



BACK BAY BREEZE

Back Bay...it's worth saving!

December, 2009

December 2nd Membership Event

From the Forum and the Flyway Feast to our meetings and cleanup events, Back Bay Restoration Foundation members and supporters are always there. The Board of Directors and staff of BBRF greatly appreciate all you've done for us throughout the year and would like to do a little something for you in return.

You are cordially invited to join us

Wednesday, December 2nd from 7-8:30pm

at the Environmental Education Center located at 3022 New Bridge Road for an evening of fun including hors d'oeuvres & desserts, a fabulous gift basket give-away and a screening of

DisneyNature: Earth

This beautiful, award winning film narrated by James Earl Jones captures the remarkable story of three animal families and their amazing journeys across the planet we all call home. *Earth* combines rare action, unimaginable scale and impossible locations by capturing the most intimate moments of our planet's wildest and most elusive creatures.



**Bring an appetizer to share,
bring the whole family or
just bring yourself!
See you all December 2nd!**



Inside this issue:

- ~Presenting - The 2009 BBRF COY
- ~Family Fun - Make an edible Christmas tree that's for the birds!
- ~BBNWR and False Cape State Park events
- ~BBRF receives grant from HRSD for the purchase of a water quality test meter!
- ~And much more...

Check out BBRF on Facebook & Twitter for event information, links, updates and news!

~Save the Date!~

Wednesday, March 17

2010 Back Bay Forum

Join us from 8:30-2:30 at the Tidewater Community College Advanced Technology Center for topics related to the health and wellbeing of the Back Bay Watershed and all the critters that call it home.

****Stay tuned to upcoming newsletters for more information****



Vickie Shufer 2009 BBRF Conservationist of the Year

On November 22nd, BBRF recognized their 2009 Conservationist of the Year. The weather was good, the food was great and the recipient of the 13th annual award was greatly surprised; indeed, she was speechless. Anyone who has had the pleasure of meeting Vickie knows this is a rare occasion. The decision to select this exuberant, entertaining and ecological-minded lady as the winner was an easy and unanimous choice for the board!

Vickie Shufer carries many titles: naturalist, medicinal/edible native plant expert, False Cape State Park and Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge volunteer, educator, published author, and now, 2009 BBRF Conservationist of the Year.

Vickie's naturalist roots began early when, as a child, she frequently spent more time outside than in. Her earliest memories tell of 4-year-old Vickie playing in the creek near her home and fishing with her grandfather, Roy, to whom she attributes much of her native knowledge. Exploring creeks and the lands near them has been a lifelong passion, and today Vickie lives next to a small waterway, Pocatoy River, which leads to the North Landing River. On Wild Woods Farm, as Vickie calls it, she painstakingly nurtures a wide variety of Virginia natives. If you ask, she will be glad to tell you more about these amazing plants than you ever imagined.

Vickie's history as an educator began more than 30 years ago when she moved to Virginia Beach and started work as a guide and interpreter at First Landing State Park. When the Education Center opened at False Cape in 1982, Vickie next developed an array of outdoor programs for school and Scout groups, community organizations and individuals. With a delightful personality, sense of humor, and easy-to-understand explanations, she presents her vast knowledge with an innovative hands-on approach that sets her apart from other educators. During a recent school outing she delighted her young pupils with tales of "scat" and how to "eat a pine tree."

As an author, Vickie has written numerous brochures and booklets about native animals and plants, co-written three local river guidebooks, and publishes The Wild Foods Forum which is an informative quarterly plant identification and use guide.

Our thanks go to Vickie Shufer for her years of devotion and exceptional contributions to conservation efforts directly impacting the waters and wildlife of Back Bay.

~Past Winners~

2008 ~ John Gallegos	2007 ~ Waller Whittemore
2006 ~ Robert Halstead	2005 ~ Reese Lukei
2004 ~ Herb Jones	2003 ~ Jeff Butts
2002 ~ Jon & Joy Eliassen	2001 ~ Barbara Henley
2000 ~ John Stasko	1999 ~ Steve Vinson
1998 ~ Molly Brown	1997 ~ Mary Reid Barrow

Special thanks to the following individuals:

Raffle Donations: Charlie Hurd of Hurd's Word's and Birds, Brian Murden of Beach Gallery, Ren Fortier, Julie Barnes, Will & Christine Gilbert

Cookin' & Shuckin': Sean Priest, George Walsh

Program: Lillie Gilbert and Kyle Barbour

Award Donation: John & Patricia Johnson of Back Bay Decoys

And to the Barnes Family for providing the use of their facilities!

BBRF Business & Volunteer Opportunities

~November 18th, BBRF members met at Guadalajara on General Booth for our last monthly chow down of the year. Our thanks to all who came out to these monthly fundraisers and to Guadalajara for donating a total of \$700 to BBRF!

~November 23rd, Back Bay staff talked to two classes of 4th graders at Saint John the Apostle Catholic School about watersheds, water quality and the importance of keeping it all clean! The kids enjoyed "polluting" a model of a watershed with simulated fertilizer, sediment, trash, grass clippings and animal waste and watching it all wash into Back Bay when it rained.

~**December 12, from 8am to 10am** BBRF is looking for a few brave individuals to help clean up New Bridge Road yet again. Meet at 2949 New Bridge Road. All cleanup and safety materials will be provided. See you there!

Stay tuned to your e-mail for updates and reminders regarding these and other events. Please email bbrf@verizon.net for more information, to sign up for any of these events or to ensure I have your most recent/correct email address.

COOL NEWS HOT OFF THE PRESSES!

BBRF is excited to announce receipt of a greatly appreciated, much needed grant from **Hampton Roads Sanitation Department Environmental Improvement Fund** in the amount of **\$5,000!**

This grant will enable BBRF to purchase a new Quanta Water Quality Testing Meter and permit us to provide DEQ and other agencies with highly accurate water quality data!

Our sincerest thanks to HRSD for their support of our water quality monitoring and improvement efforts!

The HRSD Environmental Improvement Fund was established as the vehicle to be used to return to the community the civil charges paid by businesses that do not comply with their environmental permits. The monies collected are disbursed in accordance with guidelines approved by the HRSD Commission. Since the fund's creation, the proceeds have financed (1) recognition of outstanding pollution prevention efforts or exceptional permit compliance by businesses and (2) environmental education or water quality improvement projects.

FOG: Fats, Oils & Grease

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) would like you to know how you can prevent this *slimy, gritty, nasty, yucky* stuff from clogging sanitary sewer systems across Hampton Roads and polluting area waters and otherwise harming the environment. When FOG is poured down the drain, it accumulates on pipe walls, restricting the flow of wastewater. Over time, FOG leads to blockages that result in overflows into our homes, streets, and waterways. Yuck!

Keeping your drains fat free is as easy as 1-2-3!

1. *Can the Grease* - Pour used cooking grease into an empty, heat safe container, such as a soup can, and store it in the freezer. Once solidified, toss the can into the garbage.
2. *Scrape Your Plate* - Wipe all pots, pans, dishes, and cooking utensils with a paper towel prior to washing to absorb the grease.
3. *Catch the Scraps* - Eliminate using the garbage disposal. Catch food scraps in your sink with baskets or strainers. Then throw in the trash.

For more information, visit: <http://www.fatfreedrain.com/>

December Family Fun:

Decorate a Christmas tree for the animals

This year make a Christmas tree dedicated to your furry and feathered friends. Hang edible ornaments on your trees to help feed the little creatures in your area. Make your own **bird seed ornaments** or a **nut and seed garland** to hang on your tree. Slice some fresh fruit to hang for the birds to nibble on. Oranges, apples, star fruit, and kiwi all work really well, and look festive on the tree. String some popcorn, berries, dried fruit, nuts, or grapes together to form another edible garland. This is a really fun project for children. Your children or grandchildren will have a blast helping you make the "ornaments," and decorating the tree. Hang the ornaments on a tree near a picture window, and you can watch while the birds and other critters enjoy the holiday feast you created for them! (Courtesy of <http://www.motherearthsgarden.com/christmas-tree-for-the-birds/>)



Bird seed ornaments:

1. In a glass bowl, melt a suet cake in the microwave.
2. Add 1/2 jar crunchy peanut butter and 1/2 cup bird seed. Stir until mixed well.
3. When cool enough to handle, form 1/2 of the mixture onto several pinecones with string tied to small end.
4. Grab a small glob of remaining mixture and lay in the palm of your hand. Lay a length or string across mixture and top with another small glob of the mixture. Squeeze together to form a ball and set aside.
5. When all ornaments are cooled and firm, hang them on the tree for the birds to nibble.

Nut and seed garland:

1. Gather local seeds and nuts or purchase mixed nuts or unsalted peanuts in the shell.
2. Drill small holes in the nuts on either side to permit stringing.
3. String together several lengths of your nuts and seeds on twine and decorate your tree with this delicious garland!

Thank you
to the following new and renewing members from the month of November!

~Individual~

Dr. Doug DiBona

~Family~

Reese & Melinda Lukei, Ted & Pam Clemens, Steve & Jean Vinson

Welcome to our new members!

Ernest & Susan Buchanan, Diane Staples

If you have not done so, please consider renewing your membership today! Every dollar of your membership donation goes directly toward our efforts to preserve, protect and promote sustainability of the Back Bay Watershed.



False Cape State Park Happenings

Star Gazing and Owl Hooting

Journey through scenic Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge to the heart of False Cape State Park at False Cape Landing away from city lights and traffic to observe the night sky and listen to the owls. Look for "shooting stars" and other bright lights in the sky as you learn to pick out the winter constellations. Listen for the screech owl and the great horned owl in the surrounding maritime forest. **Reservations required. Call 757.426.7128. Cost: \$10/person. Departs Little Island City Park. Saturday, December 12, 4:30-7:30pm**

Take a Ride on the Wild Side—Terra Gator Trips

The Terra Gator is an approximately 45 minute ride down the beach to False Cape State Park. Observe coastal wildlife, beachcomb & explore the isolated wilderness of False Cape.

Reservations required and must be made at least three days in advance. Call 1-800-933-PARK. Minimum of 10 reservations required for the Terra Gator to run. Departs Little Island City Park 9:00 am-1:00 pm. Cost: \$8/person. Saturdays & Sundays, November-March



Whoooo is brave enough to brave the elements & a few sleepy Screech owls to help us clean out the False Cape State Park Wood duck boxes this winter? We are looking for a dedicated few to do this difficult but rewarding and quite fun project scheduled for the end of February.

Date TBD. Spaces are limited, so get your name in now!

Winter Tram Schedule

Winter Wildlife Watch Tram Tour

Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and False Cape State Park present a wildlife watching tour on the Blue Goose Express Tram! Ride the tram and observe migrating ducks, geese, swans and other wildlife that inhabit Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and False Cape State Park. **December 6, January 3, February 14, March 14. All trips, Sundays from 1-3:00 PM.**



Welcome to Wash Woods

Take a scenic tram ride through Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge & False Cape State Park, observing wildlife along the way. Upon arrival of False Cape's historic site discover Wash Woods, a community that was located in what is now False Cape State Park. This trip includes a 1 mile hike to the site of the Wash Woods Methodist Church, where the steeple and cemetery remain. **December 20, January 17, February 29, March 28. All trips, Sundays from 1-4:00 PM**

****For above tram trips, meet at BBNWR Visitor Center. Reservations required, space limited. Call (757) 721-2412. Cost: Adults - \$8, Seniors & Children - \$6, Children under 3 - Free.**

Tram is unheated open air vehicle; dress appropriately for weather conditions.

Back Bay Restoration Foundation
3022 New Bridge Rd
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Back Bay Restoration Foundation is a non-profit corporation comprised of concerned citizens committed to the restoration, preservation, and enhancement of Back Bay, its watershed, immediate tributaries, and adjacent environs. The Back Bay Restoration Foundation Newsletter is published bi-monthly by the Back Bay Restoration Foundation.© 2003 Back Bay Restoration Foundation

Clip and Save

***December 2: Membership event -
Showing of DisneyNature: Earth***
December 6: Tram trip
December 7: Pearl Harbor Day
***December 12: New Bridge Road
Cleanup; Star gazing at False Cape***
December 20: Tram trip
February 3: Membership meeting
March 17: 2010 Back Bay Forum