

Recognizing the Best in County Government Programs!



2013 Achievement Awards

ATTN: 2013 Achievement Awards Program
Virginia Association of Counties
1207 East Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, Va. 23219-3627

Call for Entries



2013 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline: June 1, 2013

Application Form

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2013.**

Program Information

Locality County of Northampton

Program Title "Cross the Bay for a Day...Better Yet Decide to Stay"

Program Category Population

Contact Information

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Title County Administrator

Department Administration

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Signature of county administrator or chief administrative officer

Name Katherine H. Nunez

Title County Administrator

Signature* Katherine H. Nunez

*Entries without this signature will not be accepted.

The 2013 VML Achievement Awards

Northampton County, Virginia

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2013 VACo Achievement Awards

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY SUBMITTAL

Category: Community/Economic Development

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The County, along with the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses (Blue Crab Bay), recognized the need to expand the tourism season for late fall and early spring, known as “the shoulder seasons”. In addition, recent State survey information indicated that the Hampton Roads region did not possess much knowledge about the Eastern Shore or its proximity to the Hampton Roads region as a destination point.

With funding through The Virginia Tourism Commission Marketing Leverage Grant, the synergy of local government, the local Chamber and the business community, the County initiated an awareness campaign for the lower Eastern Shore of Virginia as a viable vacation destination with many unique exciting visitor opportunities. The County believes that having a cohesive “marketing plan” lead to the success of the overall program.

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY SUBMITTAL

Category: Community/Economic Development

The collaboration of the County with the Town of Cape Charles, the Northampton County Chamber of Commerce, Bay Creek Resort & Club, Chatham Vineyards, Sunset Beach & Resort and the YMCA Camp Silver Beach along with the support of the Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission obtained the grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation Marketing Leverage Program to focus on highlighting the engineering marvel of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge & Tunnel and to incorporate that asset as a starting point in visiting the lower Eastern Shore and to demonstrate a firm partnership with its business community and show its desire to position the county for continued business growth and development.

Realizing the reluctances of our “Cross the Bay” target audience through extensive market research, we developed an 18-month marketing campaign that would highlight the ease of travel across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge & Tunnel (CBBT) and showcase the local tourism activities. We then enlisted the help of Sponsors that would be vital to our campaign because of their establishments’ unique correlation to tourism.

We launched an advertising campaign with some of the most influential Tidewater Magazines and Newspapers such as: Hampton Roads Magazine, Coastal Living, VEER Magazine, The Virginia Pilot, The Virginia Pilot- Flagship and was covered by the Virginia Travel Guide. We used billboards and displays with backlighting. We contracted with Communications Consultants, BCF for media services to perform paid media planning, purchase of space in selected radio media and multiple promotional opportunities.

The major components to the campaign were setting up a website – www.crossthebay.org, that would promote the crossing of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge & Tunnel and visiting the lower Eastern Shore. The website also appeared in all of our advertisement, packets, and brochures. A welcome packet that contained promotional materials and discounted offers from our sponsors was distributed to the Eastern Shore of Virginia Welcome Center to folks that came across the CBBT, to time share renters, hotel concierges, and tour operators in the Hampton Roads area. We held a Week-end Get-A-Way drawing that included: two nights lodging at the Sunset Beach Resort, Dinner for 2 at the Aqua Restaurant at Bay Creek, Dinner for 2 at the Island House in Wachapreague, a \$50 gift certificate for Blue Crab Bay Co. Gift Shop and Wine Tasting & Kayaking Tour at Chatham Vineyards & Southeast Expeditions.

We hosted a familiarity tour for the Hampton Roads media (TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, travel writers, etc.) that began at the CBBT and proceeded to several local tourism destinations on the Eastern Shore and then ended with a reception and dinner at the Sunset Beach Resort & Hotel. Each guest was mailed an invitation suitcase that had wares for the day that included: t-shirts, hats, a wine glass, an oyster knife, Blue Crab Seasoning Packets with a mug, peanuts and brochures. This “Fam Tour” led to several well-placed articles in Recreation News by journalist Marvin Bond, VEER Magazines, Jeff Maisey Hampton Roads Magazine, and Angela Blue and by radio personalities such as James Steele from 96X, Jay West, BOB FM and Dave Parker from WUSH & WNIS.

We created seasonal rack cards that were displayed at the Eastern Shore Welcome Center and sent 10,000 to the Information Highway Media LLC, Central Warehouse for distribution to the Welcome Centers at the East Coast Gateway (New Kent I64E) and the

New Church (US 13). The rack cards have been used at tradeshow, placed in hotels and timeshares in the Tidewater Area.

Our Performance Measure Plan has demonstrated that this Marketing Leverage Program has been very successful. There was an actual increase of 15% of visitors to Northampton County along with a 6% increase in visitor spending. Across the Board, our partners all saw increase in website traffic, tourism visitation and increase visitor spending. In addition, several of our partners (Sunset Beach, YMCA Camp Silver Beach, the Town of Cape Charles, the Northampton County Chamber of Commerce, Bay Creek Resort & Club and Chatham Vineyards) expanded their roster of employees to meet the demands of increased visitor traffic.

These numbers only look to be growing over the next few years, as Northampton County and the partners look boldly at tourism as a collaborative venture.

Cross the Bay for a Day!

APPENDIX A

Come for the day and be refreshed by unspoiled water views, breathtaking sunsets and quaint, charming towns. Savor fresh caught seafood and award-winning wines. But be prepared—you'll want to stay.

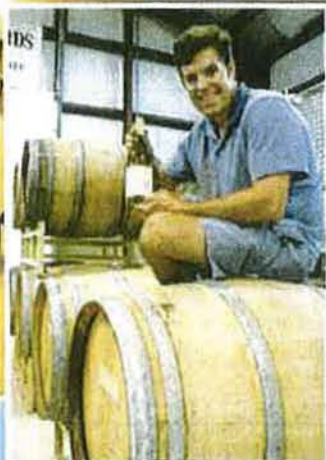
Marvel at one of the engineering wonders of the modern world, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, your gateway to the Eastern Shore. Watch for playful dolphins or simply admire the majesty and serenity of the Bay.

Relaxing, fun, and nearby—the perfect getaway! Stop in at the Eastern Shore Welcome Center for your free welcome packet with valuable coupons and discounts. Save your bridge-tunnel receipt for a \$5.00 return within 24 hours.

Virginia's
EASTERN SHORE

Virginia is for Lovers

crossthebayva.com



You'll
Love
our
Nature 
EASTERN SHORE, VA



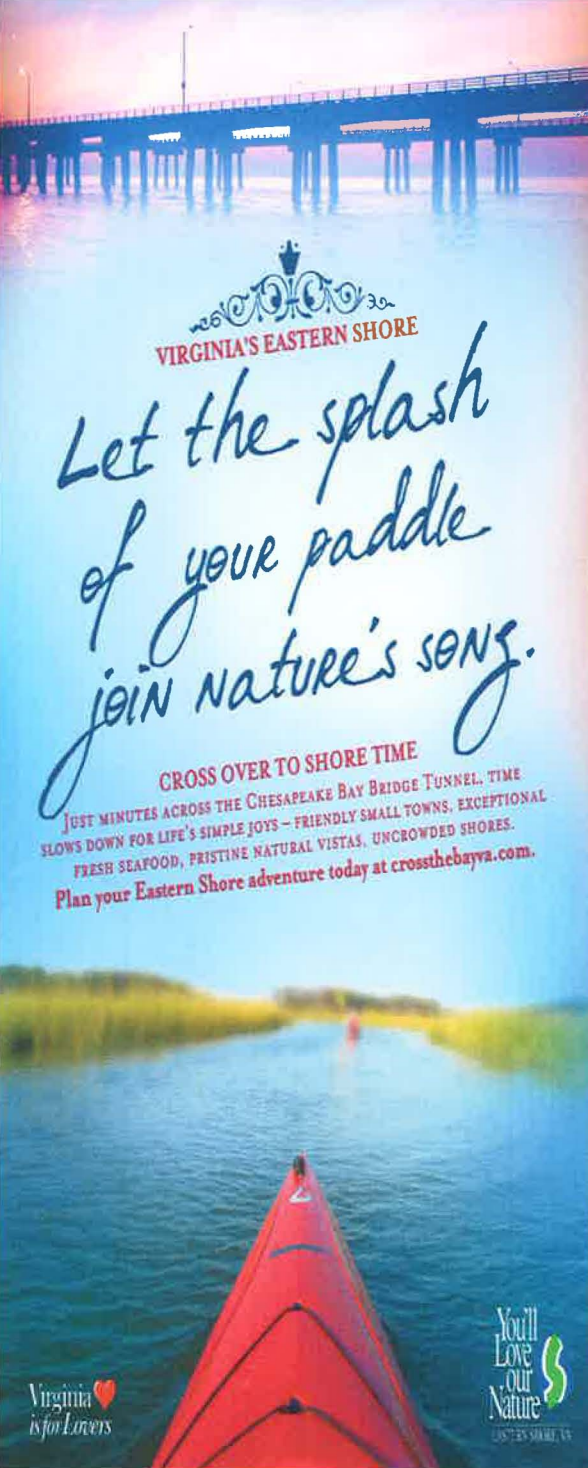
Welcome FAM Tour

Tonight's reception sponsored by



Virginia is for Lovers ♥







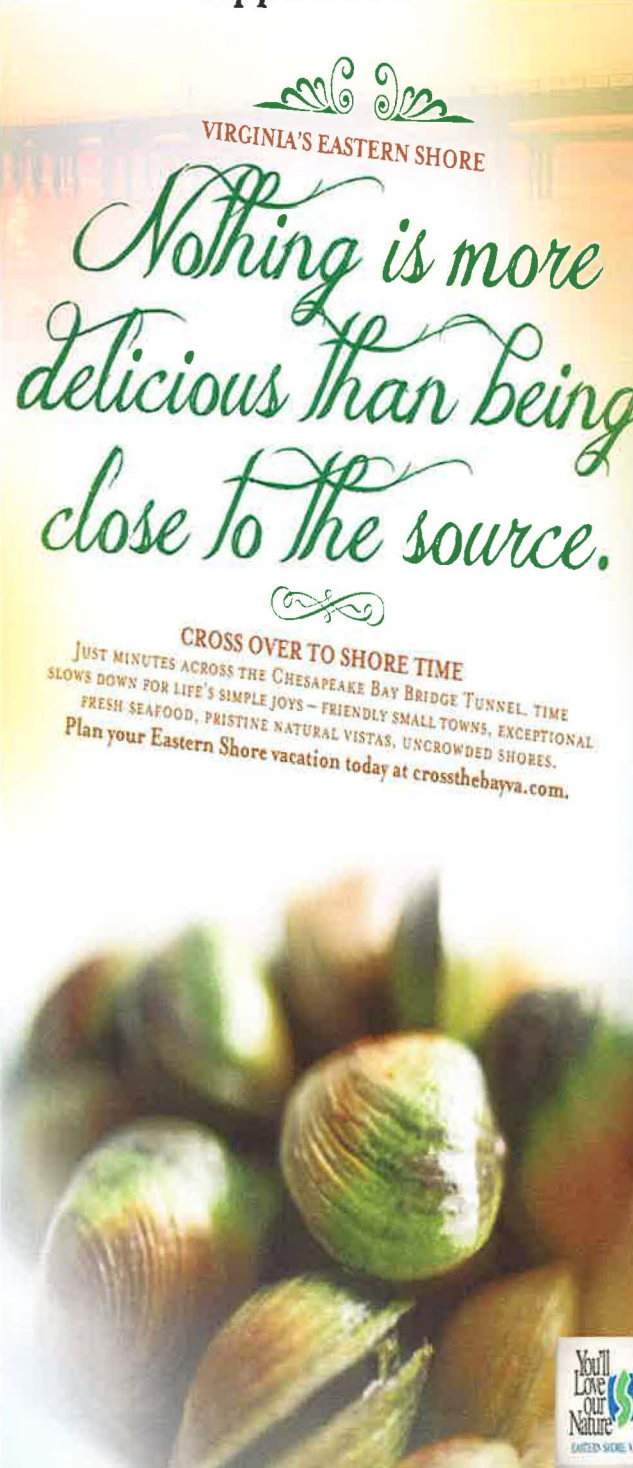
VIRGINIA'S EASTERN SHORE

*Let the splash
of your paddle
join nature's song.*

CROSS OVER TO SHORE TIME
JUST MINUTES ACROSS THE CHESAPEAKE BAY BRIDGE TUNNEL. TIME
SLOWS DOWN FOR LIFE'S SIMPLE JOYS – FRIENDLY SMALL TOWNS. EXCEPTIONAL
FRESH SEAFOOD, PRISTINE NATURAL VISTAS, UNCROWDED SHORES.
Plan your Eastern Shore adventure today at crossthebayva.com.

Virginia  is for Lovers


You'll
Love
our
Nature 
EASTERN SHORE, VA



VIRGINIA'S EASTERN SHORE

*Nothing is more
delicious than being
close to the source.*

CROSS OVER TO SHORE TIME
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Love
our
Nature 
EASTERN SHORE, VA



VIRGINIA'S EASTERN SHORE

*Where time
stands still,
inspiration blooms.*

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