



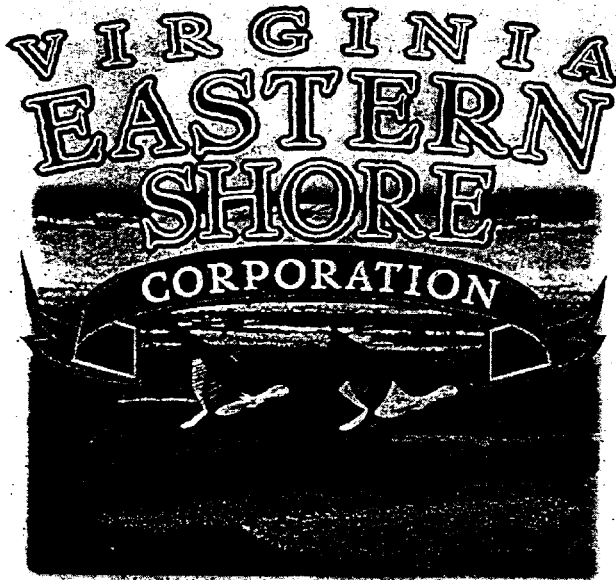
# ShoreLine

Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore Newsletter

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By Mariah Mears

In the land between the waters, the Virginia Eastern Shore Sustainable Development Corporation (VESCorp) is a confluence of efforts and ideas. As an outgrowth of the Northampton Economic Forum's *Blueprint for Economic Growth*, VESCorp was created and capitalized at \$2.1 million in 1994. Investors include The Nature Conservancy, local individuals and regional and national institutions.

VESCorp's mission is to develop successful markets for farmers, watermen, and crafts people; to help set a course for

development that preserves the environment; and to serve as a model from which those from other communities can learn.

Former vice-president and chief business officer of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Richard (Dick) Schreiber, has brought his years of business experience to VESCorp

which he now heads up as president and CEO.

The four goals set out by the corporation are:

**Jobs** - generate products and markets which create 250 new jobs in the first five years

**Environmental Protection** - develop compatible businesses and land uses that address key ecological stresses

**Replicability** - develop a structure and approach that is replicable in other communities and ecosystems

**Profitability** - secure an adequate long-term return for investors.

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## Cooperation Can Avoid Misunderstanding

### Cape Charles Development

Richard J. Foster III, a Virginia Beach developer, has taken an option on 1,846 acres of Brown and Root property in the vicinity of Cape Charles. Press reports indicate he is contemplating an upscale retirement/residential development to be complemented with several golf courses.

Since this announcement, Foster has met with a number of local organizations and individuals in keeping with his pledge to keep the community informed about his plans. Being up front with anticipated development

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Drawing on the natural beauty and resources of the Shore, as well as the bounty of talented artists and crafts people, the corporation is working to develop three brands: Eastern Shore Select™ specialty foods, Eastern Shore Selections™ gift products, and Eastern Shore Weekends™ ecotourism programs.

Eastern Shore Select™ promotes specialty and value-added foods and has just placed its first product on the market—Eastern Shore Select™ Hayman potatoes. While Haymans have always been a Shore favorite, they have also been somewhat of a secret. In hopes of creating a market for Haymans, Eastern Shore Select™ manager John Hickman, a Shore native and former manager of the Eastern Shore Farmer's Market, has introduced them recently into the Washington, DC area.

On November 14, eleven journalists and food critics ranging

from *The Washington Post* to *The Wall Street Journal* to *Mid-Atlantic Country Magazine* were introduced to Eastern Shore Select™ Hayman potatoes at a luncheon sponsored by VESCorp, the Red Sage Restaurant and Fresh Fields Stores.

By November 22, Eastern Shore Select Hayman™ potatoes will be found exclusively on the shelves of 20 Fresh Fields stores in the DC area and on the menu of the Red Sage Restaurant.

Also, currently on the shelves of 6 stores from Virginia to Ohio are several products from the Eastern Shore Selections™ line of gift and home products. Eastern Shore Selections™ manager Susan Tyler, wife of an Eastern Shore native and former manager for an environmentally friendly product line for a Fortune 500 chemical company, has worked with local artists to create painted canvas floor mats and pet mats. (These painted mats are available at the Gift Shop at Kerr Place.) Additionally, miniature decorative blanket chests are for sale.

A number of Eastern Shore Selections™ products are currently under development and two are under consideration by a major catalog company.

In the spring and fall of 1996, Eastern Shore Weekends™ hosted almost 200 guests from the Tidewater, Richmond and Washington DC area on its Bed, Breakfast and Biking Weekends. Managed by Mariah Mears, a Shore native and Outward Bound instructor, Eastern Shore Weekends specializes in ecotourism, inviting guests to explore and learn about the ecology and culture of the Shore. Twenty-one programs, including biking, birding and sea kayaking, are planned for 1997 from Chincoteague to Cape Charles.

For more information about VESCorp, call 442-7161. ■

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plans, even if they are only conceptual, is a rational first step to gain rapport with people whose continued support one would like to have.

The other side of the coin is that elected and appointed officials are presented with an opportunity to take advantage of Foster's willingness to become knowledgeable about what the community at large thinks is important. Surely Foster would like to be apprised about major issues associated with development on the Shore as well as the adopted review and approval processes.

This task should be relatively easy now because there is a well documented record of community goals, plans, and policies and ordinances, all approved or supported by the governing bodies of the county and the town of Cape Charles.

In contrast, ten or more years ago the county's comprehensive plan sat on a shelf like a potted plant; the zoning ordinances were lacking or needed amending. The available information on ground water and marine waters, including bayside creeks like Plantation Creek, were inadequate.

As a consequence, local government never seemed well prepared to react to major development proposals nor in a position to be an effective advocate for its own agenda. Today, because of the planning work done by the community, Foster can easily develop a reasonably accurate perception of what the community wants. He can study the relevant material in the comprehensive plans, the Sustainable Development Action Strategy, the Enterprise Community Plan, the Spe-

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