCranie expects many students will volunteer for the event, along with NAPS and other citizens & groups.

The Anti-Litter Committee also submitted a grant proposal for a “Cover Your Load” campaign, according to Mary Martha Stewart, president of the committee. “Seems like most people think the ordinance is just for commercial vehicles” said Stewart. So be sure to check the bed of your pickup to make sure nothing can “jump” out during your travels.

The committee is also gearing up to expand the Adopt-a-Highway program, hoping to find new individuals and groups to adopt a total of 56 miles of roadway in the county. “We will be giving away starter kits to those who adopt” including grabbers, gloves, vests and other items, said Stewart.

Please adopt a couple miles of roadway. Not only will it make our county more beautiful, it keeps our creeks clean and mitigates flooding. To sign up, or for more information, contact Stacy Messenger at 804-333-7930 or Stacy.Messenger@vdot.virginia.gov.

In Memoriam: Earline Walker

Long-time NAPS member Earline Walker of Callao died on March 9, 2022, at 82 years old as a result of gastrointestinal complications, according to her obituary. She is survived by her husband, Jay; her son and daughter-in-law, Patrick and Lia Kerwin of Alexandria; and her daughter and son-in-law, Deidre and Jason Brown of Sacramento, CA; and her sister, Karen McCallum of Norwalk, OH. Her beloved grandchildren are Tess and Sophie Kerwin and Hutch and Lucy Brown.

Born in Lorain, Ohio, Earline lived in New York and moved to Northumberland County in 2003. She immediately became a Master Naturalist, an advocate for the Virginia Native Plant Society, and a NAPS member and volunteer. She was also a major innovator for the Friends of the Northumberland Public Library. Her environmental activities also included working with the Friends of the Rappahannock Wildlife Refuge.

She also planned the native plant demonstration garden at the Old Courthouse in Heathsville, found and registered native orchids at Hickory Hollow, monitored bluebird nests in Kilmarnock and maintained native plants at Menokin.

“She will also be remembered for her sparkling eyes, laughter, and enthusiasm for pinot grigio!”

A special thanks to the Northern Neck Master Naturalists, which made a generous donation to NAPS in her memory, adding “We honor her in this small way, and hope that her legacy lives on in the environmental activities of others for years to come.”





NAPS News Extra

Summer 2022

See enclosed Newsletter
for more NAPS News!

NAPS Takes Out The Trash

On a hot, sunny day, volunteers removed roadside trash during NAPS Spring Highway Cleanup Sunday, May 22, 2022, on Route 200 from Wicomico Church to Tipers Bridge.

The crew filled 18 extra-large bags with garbage, and dozens of larger items were staged on the roadside to be picked up and disposed of by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

“A big ‘thank you’ to the adults and students who helped volunteer on the hottest day yet” to improve our scenic roadways and preserve our watershed, said team co-leader Alice Imbur.

To volunteer for the next NAPS highway cleanup, or to learn how you can “adopt” a stretch of roadway, please email Stewardship@NAPSva.org.



NAPS volunteers (left to right) Don & Alice Imbur (team leaders), Bonnie Reif, Martha Tallent, Gena McKinley, James Baker, Itzel Santamaria, Roger Gruben, Janice Mahoney, Harrison Williams, Layla Leo, Arthur Carver, Hoyt Wheeland, Quinton Jones, Michele Jennings, Mike Ahart, and Anna Pridgen.

Welcome new NAPS Board Members and Nominees

The NAPS Board of Directors elected Anna Pridgen and Lesley Newman to fill vacancies until regular elections by the membership at the Annual Meeting scheduled for Sunday, August 21, 2022. They are each nominees for election by the membership.



Anna Pridgen is a rising senior at Northumberland County High School and has been a NAPS student member for five years. She moved to the Northern Neck from North Carolina with her parents in 2016. Anna has participated in several NAPS events over the years, including creek and highway clean-ups, Earth Day festival, and the Sea Perch competition. She looks forward to serving on the board of NAPS.

Anna is filling the seat of Rita Johnson, who resigned recently to make time for other commitments. Rita has been a member of NAPS for over 20 years and has served on the board since 2018. She has also served as Webmaster, Creek Cleanup Coordinator, and a member of the NAPS Scholarship Committee and other committees through her tenure. She regularly participates in outreach events throughout the year. NAPS extends a

hearty “thank you” for her past and future help in our community.

Lesley Newman is a writer, educator, and activist who grew up in the Northern Neck. She works as the Tidal Educator for Friends of the Rappahannock. In addition to joining the NAPS board this year, she is a Master Naturalist and serves on the board as the basic training committee chair. As an educator and daughter of the Northern Neck, she is fully committed to “cherishing and preserving” this land and water for future generations. Lesley has been a member since learning about NAPS at the Earth Day Festival in 2018. She lives in Heathsville with her partner, Casey.



Lesley is filling the seat of Shauna McCranie, who served the maximum 6 years as a NAPS board member and served as Secretary throughout her tenure. Shauna also served on many committees and as liaison to the Northumberland County Schools where she was Coordinator of Gifted Services until recently taking a position with Lancaster County Schools. NAPS thanks Shauna for her many years of service with NAPS and the community.

NAPS Calendar

NAPS board meetings are held monthly at the Northumberland County Public Library meeting room, however a new regular schedule is being determined. All members are welcome to participate – please submit agenda items to Stewardship@NAPSva.org – and please let a board member know if you want to attend so we can provide the date/time .

- Aug. 2, Tue.. . National Night Out**, Tavern Grounds, 5pm-7pm
- Aug 21, Sun. NAPS Annual Meeting & Special Program**, Tavern Meeting Building 2pm-4pm
- Sep. 17, Sat. . Boots & Barbecue**, Waterloo Farm, King George, 1pm-4pm
- To Be Announced Soon: NAPS Fall Creek Cleanup, NAPS Fall Highway Cleanup, NUCPS & Anti-Litter Committee Tire Disposal Event, NAPS Fall Social**

Absentee Voting for NAPS Board of Directors Members

If you have a current membership with NAPS and cannot attend the Annual Meeting, you may vote for Board Members by email.

Send an email to stewardship@NAPSva.org with the subject line “Vote.” We will email or message you the names and biographies of each of the nominees so you can respond with your choices or write in your own nominee(s).