



Shore Conserver

Eastern Shore Soil & Water Conservation District • *promoting locally led conservation*
22545 Center Parkway • Accomac, VA 23301 • (757)787-0918

February 2018

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Local Farmers Win State Award for Protecting Water Quality



From left to right: ESSWCD Chair, Robin Rich-Coates, Lynn Gayle, Sands Gayle, Darryl Glover, DCR

The Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District annually awards members of the local community who have been remarkable stewards of the land and/or outstanding advocates of conservation. The **Clean Water Farm Award**, a State award sponsored by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, is given to Virginia farmers who implement nutrient management plans and are exemplary in their protection of the State's soil and water resources. Clean Water Farm nominees may be chosen to represent any of the 94 counties and 18 cities of Virginia. From the pool of Virginia Clean Water Farm Award recipients, up to 10 grand winners representing Virginia's major river basins are selected each year.

This year's Clean Water Farm Award was awarded to **Lynn and Sands Gayle** of Mt. Nebo Farms who then was awarded the **Coastal Grand Basin Award**. Sands was born and raised in Onancock and has been involved in agriculture his whole life. He worked with his father, Lynn in the tomato industry at Taylor & Fulton in high school as well as gaining more horticulture experience working with Hortco Garden Center. Sands also had an internship at the Warsaw Agricultural Research and Extension Center under the supervision of Carl Griffey, head wheat scientist. He completed the Agricultural Technology Program at Virginia Tech and upon graduation became heavily involved with the family farm.

The Gayles currently grow corn, wheat,

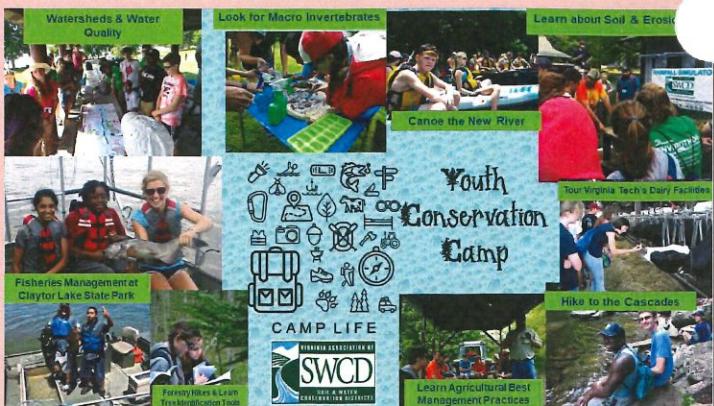
soybeans, sorghum and canola over a 2,500 acre operation located in central Accomack County. Mr. Gayle is a regular participant in the District's State cost-share programs, annually enrolling in both rye and wheat cover crops. All 2,500 acres of the Gayles Mount Nebo Farms operation are managed using no-till methods in order to protect the land from wind and water erosion and to build soil organic matter. For years they have diligently followed pest management and nutrient management plans and routinely sampled plant tissue on active fields. They use an innovative VERIS program to identify soil variability and texture and to find areas that need extra attention. The Gayles use a variable-rate spreader and high-tech fertilization techniques to significantly improve efficient use of fertilizer. This in turn cuts costs. The farms, which are being enrolled in the Natural Resources Conservation Services' Conservation Stewardship Program, also have 30-foot riparian buffers to protect water quality. Lynn and Sands Gayle are active in Eastern Shore agricultural groups, including the Accomack County Farm Bureau and the County Planning Commission.

With their ongoing efforts in soil and water quality not only do they exemplify conservation stewardship through best management practices and voluntary efforts; they also utilize innovative technology to open doors for more efficient and effective methods to minimize their ecological footprint in the local community.

Youth Conservation Camp Scholarships Available

This will be the 42nd year the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts has sponsored a week long summer conservation camp for Virginia high school students on the campus of Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. Applicants must be in grades 9-12 during the 2017-2018 academic school year. Twelfth graders who graduate May through August are eligible to attend. Previous campers may not attend. This year the camp will be held July 8-14, 2018. The program brings together approximately 70 interested students from across Virginia for a week of learning about Virginia's natural resources from conservation professionals and Virginia Tech faculty. Most of the instruction is hands-on and outdoors.

The Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District and Ye Accawmacke Garden Club are **offering scholarships to send two Eastern Shore High School Students to Youth Conservation Camp.** During the week long camp, campers will learn about lake ecology, fisheries management and stream morphology through hands-on experiences. There will be tours of the Forest Products



Center, Swine Center and Veterinary Teaching Hospital. If hiking to the Cascades Waterfall, tree identification, swimming, fishing, insect identification and canoeing sound like something you would enjoy, then this camp is for you! Apply by Friday, April 13, 2018. To see pictures from last year's camp and/or obtain an application please visit the Eastern Shore SWCD webpage: www.esswcd.org/camp.html or contact Mary Melson at (757)787-0918 x4437 or mary.melson@esswcd.org.

Scholarships Available to Virginia Students

Virginia residents enrolled in or having applied to a college curriculum related to natural resource conservation and/or environmental sciences may apply for scholarship funding from state sources. The Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts will award **four \$1,000 scholarships.**

Guidelines and application materials may be obtained from the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District office in Accomac by calling (757)787-0918, ext. 4437 or e-mailing mary.melson@esswcd.org. Completed applications must be returned to Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District by Friday, March 2, 2018.



Two \$500 Fletcher/Beasley Scholarships Available

Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District Announces the 2018 Fletcher/Beasley Scholarships. The Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District's Endowment Committee offers the W. Foster Fletcher Conservation Scholarship and the William H. Beasley, Sr. Memorial Scholarship annually. Eastern Shore of Virginia residents who are pursuing an undergraduate college degree in agriculture, conservation or environmental related studies are eligible to apply for this scholarship. Graduating seniors enrolling as a full-time college student can apply for the W. Foster Fletcher Conservation Scholarship. Students already enrolled full-time in an undergraduate or graduate school can apply for the William H. Beasley, Sr., Memorial Scholarship.

For an application, contact your School Guidance Office or Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District, 22545 Center Parkway, Accomac, VA 23301, (757) 787-0918 x4437, mary.melson@esswcd.org, or www.esswcd.org/Scholarships. **Deadline: Tuesday, May 1, 2018.**

Conservation Poster Contest

The ESSWCD Conservation Poster Contest is open to all local students, grades K-12. Prizes will be given for 1st-4th place in each of the five grade categories: K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12 — First Place Prize: \$50 in each category, Second Place: \$25, Third Place: \$15 and Fourth Place: \$10.



This year's theme is "Watersheds: Our Water, Our Home". For entry forms, complete rules and tips on how to make an effective poster, contact your art teacher or Mary Melson at mary.melson@esswcd.org or (757)787-0918 x4437. Posters must be submitted to ESSWCD by Friday, April 6, 2018 with a 2018 Conservation Poster Contest Entry Form attached to the back. Winning posters will be on display and awards will be given during the ES Science Fair held on Saturday, April 28, 2018 at the Eastern Shore Community College.



Conservation Grants Available for Environmental Education

Are you or your organization involved in environmental education on Virginia's Eastern Shore? Do you need funds to help provide these opportunities? Funding up to **\$250 per project is available** for projects such as outdoor classrooms and nature trails, recycling programs, butterfly plantings, storm drain stenciling, water quality testing, birdfeeders for the schoolyard, and field trips for environmental study. Last year, the Endowment Committee funded gardens at Broadwater and No Limits (bottom picture), a field trip to VA Living Museum for Kiptopeke Elem, a landscape Educational Film Series for Master Gardeners (top picture), a summer Butterflies Educational Program for US Fish & Wildlife Service and much more! The Eastern Shore Soil & Water Conservation District Endowment Committee does not fund beautification projects, food or money for textbooks.

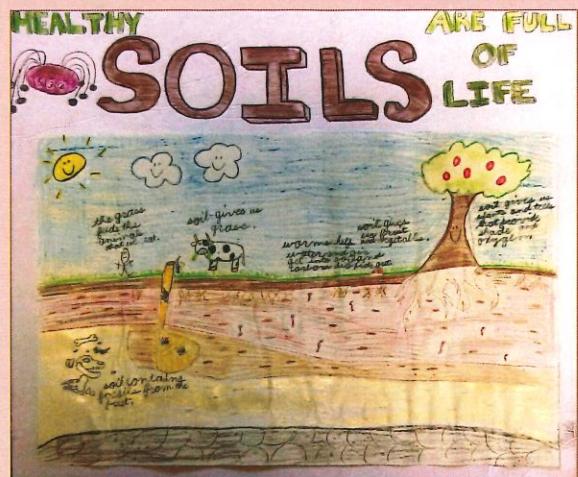


Friday, March 2, 2018 is the application deadline for the 2018 Billie Fitzgerald Memorial Conservation Grants from the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District. Schools, scouts, community groups and other organizations in Accomack and Northampton Counties are eligible for these grants.

Interested parties may obtain the one-page application form from the District office in Accomac by phone (757)787-0918 x4437, email—mary.melson@esswcd.org, or online—www.esswcd.org/education.html.



State Conservation Poster Contest Winner



Of the 184 Eastern Shore students who entered their posters into the 2017 local Conservation Poster contest sponsored by the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District, 5 were chosen as first place winners in categories of K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12. These five first place winners were sent to the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts' State Poster Contest. At the State level **Noah Steele of Shore Christian Academy** was awarded 1st place in the 2nd-3rd grade category. Congratulations Noah, for a job well done!

Conservation Specialist Recognized for 5 Years of Service



Cole Charnock was recognized for 5 years of service at the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District by the Virginia Association of Conservation District Employees (VACDE). VACDE presented a 5-year service keychain commemorating his 5 years of service to the District at the VASWCD Annual Meeting on Tuesday, December 5, 2017 in Portsmouth, VA.

Cole is the Conservation Specialist at the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District. He holds a B.S. in Agriculture from Old Dominion University. Cole has always been active in local environmental education activities, including Ducks Unlimited and Boy Scouts. Cole also participates in many environmental educational activities such as Farm Bureau's Young Farmers, Envirothon, Northampton County Fair, Watershed Festival and Arbor Day. The District Board and Staff appreciate Cole's dedication and hard work at the District.



Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District is celebrating

Arbor Day

Saturday, April 28, 2018, 9am-12pm
Free Seedlings!



Pictured left to right: Common Buttonbush, American Plum, American Elderberry, Black Locust, Eastern Redbud, White Oak, Washington Hawthorne

Yes, we are giving away 15 varieties of seedlings including:

American Elderberry
 Allegheny Chinkapin
 American Plum
 Bicolor Lepedezia
 Common Apple
 Gray Dogwood
 Willow Oak
 Washington Hawthorne

Common Buttonbush
 Hazelnut
 Black Locust
 Redbud
 Persimmon
 Silky Dogwood
 White Oak

Foresters will be onsite for any questions.

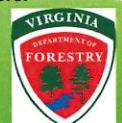
The Shore Conserver is published quarterly by the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District (ESSWCD) to provide information to land users. The District customarily meets monthly on the second Wednesday of the month at 5:00pm at the USDA Service Center in Accomac, VA. The public is welcome to attend. To be added to the mailing list, contact the District office at 757-787-0918 x4421. The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the ESSWCD through financial and administrative assistance provided by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. All programs and services of the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

Two Locations:

**A&N Electric Cooperative
 21275 Cooperative Way
 Tasley, VA 23441**

**Northampton County Green
 16404 Courthouse RD
 Eastville, VA 23347**

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