



Roundtable Wrap-Up

Middle James Roundtable Holds Annual Meeting

By Leigh Isaac

The Middle James Roundtable, in cooperation with Clean VA Waterways, held its annual meeting on March 12, 2009 at the Lankford Student Union of Longwood University in Farmville, Virginia.

The meeting served as a forum for communication and networking for the forty-one attendees, who represented various stakeholder groups such as non-profit organizations, concerned citizens, state and local governments, soil and water conservation districts, and colleges/ universities within the middle James River watershed region.

During the morning session, Keith Burgess, Chairperson of the MJRT and Director of the Monacan SWCD, welcomed members; brief introductions of attending members were made. Katie Register, Executive Director of Clean VA Waterways,



Bill Street delivering the MJRT keynote address

gave a presentation about CVW's current cleanup projects. Register spoke about how CVW has been working to bring about awareness of cigarette butt litter as a pollution problem of considerable proportions; CVW's website, <http://www.longwood.edu/CLEANVA/>, cites that about 360,000,000,000 (estimate by USDA) were smoked in 2007 in the United States alone!

Ida Swenson, as the acting MJRT secretary, led a brief business session to elect new members to MJRT's Steering Committee. Please refer to page 3 for a list of the members and their bios.

Bill Street, Executive Director of the James River Association, deliv-

ered the keynote address on the state of the James River Watershed. Street presented a "Report Card" grading the

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*Middle James Roundtable members attended breakout sessions at the MJRT annual meeting at Longwood University. Sessions included **Networking Education for Municipal Officials** with Todd Janeski (DCR) and **Environmental Education** with Ann Regn (DEQ).*

condition of the James River in 2007. The overall grade was a “C” and took into account wildlife and habitat conditions, pollution status, and restoration and protection actions being taken.

A panel discussion was held to discuss how the MJRT has been a valuable communication/ facilitation tool to different types of groups in the watershed. Keith Burgess, Monacan—SWCD, Nissa Dean—VA Department of Conservation and Recreation, Michelle Kokolis—JRA, Christina-Luman Bailey—City of Hopewell, David Robertson—Greater Lynchburg Environmental Network, and Ida Swenson—concerned citizen, participated as panelists representing their respective groups. During

the discussion, panelists and audience members shared stories about their individual and group experiences as MJRT members. Bill Street acted as the discussion moderator.

The afternoon portion of the meeting continued with two sets of breakout sessions. Members had the choice to attend *Greening Your Home* with Tara Sieber from the VA Department of Environmental Quality, *Environmental Education* with Ann Regn from VADEQ, or *Networked Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO)* with Todd Janeski from VA Commonwealth University/ DCR. The second breakout session included *Virginia’s Proposed Stormwater Regulations* with Matt Stafford from DCR and

Regulations with Matt Stafford from DCR and *Landcare in the Watershed* with David Robertson from Virginia Tech/ GLEN.

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Middle James Roundtable

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Richmond, VA 23219

Contact: info@mjrt.org

Steering Committee Member Bios

Carrie Hagin works for the Dept. of Conservation and Recreation in the Richmond Regional Office as the Conservation District Coordinator. As the Conservation District Coordinator, she works as the liaison between DCR and 7 soil and water conservation districts in the central Virginia area.

Christina Luman-Bailey serves on City Council in Hopewell, VA and serves on the Crater District Planning Commission and the Go Green Virginia Advisory Committee of the Virginia Municipal League. Her concern for the environment stems from her love of the countryside and her concern for the future of her four children.

Ida Swenson is a retired teacher. She is a very active volunteer in the Rivanna River watershed, a Virginia Master Naturalist and a Virginia certified Erosion and Sediment Control Inspector.

Peter Agelasto is founder and executive director of the Rockfish Valley Foundation and president of the Friends of Rockfish Watershed in Nelson County. He serves on the Boards of the Virginia Conservation Network, Charlottesville Area Community Foundation, Virginia Beach Rescue Squad Foundation and the Nelson County Community Fund. He and his wife, Betsy, reside in Nelson County at Elk Hill, a registered historic landmark, at Rockfish Valley Farm.

Megan Sommers Bascone is the TMDL/Watershed Field Coordinator for DCR's Richmond Regional Office. She promotes nonpoint source pollution prevention and watershed restoration through urban and agricultural best management practice implementation in the James River watershed.

Tara Sieber has been a Water Quality Specialist with the Department of Environmental Quality's Valley Regional Office for the last 4 years. In this time, she has worked with community groups and focused state efforts on implementing

TMDLs and Clean-up Plans in watersheds where water quality standards aren't met.

Keith Burgess is the District Manager for the Monacan Soil and Water Conservation District. He has been regularly involved with Tributary Strategies in the Middle James during his 15+ year career with the District. He is involved with both urban and agricultural conservation planning and implementation.

Robin Buckalew has been with the Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District since 2004 as their Administrative Secretary and Public Information Specialist. She chaired the Friends of the Appomattox River from 2002-2007, acted as Vice-Chair from 2007-2009, during which time the club incorporated, and is currently a member of the newly formed Board of Directors.

Lorne Field is the Environmental Outreach Coordinator for Chesterfield County Environmental Engineering. He worked at the James River Park System in Richmond as the lead Environmental Educator and has a background in Virginia History and Archaeology.

Michelle Kokolis is the Watershed Scientist for the James River Association where she is responsible for establishing and maintaining diverse partnerships to implement innovative on-the-ground projects that address storm water management, sedimentation, habitat restoration, land conservation and other issues facing the James River.

Joyce Pritchard lives at the confluence of the James and Appomattox rivers in Hopewell, Virginia where she is a member of the Planning Commission and active in the Main Street initiative. Joyce also manages 130 acres of forested timberland on her family farms.

Fred Boger, the Nelson County Planning Director, also serves on the Middle James Roundtable Steering Committee.

The James River Run-Off Run-Down

By: Michelle Kokolis

All Virginians orient to the James River – America’s Founding River. From the headwaters of the Cowpasture and Jackson Rivers in Iron Gate to the urban whitewater at the Falls of Richmond and on to the tidal river that feeds the Chesapeake Bay, the James River is Central Virginia’s centerpiece and focal point.

On July 11th, 2009, many river enthusiasts will take part in the Second Annual James River Runoff Rundown as a benefit for the James River Association, a Richmond-based non-profit conservation organization whose mission is to safeguard the James River from the headwaters to the Bay.

The idea of the Rundown is simple — river enthusiasts from across the Commonwealth will paddle, boat, tube, sail or otherwise cover small sections of the James River such that, taken in concert, the entire length of the James

River – all 340-miles – will be traversed in one day. We ask that only non-motorized vessels be used for the Runoff Rundown.

As part of their Rundown, River Runners may observe water quality, view wildlife, and simply enjoy the river. Moreover, friends and family can show support for the JRA and individual Runners by pledging support at the Runoff Rundown website www.runoffrundown.org.

Whether your contribution is a lazy two-mile float at Scottsville, an intense whitewater kayak through downtown Richmond, a fishing trip with your friends in a skiff below the Enon bridge or a sunset cruise to the Chesapeake Bay, everyone is

encouraged to participate in the 2009 JRA Runoff Rundown.

Registration for the Runoff Rundown is easy. Visit www.runoffrundown.org Research the interactive river map to select your section. Complete the form to register and solicit sponsors for your efforts. You can register as an individual or as a group. Join the many who will be celebrating America’s Founding River on Saturday, July 11, 2009.

To read more about the event, learn how to become a River Runner, sponsor an individual River Runner or become an Event Sponsor, please visit www.runoffrundown.org.



Dominion Riverrock

Celebration of Richmond's active river life to be partnership between Venture Richmond, the Sports Backers and Dominion Resources

RICHMOND, VA (March 17, 2009) — Dominion Riverrock, Richmond's newest lifestyle event that will blend music, sports, interactive opportunities and environmental stewardship, will debut at Brown's Island on May 15-16. The event was announced at a news conference today on Brown's Island by Richmond Mayor Dwight C. Jones and Dominion Resources Chairman, President and CEO Thomas F. Farrell II.

Billed as "Richmond's Riverlife Celebration," Dominion Riverrock begins Friday, May 15, with a free performance by nationally acclaimed roots music and world rock band Rusted Root, a Mud Run, a high-flying Big Air dog jumping competition, and an acrobatic freestyle bike competition.

Events continue Saturday, May 16, when athletes from around the region square off in high-adrenaline activities both

in and around the river including the James River Scramble trail run, mountain biking, kayaking and more. With additional musical performances, dog and bike competition, food, exhibits and more, Dominion Riverrock is sure to make a splash as Richmond's premier river event.

Dominion is the title sponsor of the event through a grant from its Dominion Foundation philanthropic arm.



richmond's riverlife celebration

"We are very pleased that the Sports Backers and Venture Richmond have developed a major new event to help us celebrate the river and all its amenities. Dominion Riverrock is uniquely positioned to capitalize on Virginia's many historic, economic and geographic endowments: a location rich in history, an economically strong city center and a marvelous geographic setting," said Farrell.

"Richmond is in such a unique position to host this premier outdoor lifestyle festival. We are one of the only urban centers in the

country that can lay claim to so many natural resources in the heart of our business district. Increasing recreational activity along the James River is in line with the tenets of our Downtown Master Plan and I welcome the advent of this partnership with Dominion Resources," said Mayor Jones.

For full event information, Such as schedules and registration for individual events, please visit www.sportsbackers.org.

Upcoming Events

- 5/1/09
Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Deadline
- 5/14
Piedmont SWCD Sediment and Erosion Control Workshop
- 5/15-16/09
Dominion Riverrock
- 5/29/09
River Rally 2009
- 6/13/09
James River Regional Clean Up
- 7/11/09
James River Associations' 2009 Runoff Rundown

For more information on these events please visit www.mjrt.org

Middle James Roundtable Media Campaign

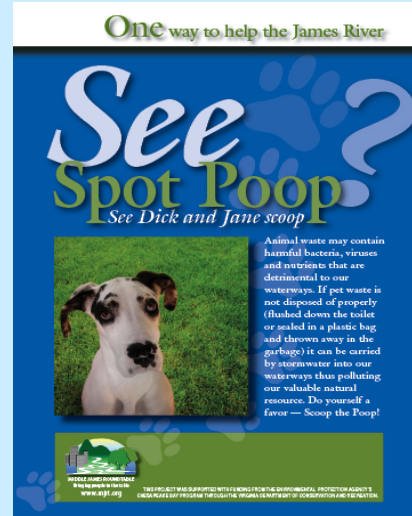
By Nissa Dean

In 2007, the Middle James Roundtable Steering Committee identified media relations as one of the most important, yet most difficult tasks that our partners face.

The design of media products are often time consuming and costly. In response to this need, the MJRT designed an advertisement campaign focusing on storm water issues that each partner can personalize and use locally.

These unique ads can be:

- Personalized with your organization's information and logo
- Printed in full color or black and white
- Used as print product or on the internet.



If you are interested in obtaining a CD which contains printing instructions and print files for the ads, please contact Leigh Isaac at info@mjrt.org

Rivanna Conservation Day

The Rivanna Conservation Society (RCS) and its many partners appreciate having the opportunity to involve nearly 150 volunteers who gathered on March 22 at the Glenmore Country Club for Rivanna Conservation Day.



By way of a summary of our collective accomplishments, we were able to conduct one of the largest buffer planting projects in Albemarle County to date.

This project included engaging volunteers in the planting of a 14 acre buffer (1,747 hardwood seedlings) between the Glenmore Golf Course and the Rivanna River. A number of partnering organizations which included Rivanna Conservation Society, Glenmore Country Club (providing matching funds), Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, County of Albemarle, VA Dept of Forestry, VA Dept of Conservation and Recreation worked together to carry out this tremendous effort.

The Go Green Challenge

By Christina Luman-Bailey

The Go Green Virginia Advisory Committee of the Virginia Municipal League is launching into a second year of the Green Government Challenge.

At the VML Annual Conference in October 2008, ten localities won awards for their achievements in "green practices." The localities included the City of Williamsburg, the Town of Dayton, the Town of Abingdon, the City of Falls Church, the City of Charlottesville, the Town of Blacksburg, James City County, the City Roanoke, Loudoun County, and the City of Alexandria. Sixteen others were recognized for gaining the minimum 100 points of the Green Government Challenge. Fifteen local governments submitted applications but did not achieve the minimum 100 points.

Many communities are now anxious to try the challenge again in 2009 while some are just getting ready to submit applications for the first time. VACO (Virginia Association of Counties) and VSBA (Virginia School Boards Association) have recently decided to join VML in the Go Green Initiative, thus making the green movement a truly state-wide campaign.

The Green Government Challenge is a friendly competition among governments who win points by implementing green policies in their respective localities. The Challenge is broken down into eleven categories. The "Water/Air Quality" category lists actions such as "Adopt a Low Impact Development (LID) storm water management policy and/or Environmental Site Design (ESD) guidelines" and "Develop and implement a plan for



tree preservation & planting."

There are obvious links between the mission of the Middle James Round Table and the Green Government Challenge; the Challenge can be used as a tool to provide incentives to local government, thereby making water quality improvement an official, ordinance-backed effort throughout Virginia. Furthermore, the Go Green Advisory Committee is currently working in partnership with ICLEI to create a "Green Community Challenge," which will expand the initiative's focus to community/civic organizations and non-profit environmental groups, such as MJRT.

To learn more about the Green Government Challenge and the Go Green Virginia initiative, please visit our website at www.GoGreenVA.org.

Green Infrastructure Planning Tools for Connected Communities

By Sarah Smith

The Richmond Regional Planning Commission (RRPDC) and the Crater Planning District Commission (CPDC) have embarked on an exciting green infrastructure planning effort. The green infrastructure concept originated over a century ago with the planning and conservation efforts of landscape architects, wildlife biologists, and ecologists. These early proponents espoused the importance of an organized conservation system for the health and well-being of both humans and wildlife.

Generally defined, green infrastructure is a strategically managed network of natural lands, working lands and other natural spaces, that provide numerous benefits—ecological and economic—to human and wildlife populations. More specifically, green infrastructure provides for habitat preservation and diversity, water filtration and storage, and improved air quality.

The two Planning District Commissions joined with the Green Infrastructure Center in Charlottesville, the Virginia Dept of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the

Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program, and the Capital Region Land Conservancy for Phase I of a regional green infrastructure planning project entitled *Green Infrastructure Planning Tools for Connected Communities*.

A review committee consisting of local government representatives, land conservation groups, and other project partner organizations was created to inform the project as work progresses and provide insight and context for data. The culmination of Phase I, ending in Fall 2009, will be a green infrastructure map for the entire region, spanning 18 localities, showing numerous layers of environmental, cultural and recreational data.

Phase II of this project is in the planning stages and will use a two-pronged approach.

The first prong focuses on rural counties. PDC staff will work with localities to develop green infrastructure implementation strategies through local comprehensive plans and/or ordinances.

ties, with RRPDC staff working with the City of Richmond to create a green infrastructure map for the city.

Separate processes are necessary because Phase I standards are more appropriate for a regional scale, unavoidably favoring rural areas. The process used to create the green infrastructure asset map for the City of Richmond will be a model for other urbanized areas in central Virginia.

For more information, please visit Richmond Regional Planning District Commission's website at: www.richmondregional.org

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www.mjrt.org**

**Any Suggestions?
Comments? Topics/
Events for the next
MJRT newsletter?
Please contact Leigh
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