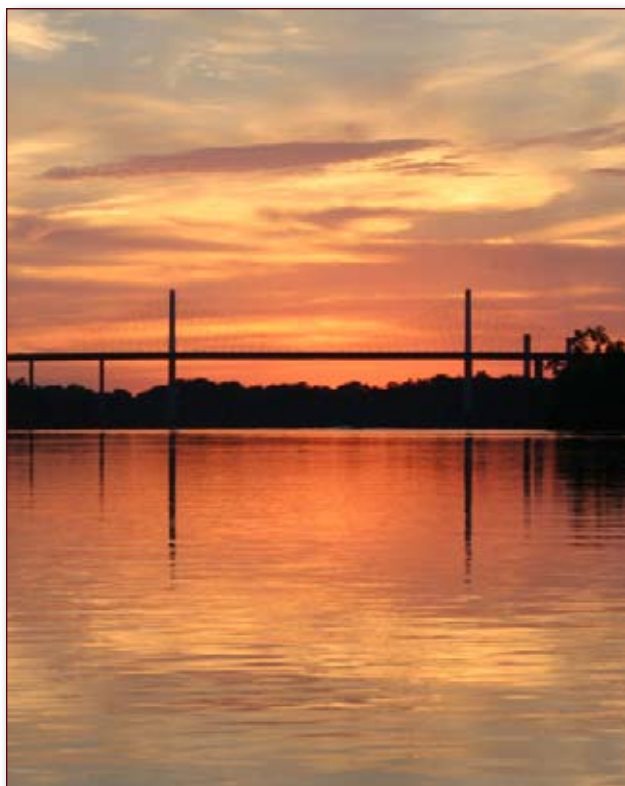




James River Reach

The James River Advisory Council Newsletter

Volume 7 No. 2 Summer 2008



James River Advisory Council

Vision Statement

A united community supporting and promoting the James River as a shared resource and enhancing its health, heritage, economic vitality and recreational value.

Mission Statement

To promote and protect the James River as one of Central Virginia's greatest assets and one of America's most unique rivers, the James River Advisory Council serves as a forum for the diverse interests along the River and communicates with public officials and the public regarding issues, challenges, opportunities, threats, and possibilities facing the river, its resources, and adjoining communities. The Council sponsors and facilitates activities and promotes public policy that focuses on the river, celebrates its beauty, and improves our use and appreciation of this extraordinary resource.

JRAC's Summer 2008 Calendar of Events

June 12, 10:00 a.m.

*James River Regional Cleanup Planning Meeting
James River Park Visitor Center*

June 14, 9:00 a.m.

James River Regional Cleanup

June 28, 8:30 p.m.

*Night Walk on the Manchester Slave Trail
Ancarrows Landing*

July 17, 6:00-8:00 pm

*Forgotten History Lecture Series
Black History Museum and Cultural Arts Center*

July 24, Noon

James River Advisory Council Summer Quarterly Meeting Location to be announce

August 12, 9:00 am

*Playing on the James
Meet at Henricus Historical Park
Note: Pre-Registration required. Visit website James River Days brochures*

August 28, 9:30 am

*James River Parade of Lights Planning Meeting
Chesterfield Co. – Lane Ramsey Administration Building*



Phone: 804-748-1567
www.jamesriveradvisorycouncil.com

It's cleanup time!

Visit www.jamesriveradvisorycouncil.com to sign up

By Dave Goode, JRAC Member

The James River Advisory Council is looking for volunteers to participate in the James River Regional Cleanup on June 14, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at selected sites along the James in Central Virginia.

In its ninth year, the cleanup continues to grow. In addition to the river itself, attention also is focused on certain tributaries flowing into the James, such as Falling Creek, in an effort to create greater awareness about the James River watershed. This year, JRAC welcomes the Chesapeake Bay Foundation as its cosponsor.

Past cleanups have seen hundreds of volunteers on foot and in boats dedicate part of a day to collect litter from the shoreline and water. In cleaning up the James, the volunteers create awareness about the need to take care of an invaluable natural resource while also learning about the dynamics of a watershed. Much of the litter collected originates upstream in roadside ditches, parking lots, etc., that drain to the river and its adjoining streams.

Activities west of Mayo's Island in Richmond are above the fall line in the nontidal portion of the river and primarily involve the collection of shoreline litter that is accessible by volunteers on foot or those paddling small craft such as canoes. Activities east of Falling Creek are below the fall line in tidal waters, where recreational craft, such as large johnboats, bass boats and other vessels are of significant benefit.

Registering as a participant has never been easier. Just log on to www.jamesriveradvisorycouncil.com, select a location from a list of official cleanup sites, and complete an electronic information form. Those

who wish to participate also may call the James River Regional Cleanup information line at (804) 717-6688.

Participants are encouraged to arrive at their designated sites by 8:45 a.m. to sign in. All participants also are encouraged to wear closed-toe shoes and bring gloves, water, sunscreen, insect repellent. Bags for the litter will be provided.



Photo is copyrighted by The Richmond Times-Dispatch and used with permission

Litter, Recycling and Your Watershed

Everything we do on land affects the quality of the water in our rivers and streams. We need water to drink, to keep clean, for recreation, transportation, fishing, and to produce goods and energy. But most people do not spend much time thinking about where their water comes from or how their actions on land can affect water. When water runs off the land, it takes litter, pollutants, loose soil and more with it.

Litter is misplaced solid waste blown by wind and traffic and carried by water. It travels until trapped and then ugly piles of waste accumulate in our waterways. Simple actions such as disposing of waste in proper trash receptacles and recycling have a positive impact on the community in which we live.

Recycling is important to both the natural environment and us. Eighty percent of items thrown away could be recycled. To learn more about what you can recycle in Central Virginia, visit www.cvwma.com

The health of Virginia's waterways begins in your own backyard. **For more information, go to www.cvwma.com**

In This Issue of the James River Reach

- Calendar of JRAC Events pg 1
- JRAC 2008 Cleanup pg 2
- Watershed & Recycling pg 3
- Member Focus: Mark Rich pg 4
- JRAC Stewards Awards pg 5
- Doing Business in a Green Building pg 6
- Fishing's Best pg 7
- New Dock! pg 8
- VA's Groundwater pg 8
- New Park Signage pg 8
- Salamanders Habitat pg 9
- JRAC Committee Contacts pg 10

Plan to attend James River Days events, programs

Looking for something fun or educational? James River Days 2008 brochures are available now!

This colorful, calendar brochure includes information about a wide variety of programs, from educational to recreational to social, and from environmental to historical, all of which are focused on the James River. These diverse

programs are offered for seven months, April-October. There are more than 200 places throughout the greater Richmond area to obtain James River Days brochures, including libraries, retail stores, government centers, hotels and hospitality centers, environmental organizations and the like, or visit www.jamesriveradvisory-council.com.

Be sure to get your copy soon!

Member Focus ...

Mark Rich

by Sue Cecil, JRAC Member

Zoologist, teacher, writer, film consultant, U.S. Army Colonel (retired), and retired Director of the Maymont Nature Center, Mark Rich brings an extraordinary assortment of skills to the JRAC Board.

Mark entered the University of Connecticut thinking he would major in chemistry, but found the subject to be too limiting so he switched to zoology, a field in which he earned both bachelor's and master's degrees. He also completed courses in marine mammalogy, information management, and the ROTC requirements to become an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve.

He started his career as a wildlife biologist in the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in Basking Ridge, NJ, but soon thereafter was activated to serve in the U.S. Army Special Forces in Vietnam. After three tours of duty, he switched to reserve status and recently retired with the rank of colonel.

Serving near the rice paddies of the Vietnamese Mekong River Delta did not diminish his love of the outdoors. Over the next 25 years, Mark held positions as curator of mammals at the San Diego Zoo, director of the Mesker Park Zoo in Evansville, IN, executive director of the Utica Zoo in Utica, NY, and general curator of the Staten Island Zoo, Staten Island, NY. While in California, he helped Durgin-Yin Productions, a Hollywood firm, produce a documentary on Chinese animals and wrote articles for Wildlife Education Ltd. In addition, he led numerous tours, expeditions and study trips to Africa, the Arctic, Asia, Australia, Central America and Europe.



Mark Rich, recently retired
director of the Maymont Nature Center

Mark has indicated that his move to Richmond and Maymont was motivated by the fact that his son and daughter had settled in Virginia and was inspired by the challenge of establishing an environmental education facility at the park. Though the Maymont Nature Center has now achieved national recognition, this winter Mark decided it was time to retire in a manner of speaking. He is writing a book about his adventures (35 chapters outlined so far), establishing a marshland garden in his backyard surrounded by river birch, mallows and marsh marigolds, doing a little environmental teaching with the James River as a resource, bird watching, running in James River Park, serving as an Elder at his church, and working on JRAC projects. Like his career, a remarkable retirement!

Let the Environmental Educators at the Maymont Nature Center Introduce you to the Natural World.

Maymont offers unique programs on topics such as birds, insects, reptiles, food chains, life cycles, the James River, geology, fossils and plants. Barred owls, turtles and snakes often help present the programs.

The Nature Center offers a variety of programs for groups:

- Schools
- Adults
- Teachers
- Preschools and daycare centers
- Scouts and youth

James River Advisory Council's 2008 Stewards of the River Awards

The **James River Advisory Council** presented four outstanding community members with its annual Stewards of the River Awards at the Spring Quarterly Meeting and Awards Breakfast on May 1 at Dominion Power's Riverside Cafe in Richmond. The 2008 awards recipients are:

Community Partnership Award

Martin Moynihan

Guardian/Stewardship Award

Marine Patrol Unit (Henrico County Police)

Communication Award

George Bruner

Education Award

Kathy Mortimer



Left to Right: Martin Moynihan, Henrico County Marine Patrol Unit, Kathy Mortimer and George Bruner

Newsletter Survey

We would like input from members of the James River Advisory Council with regards to our newsletter, *the James River Reach*. To save paper and mailing costs, we propose that the publication continue as an electronic format and be distributed by e-mail. We will also post it to the JRAC Web site. If you do not have a PC or Internet access we would still have printed copies available.

**Please indicate your preference to
Nancy Drumheller by July 1**

(804) 359-8413 ext. 14
or
ndrumheller@cvwma.com

- A) Electronic Version**
- B) Print version**

Interested in being a Sponsor?

James River Regional Cleanup
June 14, 2008

James River Parade of Lights
Dec. 8, 2008

James River Days
April-September 2008

Call (804) 748-1567 or email conleyk@chesterfield.

Doing Green Business in a Green Building

by Heather Barrar,
Chesterfield County Water Quality

A few years ago, an announcement was made that the Department of Environmental Engineering, among a few other county departments, would be moving into a new building at the Chesterfield County Government Complex. While this news in itself was exciting (who doesn't want to work in a new building?), the fact the building would be built to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental and Design) standards doubled our excitement. This meant that we would be working in a building that was designed, constructed and will perform in a sustainable fashion. The "green building" industry is growing and has a positive impact not only storm-water management, but also waste reduction, energy usage and health.

We moved to the Chesterfield County Community Development Building in November 2006, and while we can't see and feel all the "green" features of the building, we are certainly enjoying the sunny work space. While the main goal of this feature is to reduce energy usage, it also has made for a wonderful work environment. Most of our department has floor to ceiling windows that are in the hallways, not individual offices. The air quality was also considered in the building by using adhesives, sealants, paint, carpet and composite wood products that contain no or low amounts of substances like formaldehyde that have a detrimental effect on health. A few of the features that we can't feel include a 36 percent reduction in water use through water efficient technologies both inside and out of the building, and the 30,000-square-foot roof is covered with a special material that reflects more than 70 percent of sunlight. The back parking lot incorporates permeable pavers and our landscaping will be native. While the building was under construction, over 90 percent of construction waste was diverted from landfills and sent to recycling facilities. The Chesterfield County Community Development Building has not yet been certified by the LEED Council, but all of these features will be considered during the certification process.

I feel lucky to be working in one of the few government buildings in the area that considered the impacts on both the environment and employee's health when

Continued next page

The Best Things About Fishing

By Capt. Mike Ostrander, James River Fishing School

I often find myself saying, "Anything that can happen when fishing is all a part of fishing." That holds true especially when something special happens like an extraordinary sunset or sunrise. These can be phenomenal sights. If you give yourself enough opportunities, you get to experience a sunrise like the one in the photo below. It was a cold December morning, and the eastern sky lit up like an old masters landscape painting. This image was taken on the James near Fort Brady at the Richmond Yacht Basin, around 6:15 AM.

If the scenery isn't enough, then maybe the river's wildlife will give you a thrill. Bald eagles, blue heron and osprey nest and feed along the banks of the James. Owls and wild

turkey silently fly across the river, often times within the city limits of Richmond. Deer, beaver, otter, muskrats and foxes are all present if you look for them. It's better than any zoo and it's in our backyard.

Sometimes, clouds will hide a sunrise, and on a rare occasion, the river's wildlife is scarce, but if that's the case, think for a moment about the river's history. Capt. John Smith, Chief Powhatan, Pocahontus, Jamestown, not to mention the Civil War battles on the water. All these stories waiting to be heard ... or told.

To ensure a good James River fishing trip this summer, just bring a camera or a pair of binoculars or maybe a good history book with your fishing gear. Good luck and Happy Fishing!



Green Building - Continued

by and visit our new green environment.

For more information:

Visit the U.S. Green Building Council web page at www.usgbc.org/ for information regarding LEED certification. Did you know we have a local chapter that promotes green building? I recently attended the annual James River Green Building Council Awards Luncheon and was impressed by the energy and in-

novation in the room. Visit the JRGBC Web site at www.jrgbc.org/. The Chesterfield County Community Development Building and other innovative storm-water practices are featured at the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission Web site: www.richmondregional.org/Planning/stormwater/stormwater.htm

New Dock on Canal Bateaux Right Around the Corner?

By Ralph White, James River Park System

To rekindle an old use at the Pump House Park, a dock has been newly constructed along the old wooded canal that runs beside the quarry and under the access bridge.

Over 100 years ago visitors often came to this park site by boat on the nearby Kanawha Canal. The new facility, constructed by volunteers lead by JRPS Environmental Educator Lorne Field, is designed to allow somewhat similar boats to provide somewhat similar (albeit much shorter) tours on a deep water extension of this waterway known as the Power Canal. It is hoped that one or two bateaux, large wooden freight canoes used in the Annual James River Bateaux Festival in June, might later be used in the canal in July and August.

Alas, the trips will be short, 300 to 400 yards one way as the railroad prohibits access on canal waters near their tracks, but then its pretty hot and sweaty work trying to pole a boatload of people very far anyway.

Out of Sight, Out of Mind Virginia's Groundwater

By George E. Harlow Jr., P.G.,
U.S. Geological Survey

Ground water is a valuable resource in Virginia, providing 312 million gallons per day, or 22 percent, of the total freshwater used in the State (excluding thermoelectric use). Contrasting geologic features and landforms of the physiographic provinces of Virginia affect the quantity and quality of ground water throughout the State. Most ground-water withdrawals are in the Coastal Plain in the eastern part of the State, where aquifers are highly productive.

from: Source: U.S. Geological Survey,
Virginia Water Science Center

For more information:
www.deq.virginia.gov/gwpsc/homepage.html

A Picture is Worth 1,000 Words

By Ralph White, James River Park System

Signs in Spanish installed at the Pony Pasture Rapids Park have proven less successful than anticipated. Why? Many Hispanic visitors speak Qetchua and other Mexican dialects as their primary language. They speak Spanish, too, but are not literate in it.

To address this new understanding of park visitor signs in the James River Park System are being revamped to include more pictures, diagrams and illustrations, and less text, whether Spanish or English.

Pictures communicate directly. Words must be processed into ideas before they can be understood. Eliminating this mental translation process should help in communicating to children, to people who cannot read, and even to those impaired by alcohol or other drugs. This approach to signage may also be expanded to other Richmond city parks. It is possible it may have applications in parks throughout the region.



James River Park is trying to reach out to a wider range of new visitors, some of whom cannot read, so they are incorporating pictograms into their signage.

Salamander Sex

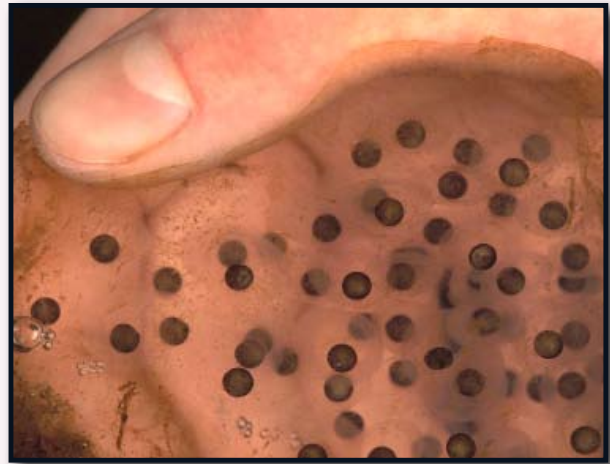
By Ralph White, James River Park System

VCU biologists have found three species of salamanders in The Wetlands, part of the JRPS. Marbled Salamanders had been reported last year, but this year three small populations of spotted salamanders were also found plus a large number of Spotted Newts. This is pretty good news. The park management plan to foster the regrowth of the Powhite Swamp seems to be bringing back some of its original inhabitants, although there are some complications. The biggie? The spotted salamanders all seem to be males! Oh well, if they splash around in a big enough fraternity party next year perhaps they may attract a couple of sorority sisters.

Here's the background:

The population of the spotted species along Riverside Drive (100 yards west of the Pony Pasture Rapids) has been declining. There's a double whammy of problems. Land owners on the steep hillsides above the river have been clearing out the forest and replacing it with grass to get better views. As a result, the soft forest soil of decaying leaf matter is disappearing and with it the underground homes for the salamanders. At the same time, the creation of the parks along the river has brought in more car traffic. During the breeding season, a large number of sex-starved salamanders have been crushed as they slithered, like college students on their way to Florida for Spring Break, along the asphalt during the late winter rains to get to the breeding pools quickly.

To address the latter problem, the roadway is closed during rainy nights in late winter and early spring. This has greatly slowed the slaughter. Addressing the former has been less successful. Only about half of the desired forest conditions remain and the breeding pools in the ditches along the road are holding less and less water. And there are other problems.



Salamander eggs

A few years ago, a tall, thin guy with straggly hair, claiming to have been given permission, stole most of the egg masses in the pools along the road. Although salamanders are explosive breeders, there may be over 100 eggs in a single mass, the long-term answer seemed to lie in finding and setting up new sites for salamanders to move in to. In desperation, park staff salvaged a few of the remaining eggs and placed them at three sites in The Wetlands and one marshy pool at the old hydro plant on Belle Isle.

The Wetlands Park was once swampland, but had been drained 100 years ago to become a corn field and later a sewage lagoon. By eliminating most mowing, closing off drainage ditches and digging shallow basins, it is now returning to swamp. The eggs placed there may likely be the origin of the spotted salamanders' reappearance. It is unknown whether a population has started on Belle Isle, but the conditions are increasingly good there, forested hillside and seasonal pool without fish. It would be like herpetological homesteading to restore them to a place that has been an industrial site for over 150 years!

If you'd like a nice picture of a spotted salamander, consider joining the Friends of the James River Park System. That's their logo. The \$15 membership includes a nice sticker and a picnic in the old Pump House where, alas, salamanders have yet to be found. For more information, email fojrp@mindspring.com.

JRAC Committee Contacts

Co-chairman

Ralph Hambrick
ralphhambrick@comcast.net

Co-chairman

James Donati
varina@co.henrico.va.us

Executive Director

Kimberly Conley
conleyk@chesterfield.gov

Activities Committee Chairman

Michael Golden
goldenm@chesterfield.gov

Issues Committee Co-Chairman

Nissa Dean
nissa.dean@dcr.virginia.gov

Jen Sideleck
jsidleck@chesterfielddrivers.org

Media Committee Chairman

Dave Goode
gooded@chesterfield.gov

Newsletter Committee Chairman

Mike Ostrander
mike@jamesriverfishing.com

Administration and Finances Committee Chairman

Carson Tucker

Membership Committee Co-Chairman

Nancy Drumheller
ndrumheller@cvwma.com

Debbie Nedervelt
ned@co.henrico.va.us

Preserving the James River

The James River Advisory Council (formerly the James River Task Force) serves as a forum for the diverse interests along the James River in Central Virginia and communicates with public officials regarding issues and challenges facing the river and its resources. The Advisory Council's vision is to unite the community by supporting and promoting the James River as a common resource and preserving its health.

In March 1993, a resolution was adopted at the first Regional Summit by area localities, to create the James River Task Force to study the development of the James River as a regional tourist attraction. In May 1999, the Task Force transitioned to the James River Advisory Council.

The Advisory Council's vision is to unite the community by supporting and promoting the James River as a common resource and preserving its health, beauty, heritage, economic vitality and recreational value.

JRAC has a membership of more than sixty members with representatives from eight local jurisdictions, including the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent and Powhatan, and the city of Richmond, local businesses and industries, civic organizations and citizens. JRAC leads regional river groups and sets the tone for positive and interactive relationships among various organizations.

JRAC sponsors the James River Parade of Lights in December, James River Days during the summer, and the James River Regional Clean Up in June. The co-chairs of the council are Jim Donati of the Henrico County Board of Supervisors, Varina District and Ralph Hambrick of Falls of the James Scenic River Advisory Council, and Southampton Citizens Association.