

The Croatan Civic League News

August 2020

President's Letter by Mike Kelly

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Everyone seems to have made it through Tropical Storm Isaias. In case you missed it, we had a large tree get blown across Croatan Road near the entrance. The result was a loss of electrical power for most of the neighborhood. Perhaps of equal significance was that there was no entry/exit for about 8 hours. I am not sure who was more frustrated – some of our residents and visitors trying to get out or surfers trying to get in. One long-time resident reported that in their 26 years in Croatan, the exit has never been completely shut down by a storm.



The city and Dominion Energy response was quite good. One of the challenges to removing the tree was that the power had to be shut down before the city Public Works people could cut and remove. Power lines were live and laying across the branches. It's important to remember

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

8/20 Book Club

9/7 CCL Board Meeting

9/11 Newsletter Deadline



that this wasn't the only power outage in the area and so, responders and equipment had to be doled out on a priority schedule.

Another major concern was response for a fire or medical emergency. We were able to coordinate very quickly a dialog between the State Military Reservation (historically known as Camp Pendleton) and the Virginia Beach Police Department. Any emergency response would come through the back gate at the public beach parking lot. More detail is in the **Safety and Security Report**.

The Board had a virtual meeting on Monday, 3 August. We continue to review options for social events, but we have chosen to remain very cautious. If you have an idea on events that you would attend and feel safe, please let me know. A very interesting commentary on Virginia Beach can be found at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/benbaldanza/2020/08/05/a-trip-to-virginia-beach-showed-why-we-arent-beating-this-virus/#7cb5ecea781f>.

"Connie" Agresti provides some great information about the issues and concerns affecting the neighborhood. Please make sure you read his **Safety and Security and Short-Term Rentals Reports**.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be virtual on Monday, 7 September at 6:30 PM. If you have an item you want placed on the agenda, please send it to me and plan on attending. I will provide the Zoom invite and connection to those who ask.

Remember the basics. Wash your hands. Practice social distancing. And, wear a mask.

Stay safe and watch out for each other.

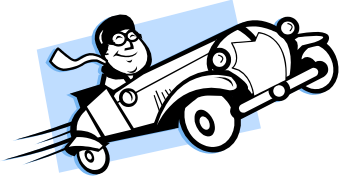
Mike Kelly

President, Croatan Civic League

(M) 703.439.9153 (Primary)

(H) 757.961.6244 (After 7:00 PM)

president@croatanbeach.org



Do you want to save \$200.00, save your neighbors, save children, bicyclists, pets and wildlife? **GO SLOW IN CROATAN!!!**

Beach Restoration by John Mannarino, Director

US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) plans to re-bid the project with a bid date to be determined. The USACE is currently reaching out to the dredging industry to obtain feedback as to what can be done (longer performance period?) to advertise the dredging project in order to receive more attractive bids. City project engineers expect to hear back from the USACE within the next month on a tentative schedule.

Short Term Rentals by Connie Agresti, Director

Short Term Rentals: I attended a public forum on short-term rentals (STR) held by the Planning Commission on July 20. Their formal meeting will be in City Council chambers at **9:00 AM on Wednesday, August 12**. One issue on the agenda is whether to recommend a proposal to implement an overlay district on STR in the Old Beach neighborhood. Councilman Guy Tower has expressed the concern of his constituents that the plethora of replacing beach cottages with large multi-bedroom STR buildings is detracting from the character of the residential neighborhoods.

Next Wednesday's Planning Commission meeting will also discuss whether to change portions of the grandfathering clause on STR (Zoning Regulation § 241.2) that existed prior to July 1, 2019 and whether to implement civil fines for failure of STR lessors to comply with § 241.2.

Within Croatan, one new Conditional Use Permit application for a new STR is also on the agenda for public comment. That proposed new STR location is 809 Vanderbilt.

Citizens may send comments (pro or con) on this subject to the Planning Commission at email str@vb.gov. The Planning Commission's web site contains the proposed zoning ordinance changes as well as the PowerPoint deck presented at the July 20th meeting. That web address is <https://www.vb.gov/government/departments/planning/boards-commissions-committees/Pages/pc.aspx>.

The Croatan Book Club

Next Meeting

Date: **Thursday, August 20th**

Time: **6:30 P.M.**

Place: **Karen Moore**

Selection: **The Tattooist of Auschwitz** by Heather Morris

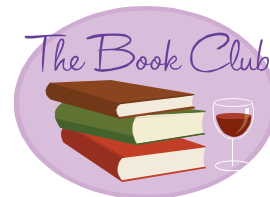
All Neighbors are welcome. Just read the book (or maybe not), bring a beverage or snack, and e-mail the hostess that you will be attending.

Future Selections

Author

The Art of Racing in the Rain

Garth Stein



Information is also on the CCL website: www.croatanbeach.org/book-club/.

Safety, Security Update, Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC), and Virginia Beach Council of Civic Organizations (VBCCO)



Bottom Line Up Front:

- Tropical Storm Isaias – the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly
- Drones and Croatan – restricted airspace
- Hot Time, Summer in the City – know the dangers
- Sales Tax Holiday for Emergency Supplies, etc.
- Coronavirus – did we blow a good thing?
- Bike the bike path, walk the boardwalk
- Mailbox thefts on the rise
- Electric Scooters – love to hate ‘em

Tropical Storm Isaias: Now that fallen trees are being removed and power has been restored, we can take a step back, lower our blood pressure, and review the good, the bad, and the ugly of a relatively “minor” storm. First of all – the good – no one was injured, neighbors looked after neighbors (which is why many of us move here in the first place), and we had no life-threatening emergencies of which I am aware. Most of us took the opportunity to review our homeowners’ insurance documents and should have learned their evacuation zone (Croatan residences range from Zone “A” to Zone “C”).

So, what benefit is knowing your evacuation zone if you cannot evacuate, you ask? Herein lies the “ugly:” Croatan has a key vulnerability – only one means of vehicular ingress or egress. CCL President, Mike Kelly, has been contact with VBPD and Camp Pendleton to establish a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) or other coordinating document, whereby emergency vehicles and residents can use the back gate (west side of parking lot) for access to/from Croatan through the adjacent National Guard base. The circumstances as to when access can be used, as well as who has decision authority to execute the MOU rest in forthcoming negotiations. Any SOP or Memorandum of Understanding will also include a provision as to who would hold a key to the locked parking lot. If any resident has political clout with the City and/or National Guard, please make yourself known to Mike.

Albeit, out of sequence is the “bad.” Power was out for many for approximately 32 hours. Dominion Energy actually thought power had been restored for all of Croatan on Tuesday, August 4, until Bob Lougen informed them that it hadn’t. I was fortunate enough to espy Dominion Energy workers at Zero’s Subs on Wednesday, many people called in their outages, and one thing led to another with positive results. In the interim, some resorted to cars for air conditioning and charging portable electronics. All other things being equal, **call 3-1-1** for public works assistance during storms. Access additional preparedness information at <https://emergency.vbgov.com/hurricane> .

Drones: Some people have recently reported drones (aka: unmanned aerial systems – UAS) operating over Croatan recently. While not many have seen the drones, everyone has heard, seen, and felt the F/A-18s and variety of rotary wing aircraft that fly overhead on a daily basis. Croatan lies in “restricted airspace.”

Facilities with airfields have a **five-mile no-fly zone** around their airspaces, which covers much of Virginia Beach, including Croatan. Violating restricted airspace is so serious that offenders are reported to the FAA, which can assess civil fines and revoke a pilot's license or drone registration. Any drones that violate military airspace are subject to confiscation. Anyone who wants to operate a UAS within controlled airspace must have permission from the airfield(s) within five miles of where they want to fly. For Croatan, that means getting permission from the air traffic controller of Oceana Naval Air Station. For more on drones, please visit the CCL website at <https://www.croatanbeach.org/flying-drones-in-croatan/> or <https://www.vbgov.com/government/departments/communications-office/fact-or-fiction/Pages/Drones.aspx>.

Hot Weather Warnings: These past few weeks have seen several days where heat indexes reached 105 – 110 degrees. National Weather Service will declare **“Heat Advisory”** for such days. These high temperature/humidity combinations can do serious damage to individuals not taking proper precautions such as minimizing outdoor exposure, dressing in light, loose fitting clothes, and drinking plenty of non-alcoholic fluids. Heat will make you fatigued, lethargic, and impact mental acuity. Knowing the warning signs of Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke, and taking immediate proper action can save a life:

- **Heat Exhaustion** – feeling faint or dizzy, excessive perspiration, cool, pale, clammy skin sometimes with goosebumps despite heat, nausea/vomiting, rapid/weak pulse, muscle cramps – get to cooler air, drink water if fully conscious, take a cool shower or use cold compresses at neck, underarms, and groin.
- **Heat Stroke** –throbbing headache, no perspiration, red, hot, dry skin, body temperature of 103 or higher, altered mental state (possible slurred speech, agitation, or delirium), nausea/vomiting, racing pulse, rapid/shallow breathing, possible loss of consciousness. **Life threatening – call 9-1-1.** Take immediate action to cool person by placing in shade, removing excess clothing, using cold compresses as above, and/or spraying with cool water but **do not immerse in pool or bath** (due to risk of drowning should they lose consciousness).

Oh, my burning tootsies: On these 90+ degree days, a strong sun can turn decks, patios, road parking surfaces, and sand into griddles with temperatures hot enough to burn and blister the soles of your feet. Protect your tootsies (and that pedicure) with some sort of footwear on these torrid days. Dogs don't have the luxury of donning sandals or flip flops – please walk them in the shade, early morning, or evening on days when the pavement sizzles.

Thunder and Lightning: When the “gods are bowling in heaven,” it's time to end the outdoor chores/playtime and head indoors. The National Weather Service warns that if you can see lightning or hear thunder, you are at risk. Thunderstorms can bring intense rain and strong winds in a very short period of time. Batten down the hatches and enjoy the show - safely from indoors. If caught outdoors, seek shelter (**not under a tree**) or lay down if in the open, as lightning will usually strike the tallest object.

Sales Tax Holiday: Beginning **Friday, Aug. 7 at 12:01 a.m.**, Virginia consumers will be able to purchase qualifying school supplies, clothing and footwear as well as hurricane and emergency preparedness items such as generators, flashlights and batteries tax free during the Commonwealth's annual **three-day tax holiday**. Energy Star and WaterSense products will also be sold with no sales tax **until 11:59 p.m. on**

Sunday, Aug. 9. The tax exemption applies to purchases made in-store, online, by mail or over the phone. For more info and a detailed list of qualifying items, visit the Virginia Department of Taxation's website at www.tax.virginia.gov.

Coronavirus: On July 28, Governor Northam imposed new restrictions on the Hampton Roads community due to localized spikes in transmission of coronavirus. Group gatherings are again limited to 50 people, alcohol sales must end early, and restaurants remain limited to 50 percent capacity. We cannot be self-centered about this and have to wear masks/social distance as an example of the care and respect that we have for ourselves and others. It is not about individual rights; it is about community health. As the quip goes, "Catch a wave, not COVID." For the latest, visit: <https://emergency.vbgov.com/coronavirus>.

Exercise etiquette: Bicyclists frequently complain about the risk of collisions with pedestrians on the Oceanfront bike path. The boardwalk is for pedestrians (think: walk = walk), while the bike path is for bikes (think: bike = bike). Nevertheless, control your speed, give timely, audible overtaking warnings, be tolerant of tourists, and watch out for tykes who only see the beach.

Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC):

CAC meetings are again suspended due to re-imposed coronavirus mandates restricting gatherings. The following are provided for your information.

Mailbox Thefts: Although he doesn't identify the area(s) of Virginia Beach where the thefts are occurring, Second Precinct Community Engagement Officer, MPO Jim McElligott, posted the following alert to Nextdoor on July 29: Since January 11, 2020, there have been several larcenies from mailboxes throughout the City of Virginia Beach with a steep rise in May of 2020. The victims have placed checks in their mailboxes and later found their checks were compromised. In 78% (14/18) of these cases, the checks are noted to be cashed for a higher amount [than originally written]. Incidents are occurring [at all hours of] the day. It is suggested that citizens consider dropping mail off, particularly those that may include checks or other forms of payment [e.g., money orders], at the post office. Also, do not leave mail in your mailbox for extended periods of time.

Electric Scooters: The expected return to the Oceanfront of up to 1,000 electric scooters (250 from each of four vendors) has been delayed as of this writing due to contract disputes regarding vendor liability for scooters left blocking streets or sidewalks. The newspaper or social media will likely contain the up-to-date information of this daily-changing issue. In the interim, know that the scooters will soon be among us and keep a keen lookout for them when driving, as history has shown that they're not always operated in a safe manner.

Call the VBPD non-emergency number (757-385-5000) when something is an inconvenience. Call 9-1-1 when there is a life-threatening issue.

Virginia Beach Council of Civic Organizations (VBCCO)

VBCCO meetings continue to be postponed – at least through August. The organization's monthly newsletter – The Voice can be found at <http://www.vbcco.org>.

Be safe, be happy. M. C. "Connie" Agresti, CCL VP, Security Chair

Wildlife in Croatan by Susanna H. Miller (Suditi)

With the sort of weather we have had lately, it seems a good time to recognize the waterfowl of Croatan. These waterfowl include just a few of the diving and dabbling ducks, but by no means all of the numerous waterfowl species that visit and live here.

This month I thought I would share some of the photos I have taken over the years... all from my backyard. I will include the common names, a quick line, maybe, and a link (go to the Croatan Civic League online version for active links), but will leave you to explore their biology online if you wish.



Northern Shovelers have an amazingly long and broad bill. Right before the lake iced over one winter, they swam in tight circles as though to prevent the ice from forming as long as possible. https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Northern_Shoveler



Wood ducks are colorful, shy cavity nesters... one of the only forest nesting ducks... Nest boxes helped their numbers increase when forests with big enough nest trees became scarce. https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/wood_duck



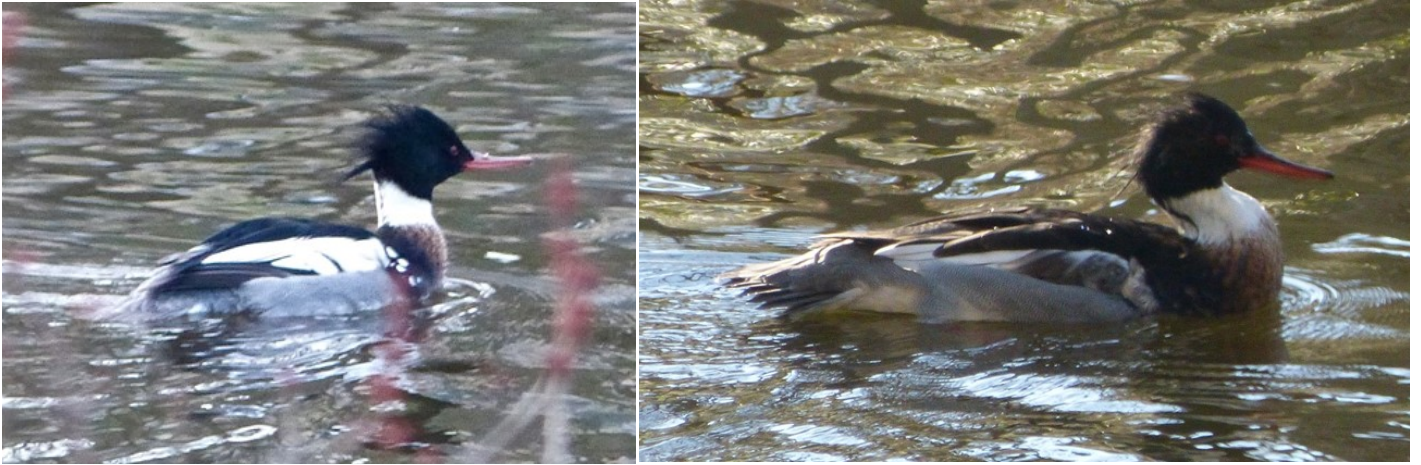
Wood Ducks, cont'd



Ring-necked Ducks are cute little diving ducks seen in the winter months. Neat fact from my link... The oldest known Ring-necked Duck was a male, and at least 20 years, 5 months old. He was banded in 1964 in Louisiana and was shot in 1983, in Minnesota. If you wonder why some ducks stay a certain distance away, you will often find it just beyond shotgun range. https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Ring-necked_Duck



The Red-breasted Merganser is a showy bird known as a “Sawtooth” for its serrated beak that holds on to the fish it catches. https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Red-breasted_Merganser



Last but not least (well... it is the least in size...) The Pied-billed Grebe is the smallest and, maybe the most interesting... including; eating feathers, explosive diving, trapping water for buoyancy and carrying young on their backs. https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Pied-billed_Grebe



I so hope you enjoy some of our more interesting waterfowl neighbors... if you have not yet met them. Visit the links to hear calls and see additional great information. All links are to Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s Bird I.D. pages. This great source also offers live webcams for birds all over the world. Enjoy your feathered neighbors!

Neighborhood Contacts

Send any corrections, deletions or additions to this page to Marian Kitchin at mdkitchin@gmail.com.

Welcome Wagon

Contact Cheryl Garvey at cgcroatan@gmail.com or phone 471-5436 if you know of new Croatan neighbors .



Magazine Collection

Michele Speight, Teen Crisis Intervention
549 Bushnell Drive
428-7947; msp8@cox.net

Book Collection

Betty Rosignolo
760 Virginia Dare Drive
437-8662; rbrosignolo@cox.net
For Sentara Virginia Beach Hospital Auxiliary

Who to Call

Dead or Stranded Marine Mammal (dolphin, seal, whale) or Sea Turtle
Virginia Aquarium Stranding Response Team
757-385-7575



Important Contacts

Police Fire & Rescue Emergencies	911
Non-Emergency Assistance	385-5000
Miss Utility	811
Potholes, Street Signs and Repairs	385-1470
Animal Control (Option #1)	385-4444
City Landfill	385-1980
Bulk Trash Pickup	385-4650
Croatan Temporary Parking Permit	385-4131
Wildlife Response , Inc.	543-7000
VBSPCA Wildlife Referral Line	263-4762
Wildlife Conflict Helpline (toll free)	(855) 571-9003
Beach Wedding Permit	385-4800

Tidewater Wildlife Rescue

Helpline 757-255-8710

A volunteer organization dedicated to assisting orphaned and injured wildlife throughout Tidewater, Virginia.

Tidewaterwildliferescue@gmail.com



SCOOP THE POOP!!!! It's the LAW!!! Please carry a plastic bag with you when you walk your dog. Don't let pet waste become part of our waterways or our neighbor's landscape.

The People Make the Beach
Croatan Civic League

We are on the WEB!
 Check us out at
www.croatanbeach.org
 and Nextdoor.com

Croatan Civic League Officers, Directors and Committee Chair Contacts

President, Spring Fling, City Government and Military:

Mike Kelly Phone 961-6244
 Email: mkellyav8@aol.com

Vice President, Security, VB Council of Civic Organizations, Citizen's Advisory Committee:

M.C. "Connie" Agresti Phone 425-2068
 Email: security@croatanbeach.org

Secretary, Social Activities and Children's Programs:

Amanda Robinson
 Email: secretary@croatanbeach.org

Treasurer:

Jim Skarbek Phone 491-3230
 Email: treasurer@croatanbeach.org

Past President, Membership and Croatan Yard Sale:

Bill Garvey Phone 471-5436
 Email: cddx@aol.com

Director, Artisan's at Croatan Beach:

Jen Alex Phone 348-3884
 Email: directorja@croatanbeach.org

Director:

Kathy Donahoe Phone 422-8766
 Email: Kdonahoe@cox.net

Director, Welcome Wagon and Landscaping:

Cheryl Garvey Phone 471-5436
 Email—cgcroatan@gmail.com

Director, Spring Fling:

Larry Kurtz
 Email: directorlk@croatanbeach.org

Director, Website, Facebook Group and Directory:

Bob Lougen
 Email: support@croatanbeach.org

Director, Beach Restoration:

John Mannarino Phone 496-2746
 Email: directorjm@croatanbeach.org

Director:

Milt Martin Phone 804-467-0717
 Email: directormm@croatanbeach.org

Director, Social Activities, Logo Wear and Directory:

Katie Ripberger Phone 434-6450
 Email: katiefr@howardhanna.com

Director, Halloween Party and Parade:

Amber Torgerson
 Phone 319-6076
 Email: directorat@croatanbeach.org

Director, Spring Fling and Directory:

Patricia Zuraw Phone 757-373-8601
 Email: pzuraw@howardhanna.com

Special Advisor:

Ken Jobe Phone 428-0328
 Email: kejo425@aol.com

Committee Chairs

Newsletter, NextDoor:

Marian Kitchin Phone 437-9554
 Email: mdkitchin@gmail.com

Surfing:

Wes Laine Phone 428-2620
 Email: surfing@croatanbeach.org

Women's Club President :

Amanda Robinson
 Email: wclub@croatanbeach.org

Book Club Leader:

Alice Weisz
 Email: bookclub@croatanbeach.org