Population and Demographic Changes
By Mary Miller

The Demographics Research Group of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service* at the University of Virginia has released its 2019 Report, which details both population and demographic changes in Virginia’s towns, cities, and counties since the 2010 Census, and issues population projections for the next 20 years.

According to the report, Virginia’s total population will continue to increase, by 14.3% by 2040 – mostly in the northern suburbs and the Richmond and Hampton Roads areas. As expected, other decades-long trends will persist: rural counties will continue to lose population, rural populations will continue to be older than the state average, and young people will continue to leave rural areas – for college and other skills training, for the military, and for entry-level career jobs in urban centers.

Although Accomack’s full-time population increased by 0.5% shortly after the 2010 Census, and Northampton lost 2% of its population at about the same time, both counties are projected to lose population over the next 20 years – Accomack down by 10.5% and Northampton down by 15%.

Previous Weldon Cooper research for the years since the 2010 Census has shown that both counties’ full-time population changes have been due more to “natural increase” (more deaths than births), than to “outmigration” (more people moving away than moving in). Due mainly to an influx of retirees, both counties had more people moving in than moving out. Without that retiree trend, the Shore would be losing population at a greater rate. (Ed. Note: see September 2017 ShoreLine “Virginia Population Shifts Continue”)

All the towns in both counties lost population since the 2010 Census: Belle Haven, Cheriton, Nassawadox, Onancock, Exmore, Melfa, Painter, and Wachapreague lost between 3% and 5.4% of their residents. Cape Charles lost only 0.3% in population.

Demographics Are Changing, Too

Ages of residents in both counties continue to follow national trends for rural counties – rural residents continue to be older than state averages. An influx of retirees into both counties affects these figures – just as they affect the population projections.

By 2040, more of Virginia’s population will fall into the 20- to 59-year-old age group than any other. In Accomack, the largest age group will be between 50 and 74 years old, and in Northampton, between 45 and 79 years old. The smallest age group in Virginia will be between 80 and 85 years old in 2040; however, in Accomack the smallest age group will be between 20 and 49 years old, and in Northampton, between 0 and 19 years old.

And as has happened in many parts of rural America, there has been an increase in residents of Hispanic origin since 2010. The increase in Virginia was 29.9% and in Northampton, 25.1%. But in Accomack, the increase was just 6.2% – one of the lowest increases in the state.

These figures and projections will continue to help local governments plan for the next 20 years – for determining essential services, for health care needs, for education and the available workforce, and for the future of the local economies.

*http://demographics.coopercenter.org

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The connection between art and conservation has a long history. The area that became Yellowstone National Park was once known simply as a harsh and wild place. In 1871, Thomas Moran sketched the area while a photographer documented it. His final paintings were the first color renderings widely seen of Yellowstone. Thomas Moran presented the work to Congress and to the public, and the resulting support led to our first national park in 1872. As the National Park Service acknowledges, “As artists celebrated nature on canvas, city dwellers who hung landscape paintings on their walls came to believe that the natural scenes depicted were worthy of preservation.”

Much of the appeal of preserved lands comes from their light human presence. We are a species that tends to bend nature to serve our needs. Yet our connection to “unspoiled” landscapes is a critical need for all of us. As Thoreau expressed it, “We can never have enough of nature. We must be refreshed by the sight of inexhaustible vigor, vast and Titanic features…. We need to witness our own limits transgressed, and some life pasturing freely where we never wander.” Artists from Ansel Adams down to many of our Eastern Shore artists of today play a critical role in celebrating wild places. They build support and understanding of the beauty of preserved lands while not harming them in the process.

On the Eastern Shore, we are blessed in having access to many wild places and breathtaking natural beauty. We have a rich tapestry of preserved land sprinkled up and down the peninsula. The Virginia Eastern Shore Land Trust (VES Land Trust) alone has over 14,000 acres privately held but permanently preserved. But there has always been some tension between preservation and access. How can we share our preserved lands, many of them privately held, while preserving their use by their owners, and the wildlife that often depends on their solitude?

As one way to broaden that access, the VES Land Trust is once again sponsoring their “Paint the Shore” event. In early October, local artists will fan out to preserved properties around the shore to paint “plein aire,” out in the open on location. The VES Land Trust is partnering with The Nature Conservancy for access to the barrier island system, and with the Barrier Islands Center, which is providing the display space.

Open-air painting challenges the artists to paint what is directly before them. “I loved painting those remote areas that were made available to us for those few days,” remarked Clelia Sheppard, an artist participant at the last event. As Laura Craig, another of the artists, put it, “Anything that will preserve the beauty of the region, whether it is a painting that survives into posterity, or a conservation effort that aims to prolong the life of this special place, is a pursuit that I will enthusiastically lend myself to.”

This year’s work will be on display at the Barrier Islands Center in Machipongo on October 11 and 12. There is no charge for visiting the exhibited art works on either day. For more information on the VES Land Trust, go to veslt.org.
At the August 8 meeting of the Board of Directors of the Eastern Shore Broadband Authority (ESVBA), Robert Bridgham, Executive Director of the Broadband Authority, provided a status report of the current network, showing:

- 12 free WiFi hotspots in service (see box), from Chincoteague to the Southern Visitors Center
- 52 Wireless Internet Service Provider (WISP) sites in service, with 1 new site underway
- 23 cell towers on the service
- 325 linear miles of fiber, including the 80-mile fiber optic backbone cable from Virginia Beach, across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, then north along US 13 and the railroad to Wallops Research Facility
- Regeneration facilities in Wallops Island, Tasley, Exmore, and Cheriton
- 495 total buildings on the service (357 active customers, 122 pending construction, 16 pending contracts)

Bridgham noted that the number of active customers has increased from 267 in May to 357 in August—a 34% increase in 3 months. They are currently deploying 4 crews in the field plus their internal personnel, and will begin advertising more heavily as the number of customers awaiting construction decreases. Current wait time for connection is 6 to 8 weeks.

In the 25 communities where Fiber to the Home (FTTH) is currently available, the current adoption rate is 10.2%, with 357 active customers out of 4,867 homes (7.34%), an additional 122 customers (2.51%) awaiting construction, and 16 (0.33%) with pending contracts. The “take rate” (combined active and signed customers) varies from 2.27% (Cheriton) to 54.76% (Church Neck). Harborton was the first community opened, in November 2016; Nocks Landing is the most recent, in January 2019.

The ESVBA is currently expanding the network, to include sections of all 19 incorporated towns in both counties (94.42 miles), and 36 road extensions to individual communities (109.58 miles), for a total of 204 miles. Bridgham noted that one third of the network expansion has been engineered, with 22 miles (11%) built (see table below). For the expansion in the towns, construction was completed in July for Keller (1.80 miles), Onley (2.57 miles), and Wachapreague (3.34 miles). For the road extensions, construction was completed between March and July for Nassawadox to Hare Valley (1.37 miles), Franktown (1.18 miles), and Wilsonia Neck (4.54 miles). Bridgham is currently working on a timeline for completion of the network expansion.

The ESVBA is a public not-for-profit company formed by Accomack and Northampton Counties under the Wireless Service Authorities Act (Chapter 54.1 § 15.2-5431.1 et seq). More information about ESVBA can be found at www.esvba.com, including maps of the latest service areas (under “Recent News”). A list of current communities with service, and an interactive tool to search by street address, is available at www.esvba.com/residential. Residential speeds start at 10 Mbps download, 5 Mbps upload, and go up to 100 Mbps download/50 Mbps upload. In addition to residential service, the network provides ethernet service for WAN/MAN connectivity, with speeds from 1 Mbps to 10 Gbps, and SONET (Synchronous Optical Networking) service from T1 (1.5 Mbps) to OC-192 (1 Gbps) and up to OC-768 (40 Gbps). A list of current WISPs on the “open access” network is available at https://esvba.com/service-providers/.

### Current Broadband Network Expansion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Total miles</th>
<th>Engineered Miles</th>
<th>Engineered %</th>
<th>Built Miles</th>
<th>Built %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 incorporated towns</td>
<td>94.42</td>
<td>44.19</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>15.43</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 extensions</td>
<td>109.58</td>
<td>32.13</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6.59</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td><strong>204.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>76.32</strong></td>
<td><strong>37%</strong></td>
<td><strong>22.02</strong></td>
<td><strong>11%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomack County</td>
<td>133.60</td>
<td>40.39</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10.86</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton County</td>
<td>70.40</td>
<td>35.93</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>11.16</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Free WiFi Hotspots**

- Robert N. Reed Waterfront Park, 4077 Main Street, Chincoteague
- Bloxom Tower, 26129 Shore Main Drive, Bloxom
- Parksley Town Pavilion, 18468 Dunne Avenue, Parksley
- Mary N. Smith Center, 24577 Mary N. Smith Road, Accomac
- Accomac Central (Sawmill) Park, 24387 Joynes Neck Road, Accomac
- Accomack County Airport, 29194 Parkway North, Melfa
- Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce, 19056 Parkway Road, Melfa
- Exmore Town Park, 3386 Main Street, Exmore
- Custis Park, Silas Court, Exmore
- Indiantown Park, 7399 Indiantown Road, Eastville
- Cape Charles Museum, 814 Randolph Avenue, Cape Charles
- Eastern Shore Welcome Center, 32463 Lucius J. Kellam Jr. Bridge-Tunnel, Cape Charles
Local Company Seeks to Transform Lives
Submitted by Eastern Shore Training and Consulting, Inc.

Eastern Shore Training And Consulting, Inc. (ESTACI) presented ESTACI’s Anchor Awards again this year to “recognize the work of outstanding women of courage and conviction on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.” Executive Director Gerald Boyd announced that Pastor Alice Coles, Executive Director of Bayview Citizens for Social Justice, and Jane Cabarrus, President of Northampton NAACP, are being honored with the Anchor Award. Each recipient of this Award takes decisive actions to relieve human suffering through the elimination of racism, sexism, and poverty, and her sacrificial service holds in place love and justice in an indifferent, intolerant, and inhumane social environment.

Ms. Ava Gabrielle-Wise provided the Keynote Address, and Dr. Heather Tucker served as Master of Ceremonies. The theme for this year’s Luncheon was “400 Years of Womanist Determination.” A Womanist, according to Pulitzer Prize-winning author Alice Walker, “is someone who is committed to critically analyzing sexism, anti-black racism, and their intersection,” Boyd said. The Awards Luncheon took place Saturday, August 3, at the Historic Onancock School and Cultural Center.

Polly Boyd, Director of ESTACI’s Empowering Women and Girls programs, announced that 2019 Young Leaders Scholarship winners were Ms. Tamyra Jones and Ms. McKaley Parks, who were each presented with a $2,500 Scholarship Award. “The ‘Empowering Women – Overcoming Racism, Sexism & Poverty’ group created and continues to sponsor the annual Young Leaders Scholarship Awards; we are extremely proud of all the Scholarship finalists and winners and encourage their growth into Womanist leadership in their own right,” said Ms. Boyd.

As stated in their 501(c)3 documents, ESTACI’s mission/purpose is “to reduce the number of families involved in the criminal justice and child welfare systems through preventive, educative, peer-counseling, and mentoring approaches to substance use, domestic violence, re-entry, and addiction.” Boyd continued, “To this end, we provide training, consulting, and mentoring to hard-working, low-wage/low-wealth individuals and families, organizations, and communities in Northampton and Accomack Counties who otherwise would not be able to access these resources.”

When individuals and families who are struggling with a range of complex and compounded mental, emotional, and behavioral health problems are provided effective training and mentoring, they are guided to develop nascent gifts and talents, and to strengthen marketable skills. A transformed mind leads to a transformed life. Hope, combined with life skills-building, maximizes the capacity of individuals and elevates them to the status of productive members of society – thus promoting public safety, saving taxpayer dollars, increasing the success of the business community, and enhancing the quality of life for Shore residents.

More information about the organization and upcoming events, such as the Music & Soul Food Festival to be held in Exmore on September 28, is available at www.estaci.org, or contact Gerald at the ESTACI office, 3100 Main Street in Exmore, or 757-656-3460.

Cold Cucumber-Buttermilk Soup

‘Tis the season – all kinds of fresh, garden vegetables piling up in the fridge. Zucchini, tomatoes, string beans – and cucumbers. Maybe you’re ready for something cold, decadent, delicious – something that uses up some of that veggie stash.

Cold soup is summer’s gift – this no-cook recipe is fast and easy. Every cuisine that has cucumbers available seems to have a version of this summer soup. This is an old-fashioned version, with fresh herbs, from the kitchen gardens of New England.

Take 5 medium or 2 large English/Persian cucumbers peeled, deseeded, and cut into small chunks; set cucumbers in strainer, toss with salt, and let drain for 30 minutes.

In blender or food processor, combine drained cucumbers with 6 chopped scallions, ½ cup chopped parsley, 2 tbsp dried dill weed, juice from 2 lemons, 1 quart buttermilk, and 1½ cups sour cream.

Pulse and process until smooth. Add salt and pepper to taste. Chill overnight; shake or stir well before serving.

Cape Charles Comprehensive Plan Workshop
by Mary Miller

In July, about 50 Cape Charles residents and officials gathered for the Kick-off Workshop to review and update the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. Attendees were encouraged to put forward wide-ranging ideas on how the process would work, who would participate, how new and current needs would be addressed by the Plan, and how the Town might work better for full-time and seasonal residents, and for visiting tourists.

There were many overlapping ideas for discussion among the work groups:

• Infrastructure, including water quality, drainage, parking, sidewalk and street maintenance, and public restrooms
• Beach issues, including maintenance, accessibility, safety, lifeguards, and parking charges
• Resilience planning for stormwater and drainage
• Workforce housing

Other ideas for further discussion included recreation and a community center, future use of the railroad property, development outside town in Northampton County’s Town-edge Zoning District, and how to retain a historic, small-town feel.

Participants were particularly concerned that all stakeholders, residents, property owners, businesses, public service workers, churches, watermen, other harbor users, and visitors have a chance to participate in the planning. Outreach suggestions covered everything from surveys (online, in water bills, and by mail), to old-fashioned broadsides posted on the utility pole in front of the post office and the bulletin board at the beach. And many felt that community meetings ought to be held where the people are – in church halls and Heritage Acres, for instance.

Stakeholder meetings will be planned to move forward with a Town vision statement and specific goals and strategies.

Editorial comment: ShoreLine will continue following both Northampton County and Cape Charles as they review and update their Comprehensive Plans. Thanks to Cape Charles staff: Town Planner Zach Ponds and Deputy Clerk Tracy Outten for their professional assistance.

The Sounds of the Tide
Submitted by Cora Johnston, Director of the Anheuser Busch Coastal Research Center (ABCRC)

On Saturday, September 21, from 4 to 6 PM, the public is invited to join composers, scientists, and scholars from the University of Virginia and across the world for the opening of a listening exhibit at the Barrier Islands Center.

Tides set the rhythm of life on the Eastern Shore, but have you ever listened to 8 full years of ebb and flow? Young oysters can find healthy reefs by their sound, but what do oyster reefs sound like?

The Coastal Conservatory’s opening reception will give you the opportunity to experience these sounds. Members of the Conservatory will explain how the compositions were made and how they could be valuable to conversations on coastal change. Use individual listening stations to experience nature recordings, data sonifications (i.e., numbers translated to sound), and eco-acoustic compositions. Listeners can hear the Eastern Shore anew, and also experience the sounds of coastal change in Australia and the Arctic.

This exhibition comes to the Barrier Islands Center from the Coastal Futures Conservatory – an initiative of the University of Virginia (UVA) that integrates arts, humanities, and sciences to stimulate public engagement with coastal change. It is a collaboration between the Virginia Coastal Reserve Long-Term Ecological Research program, UVA’s Environmental Resilience Institute, the Institute for the Humanities & Global Cultures, and the Department of Music at UVA.

The exhibit will remain at the Barrier Islands Center from September 21-December 21, 2019.

Oil Spill Community Open House
Eastern Shore Community College • Great Hall
September 10, 2019
10 AM to 2 PM

Federal and state representatives and technical specialists will be present to share information and answer your questions about key oil spill response issues. September 10 is the first of a 4-day, full-scale Area Exercise Program to prepare for possible marine oil spills, which could impact sensitive environments and the community on the Shore. An actual deployment of oil spill equipment will occur in Wachapreague on Sept. 13.

Please plan to attend the Open House!
It’s Election Season! Can I Recycle All Those Signs? RECYCLING CORNER

On November 5, we’ll have elections for state and local offices, so between now and then we’ll see plenty of yard signs along our roads. But what do we do when the election is over? Here’s how to keep them out of the landfill:

Reduce:
• Make sure you’re not taking more signs than you can realistically use; if the campaign ends up with a lot of signs left over, they’ll order fewer signs next time.

Reuse:
• If the candidate might be running again, and there’s no date on the sign, save it for next time (the candidate may also collect these, to store them for the next election in 2 or 4 years).
• If the sign is no good but the metal wire stand is still usable, save the wire stand, for the next election or the next time you need a sign for a special event.
• If it’s a good, sturdy sign (think corrugated paper or plastic), save it for the next rally or special event, and cover it with construction paper for your own message.

Recycle:
• The metal wire stand (if it’s rusty or bent, or you can’t save it for another time) is steel, and can be recycled in the scrap metal containers at each convenience center.
• Paper signs (even glossy or corrugated paper) can be recycled at each convenience center.
• Thin, flexible plastic signs can be recycled with plastic bags (at Food Lion and Walmart).

Sturdy, corrugated plastic signs cannot be recycled, and have to be tossed (or reused; see above).

SOURCE: Recycle Those Campaign Signs! Here’s How.
https://www.keeptrukeegreen.org/recycle-campaign-signs/

EPA Plans to Curtail the Ability of Communities to Oppose Pollution Permits

According to national press reports, the EPA will soon announce changes to its Environmental Appeals Board – which would eliminate the ability of individuals or community groups to appeal pollution permits before a panel of agency judges, without piling on legal fees and mounting lengthy legal cases. However, the industrial pollution permit holders would retain their right to an appeal for an increase in pollution permits. After publication of the change, there will be a period for public comment before implementation.

The EPA action was announced by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER),1 a legal support group for government employee whistle-blowers. But industry representatives appeared to be aware of the proposed changes in advance, and supported the elimination of “burdensome red tape.”

“Often the Environmental Appeals Board is just sort of an expensive and time-consuming stop along the way to the court of appeals,” said Russell Frye, a lawyer for several companies that have received and appealed such permits, including oil companies, power plants, and paper-and-pulp factories. “This would eliminate that step for my clients.”2

1 A 501(c)(3) non-profit, environmental protection organization of local, state, and national government, natural resource, and environmental professionals
2 The Hill. Communities no longer able to appeal pollution permits under forthcoming EPA rule. By Miranda Green - 07/15/19

Bargain Basement Auction Prices in Cape Charles

Three people often make a crowd at the court-ordered real estate auction sales in front of the Northampton County Courthouse – and 1 of the 3 is often the auctioneer. But a real crowd of about 30 showed up in August when 34 parcels, mostly in Cape Charles, went on the block. The lots ranged from a string of 14 commercial lots along Stone Road owned by HJ Rail, LLC (Registered Agent, Richard S. Foster), to several lots owned by Bay Creek and the Baymark Construction Corp (Registered Agent, Richard S. Foster), to the Bay Creek Welcome Center on Stone Road.

The string of small lots along Stone Road sold for less than 20% of their county assessed value. A larger commercial parcel in the same area, assessed at $460,000, sold for $94,000. Many lots in Bay Creek and in and around Marina Village sold for 50% or more of their assessment. The Bay Creek Welcome Center was sold for almost its assessed value. Most of the parcels were sold to local residents.

Distress sale prices don’t affect the counties’ assessed values for tax purposes. However, it is generally expected that the auction proceeds will cover the amounts of unpaid real estate taxes. All sales will need to be approved by the court before closing.
HELP WANTED

Bike Tour Volunteers

Interested folks can contact Sally Williams at bike-tour@cbes.org or call 757-678-3551.

- Need people for 7 rest stops: St. George’s Episcopal Church in Pungoteague, Travis Chapel in Oyster, Wachapreague Town Park, Happy Union off Wardtown Road, Morley’s Wharf in Wardtown, Maplewood Farm between Exmore & Nassawadox, and Boxtree near Machipongo.
- Need people at Exmore Town Park to give out t-shirts and answer questions. Shifts from 10:30 AM - 1:30 PM, or 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM. Need another there 4:30 PM - 6 PM to help clean up and return things to Eastville.
- Need 2 more SAG (rider help) people with trucks, air pumps, and wrenches to help riders with transportation, fix a flat, or give directions. VERY IMPORTANT!
- Need a volunteer to put signs out on Rt. 13 Friday evening or Saturday morning before 7 AM, and pick them up after 6 PM and return to Eastville.
- Need people with vehicles to deliver supplies to Exmore and lunch and rest stops on Friday, October 25 – all day.
- Need at least 6 more volunteers for lunch help at Cedar Grove Farm near Bayford from 9 AM until 3:30 PM. May need to help take things back to Eastville.

If you have any questions, contact Sally. She is just starting to line up volunteers and needs about 50! It’s fun and you will be supporting CBES largest fundraising event.

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General Assembly Wrap Up

Hundreds of new bills were signed into law and took effect on July 1 – many of which didn’t get much publicity, but can affect our daily lives:

- More than 600,000 drivers had their driving rights restored without paying the $145 fee.
- No one under 21 is allowed to buy tobacco and nicotine products, including vaping products. Also, these are now banned from school property.
- Animal abuse resulting in the animal’s death is now a Class 6 felony – 5 years in prison and up to $2,500 in fines.
- Stricter penalties established for drunk driving convictions – those that result in serious injury to an accident victim are now considered either a Class 4 or Class 6 felony – 2 to 10 years in prison.
- Restaurants with ABC licenses can promote happy hours with descriptive phrases like “Thirsty Thursday” – and can now list prices.

- Nurses and school professionals are allowed to administer naloxone to counter an opioid overdose. This is not mandated; the policy decision will be up to each school system.
- Registered student patients can take medical cannabis products at school, and school health care providers can administer them.
- Virginia allocated funds to give taxpayers $420 million in refunds next fall to compensate for higher state taxes on 2018 income. This is a consequence of the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act signed by President Trump.
- The General Assembly approved $125,000 for the Beehive Distribution Program, which provides free beehive equipment to Virginia residents. Anyone age 18 or older can apply to receive up to 3 beehives.
Community Calendar

Note: Please verify times and places prior to traveling to meetings.

Accomack County
757-787-5700
www.co.accomack.va.us

1st Wed Board of Zoning Appeals
10 AM, Accomac

2nd Wed Planning Commission (PC)
7 PM, Accomac

3rd Tues School Board
6:30 PM, Accomac

3rd Wed Board of Supervisors (BOS)
5 PM, Accomac

4th Tues PC Work Session
7 PM, Accomac

4th Thur Wetlands Board
10 AM, Accomac

Northampton County
757-678-0440
www.co.northampton.va.us

1st Tues Board of Zoning Appeals
10 AM, Eastville

1st Tues Planning Commission (PC)
7 PM, Eastville

2nd Tues Board of Supervisors (BOS)
6 PM, Eastville

3rd Wed Wetlands Board
Meets as needed, Eastville

3rd Wed PC Work Session
5 PM, Eastville

4th Tues BOS Work Session
5 PM, Eastville

4th Thur School Board
6 PM, Machipongo

Included:

CBES
Candidate Forums Insert

Also This Month

Comprehensive Plan Workshops in Northampton County and Cape Charles
Oil Spill Preparedness
The Sounds of the Shore
Recycling Corner: How to Deal With Election Signs After the Big Day

For membership and other CBES information:
www.cbes.org

Check your label – if it doesn’t show ‘19 or Life, you need to renew (cbes.org).