



FROM THE BRIDGE *COMMUNICATION*



“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.” These words by George Bernard Shaw exemplify the

importance of Nanticoke Watershed Alliance’s mission to embrace constructive, open dialogue as a means of problem solving. This is the fifth and final article dedicated to the core values of the Alliance. Along with conservation, education, scientific integrity, and collaboration, communication is the backbone of any Alliance program or initiative. Communication goals include strengthening our organizational message, creating opportunities for constructive dialogue between diverse voices, and effectively sharing water quality information with various audiences.

The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance strives to protect the natural, cultural, and recreational resources through dialogue, collaborative outreach, and education. As our organization expands our audience throughout the

watershed community, we have discovered a widespread misconception over who we are and what we do. For example, we do not participate in traditional advocacy, as other organizations fill that role in the watershed. In turn, we advocate for collaboration, often allowing opposing interest groups opportunities to communicate.

The Alliance is currently working with Opinion Works on a watershed-wide survey to garner public awareness and opinion of our organization and efforts. Goals include gaining a sense of our public perception and getting community input on our programs and initiatives. We will use these findings to structure a communications and messaging campaign. These efforts will ultimately help the Alliance to effectively protect the resources of the Nanticoke River.

Secondly, we are planning upcoming Partner Meetings focused on relevant “hot button” conservation issues. Currently, there are many polarizing issues in our area, and our organization would like to bring together opposing viewpoints to

begin the process of communicating towards a common goal. The leadership of our Board is well-suited for this task, as we have representation from agriculture, industry, conservation, academics, government, and more.

Lastly, the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance continues to improve its ability to communicate water quality and other resource information with various audiences. From students and teachers, to homeowners, community groups, donors, partners, Board members, and beyond, the Alliance continually works to enhance its communication skills and outreach resources. The development of a messaging campaign will enrich these efforts. As always, we value your input and would love to hear from you. Please let us know your thoughts on this newsletter and other communication tools and how we can improve our relationship with the watershed community.

Feel free to contact me at
410-430-3273 or
shellybaird@nanticokeriver.org.

NANTICOKE CREEKWATCHERS EIGHTH ANNUAL TRAINING & SEASON KICK-OFF!

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2015

10:00 AM-4:00 PM

BALDCYPRESS NATURE CENTER AT TRAP POND

STATE PARK

33587 BALDCYPRESS LANE, LAUREL, DE 19956



Nanticoke Watershed Alliance is now recruiting new Nanticoke Creekwatchers for 2015! Join an award-winning water quality monitoring team by attending the March 21 training. Need more info?

Contact Beth Wasden at
443.944.1175 or at
bethwasden@nanticokeriver.org.

[REGISTER AT HTTP://CREEKWATCHERS2015.EVENTBRITE.COM](http://creekwatchers2015.eventbrite.com)

LIVING SHORELINES WORKSHOP

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2015

10:00AM-1:00PM

WESTSIDE COMMUNITY CENTER (BIVALVE, MD)

**The workshop is free to attend, but
pre-registration is required.**



Speakers from the NWA, Maryland Sea Grant, Maryland Department of the Environment, Environmental Concern, and Bryan and Sons will share information about the relationship between water quality and living shorelines, the benefits of living shorelines over hardened structures (when applicable), the permitting process, project examples, and contractor services.

This project is funded by the Chesapeake Bay Trust



[REGISTER AT HTTP://LSBIVALVE.EVENTBRITE.COM](http://lsbivalve.eventbrite.com)

NANTICOKE RIVER WADE-IN & REPORT CARD LAUNCH



Save the Date for NWA's Annual Wade-In event happening on Thursday, July 16, 2015.

Attendees will enjoy a free lunch, learn about the health of the river through the launch for the

2014 Nanticoke River Report Card, and experience live animals up close! Participants are encouraged to get their feet wet to help evaluate the river's condition using the "sneaker index."

Stay tuned for more details!



SAVE THE DATE: JULY 16, 2015 @ TRAP POND STATE PARK

NWA ELECTS FARMER AS PRESIDENT

By Joe Layton



As the recently elected president of the NWA, I would like to introduce myself and share with you a few of my thoughts about our organization. I am a full-time farmer and have

been all of my life—the last 45 years or so. On our family farm, we raise corn and soybeans, which all goes to feed Delmarva chickens. We also grow wheat and wine grapes, and we operate a winery, Layton's Chance Vineyard and Winery.

Like most farmers, I also consider myself an environmentalist and conservationist. I believe that the great resources of the Nanticoke and Chesapeake areas have been protected by the stewardship of farmers over the last



400 years. We, as most farmers, have used the best science available, operating under a soil conservation plan developed through our local Soil Conservation District.

However, it is unusual to have a farmer as a leader of an environmental or "green" organization, but then again, I see NWA as an unusual organization. We look for the good, not the failures, in the watershed. We welcome all groups, not just one side, to our table. We seek areas where we can cooperate to find solutions, rather than blaming others and trying to force change on them. We accept that there are issues such as the Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT) on which our members can have very strong opposing views and will probably never agree, but even then we (NWA) see value in a dialogue.

I see the coming year as a time of opportunity for NWA. We are a small organization and I do not expect to find THE SOLUTION, but we will continue to take steps towards protecting our natural resources, through our Creekwatchers volunteer water quality monitoring program, student and teacher educational programs, public outreach, and strong partnerships with various industries, institutes, and organizations, including the farming

industry. All of these efforts are aimed at being part of the solution, and I think that is the way good solutions can be found—a little bit at a time, cooperatively.

In the coming year, we will seek to increase the number and participation level of our Partners in Conservation as well as financial and general supporters, both of which are needed for us to be successful and to grow.



In recent years, Joe Layton has been recognized for his role in agriculture and conservation in Dorchester County. He has been inducted into the Maryland Agriculture Hall of Fame and is a Certified Agricultural Conservation Steward. The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance is excited to see where this new leadership takes us.

RECLAIM OUR RIVER 2015 SERIES

The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance is partnering with the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, the Delaware Nature Society, and a number of other community and regional groups to offer a second year of "Reclaim Our River" activities! Learn what you can do to improve water quality in your local waterway, meet new friends at community events and celebrations, or paddle the afternoon away in a local creek or section of the river. Find a full list of Western Sussex County events that you can participate in via the Delaware Watersheds website at delawarewatersheds.org.



NANTICOKE RIVER WATERSHED TOWN PROFILE: GEORGETOWN, DELAWARE

By Joanne Maturana

“Sixteen miles from anywhere,” Georgetown, Delaware, is the heart of Sussex County and the county seat. Georgetown was not always the county seat, however. In 1791, the Delaware General Assembly relocated the county seat from Lewes to a more central location in the county, after Lord Baltimore and William Penn settled on the borders of New Castle, Kent, and Sussex Counties. In deciding to move the seat, the General Assembly also appointed ten men from the community to be commissioners, led by George Mitchell, who would become the town’s namesake. The commissioners negotiated with Abraham Harris, Rowland Bevins, and Joshua Pepper, owners of 76 acres of land in what is now Georgetown. After securing the land, George Mitchell worked to build a central location in town with a new courthouse, jail, and businesses. This part of town would become known as The Circle.

The Greater Georgetown Chamber of Commerce recounts a local legend that credits a former slave named Liz for the creation of The Circle through her plowing and tree planting efforts. In another version of the town’s origin, Commissioner Rhodes Shankland surveyed and designed The Circle between the years of 1791-1793. Whether created through Liz’s efforts or through Shankland’s,

William Strickland, a famous Sussex County architect, completed The Circle’s surrounding structures and buildings in 1839. To this day, motorists drive through the “round-about” on the way to the beach, the Brick Hotel, the courthouse, or many other tourist attractions.



The Brick Hotel
Photo by: The Brick Hotel

The National Register of Historic Places added The Circle to the register on June 4, 1973, due to its significance in nineteenth century architecture, politics, and planning. The Circle, including the surrounding brick buildings and



The view of The Circle from the 2nd floor Veranda at The Brick Hotel
Photo by: The Brick Hotel

structures, remains well-preserved with few alterations.

As the county seat, Georgetown plays a number of roles and hosts unique events. No more unique is Return Day, which is held every two years and offers political opponents the chance to “bury the hatchet.” In addition, officials announce election results, and the county invites the community to celebrate.

The “burying of the hatchet”

ceremony gives the two opposing political parties an opportunity to make peace. Together, the chairmen of the Sussex County Democratic Party and the Republican Party place the hatchet in a box and pour sand from Lewes Beach on top, thus “burying the hatchet” until the next election season.

Georgetown residents and visitors can find plenty to do in or near Georgetown. Cultural opportunities such as the Delaware Aviation Museum, Nutter Marvel Carriage Museum, and Treasures of the Sea Exhibit may entice a visitor to stop. Possum Point Players regularly present theatrical comedies and dramas. The University of Delaware’s Carvel Research Station offers Master Gardener training and agricultural workshops. Georgetown Farmers’ Market (seasonally, from May to October), and 16 Mile Brewery can fill a rumbling stomach or quench a thirst. To find out more information on events or information on Georgetown, visit www.georgetownde.com.



Announcing the elected officials

HOLIDAY DINNER AND 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance “Celebrated the Sturgeon” at our annual Holiday Dinner on December 11. The Department of Natural Resources captured and documented eight mature Atlantic sturgeon in the Marshyhope Creek in 2014; this was the first documented sturgeon capture in upper tributaries of the Chesapeake in over 40 years.



Special guest speaker, Chuck Stence, Head of Anadromous Fish Restoration with Maryland Department of Natural Resources, discussed this event and talked about Atlantic sturgeon restoration efforts.

Our second guest speaker, Erin Markin, Researcher with University of Maryland (UMD) Center for Environmental Science, discussed UMD’s analysis of Atlantic Sturgeon habitat. The speakers also set up a touch tank with two live juvenile sturgeons, who quickly charmed the audience. Participants enjoyed touching and holding these prehistoric fish, including those who



had never held a fish before.

Executive Director Shelly Baird presented the NWA’s 2014 Annual Report, which included re-caps of some of NWA’s initiatives and programs, including:

- **Partner Meetings:** *The Value of Clean Water* on February 25, 2014, and *Innovative Practices to Protect Water Quality* on October 9, 2014.
- **Creekwatchers Program:** Completed Year 7 of the program with 6 new members! The 2013 Report Card was released in July at NWA’s Annual Wade-In and at Nanticoke Riverfest with Rivers scoring a C+ and Creeks scoring a B.
- **Environmental Education:** Educated over 500 students in 2014, conducting in-classroom presentations, field trips, and action projects with seventh graders at two schools. We began a school-wide recycling and composting program at North Dorchester and conducted a 2.5-acre tree planting with Mardela Middle and High Schools. Twenty-two teachers participated in our *Food, Land, and People* Teacher Workshops conducted in MD and DE.
- **Community Outreach:** Reached over 1,500 people in 2014 through 40 events and meetings, including our Annual Toast to the Nanticoke at Layton’s Chance Winery, which will be held this year on Friday, June 12, 2015.



HOMEOWNER WORKSHOPS 2015



Our actions at home and in our backyards directly impact the health of our local waterways. Most of us want clean, healthy water but don’t always understand how our actions can benefit or harm creeks and rivers and the Bay itself. Homeowner Workshops engage,

educate, and empower local residents about conservation practices that improve water quality. All workshops are free, but registration is limited to 20 families per workshop.

In 2015, the NWA plans to host workshops in **Cambridge, MD** (late spring and early summer—dates and topics TBD) and in **Blades** (see schedule below) and **Laurel, DE** (TBD). Registration and program information will be available later this spring. Visit www.nanticokeriver.org/outreach.

HOMEOWNER WORKSHOPS—DATES AND TOPICS (BLADES, DE)

JULY 25: Rain Barrels and Rain Gardens

Learn how to install, maintain, and use your 45-gallon, FREE EarthMinded Rain Barrel and how rain gardens can be planted to help slow and filter excessive stormwater before it enters your local waterways.

AUGUST 15: Soil Testing, Lawn Fertilizers, and the Livable Lawns Program

Receive a FREE soil test to determine nutrient levels in your lawn or home vegetable or flower garden and learn how to properly feed your lawn or garden. Pledge to make your landscape a “Livable Lawn” and receive a \$50 gift certificate to purchase native plants.

OCTOBER 24: Your Water, Your Watershed

Learn about pollution sources, how your actions can benefit or harm your local waterways, and steps that you can take to conserve water, reduce your expenses, and improve water quality.

Celebrate Cinco de Mayo and support the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance



**Community Day
at Abbott's on
Broad Creek
May 5, 2015**

**10% of lunch and dinner sales
will be donated to NWA
300 Delaware Ave., Laurel, DE**

**Enjoy food & drink
specials and support a
great cause !!!**

SAVE THE DATE

Toast to the Nanticoke

**June 12, 2015
(6:30 ~ 10pm)**



**Join us for a night of food, fun, and
friendship as we celebrate the Nanticoke
River and Community!**

**Layton's Chance Winery
4225 New Bridge Rd, Vienna**

**Visit NANTICOKERIVER.ORG/EVENTS for
ticket and sponsorship information**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (MARCH—AUGUST)

- Reclaim Our River (ROR) Rain Barrel Workshop: March 14
- Living Shoreline Workshop at Federalsburg Museum: March 14
- Eighth Annual Nanticoke Creekwatchers Training and Season Kick-off: March 21
- Living Shorelines Workshop at Westside Community Center: March 28
- Rain Garden Installation at Old Trinity Church: April 11
- Project Cleanstream: April 18
- Earth Day at Salisbury Zoo: April 25
- ROR Paddle on Broad Creek: April 26
- NWA Community Day at Abbott's Grill on Broad Creek: May 5
- Nanticoke River Marina and Park Festival: May 17
- Toast to the Nanticoke: June 12
- Chesapeake Paddlefest: June 20
- EcoPaddle at Phillips Landing: June 27
- Nanticoke Riverfest and 2014 Nanticoke River Report Card Release: July 11
- Nanticoke Wade-In at Trap Pond State Park: July 16
- Rain Barrels/Rain Gardens Homeowner Workshop in Blades: July 25
- Soil Test/Livable Lawns Homeowner Workshop in Blades: August 15
- Great Eastern Shore Tomato Festival: August 22

Board of Directors

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