

CROATAN CIVIC LEAGUE NEWSLETTER



JANUARY 2026

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Happy New Year to all. It is hard to believe that it is now 2026.

The Board of Directors Meeting was held on Monday, January 5th at my home.

We have had a great year.

- The U.S Army Corps of Engineers placed approximately 125,000 cubic yards of sand on the beach from 654 S. Atlantic to the parking lot fence;
- The weir modification project continues to move along;
- We had 3 members socials as well as our annual Spring Fling; and
- Several children's events including ice cream socials and a Halloween Party.

Our treasurer, Pat Costigan, reported that we had \$27,804.88 on January 1st. That is down from \$34,683.13 at the start of the year. This is in line with our 2023 decision to reduce the general account to \$20,000. We think that is a reasonable reserve. We are getting there by holding the member dues steady at \$80 per couple and \$45 for singles, and absorbing the increase in event, maintenance, and insurance costs. We will finalize the 2026 budget at the February meeting.

The end of year treasurer's report showed 476 member names. We had 416 at the beginning of the year. The number also represents 266 properties in Croatan. That is little more than half of the properties in Croatan. Fifty percent is impressive for a volunteer, neighborhood organization.

To all – Thank you for your confidence in the Board and your desire to keep Croatan a great community.

The not so good news: Over the last couple of years, we lost several board directors and now have 11 out of 15. Several directors have served for more than 10 years. That puts a lot of pressure on the current directors to keep the Civic League running smoothly and maintain the standards that have been established over the last 30 years. (We are also getting older and set in our ways.) We need more people to volunteer as directors or to assist in helping to put on our major events. Please consider stepping up and be a part of Croatan's future.

All the best to each of you in this new year and stay safe.

Mike Kelly, President, Croatan Civic League
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Please Share with Renters & Contractors

Bottom Line Up Front:

- Be Seen at Night
- Black Ice
- Cyber Security Tips – File Extensions
- Streetlight Out?
- Security Fund and Performance
- CAC – Next meeting January 14 – new time, new location



Be Seen at Night: As our eyes age, seeing and driving at night becomes increasingly difficult. Even after cataract surgery, dark shapes may appear out of nowhere. If you're on the other end – walking a pet, exercising, bicycling, etc. be mindful that just because you can see a car, does not mean the car can see you. Wear reflective clothing and use lights – inexpensive, wearable LED lights are widely available. No one wants to be the unseen bump in the road.

Black Ice: When the ambient temperature is at or below freezing (32° F), pavement dampened by dew, fog, or precipitation can acquire a glaze of ice that is not always visible. If the road looks wet, test for the presence of ice by braking while driving slowly in the neighborhood.

Be mindful that even on sunny days, elevated roadbeds, bridges, roadways in shadow, or the edges of curves may be slick even when the rest of the road seems clear. Drive cautiously and defensively. If you skid, ease off the throttle and steer into the skid – do **NOT** mash on the brakes, even if they are anti-lock. Final note: Clear all windows of frost or snow before you drive – you can't avoid what you can't see.

Cyber File Extensions: Alice Weisz forwarded me these timely cybersecurity tips to keep in mind as we upgrade our computers.

Adding extensions to your browser can improve usability and lead to a better browsing experience. Unfortunately, cybercriminals take advantage of this and can use browser extensions to hack into your accounts and steal your sensitive information. Cybercriminals can make fake extensions that look legitimate and even spoof real extensions. These scams can be hard to spot. So, it's important to learn how to keep yourself safe.

Hidden Extensions - Cybercriminals can create malicious browser extensions designed to steal your email information. For example, cybercriminals can send you a phishing email urging you to download an extension for your Google Chrome browser. This looks like a legitimate Google Chrome extension, but it's actually malicious. When you download this extension, it is hidden and can only be seen in your extensions list if you enter a specific address in the address bar. However, the next time you open your Gmail account, the extension automatically activates to steal your email content.

Spoofed Extensions - Cybercriminals can also make malicious copies of real browser extensions. For example, cybercriminals have created a malicious spoof of the legitimate Google Chrome extension for ChatGPT, a well-known AI chatbot. If you download this extension, it won't appear in your browser's toolbar or extension list, but the hidden extension is still running in the background. This fake extension looks legitimate, but it's actually a copy of the real extension with extra malicious code designed to steal your sensitive information. After you install this extension, the malicious code will steal your Facebook account information.

What Can I Do to Stay Safe? - Follow these tips to stay safe from Google Chrome extension scams:

- Be cautious before you download an extension for any internet browser.
- Only add any extensions to your browser from trusted sources, such as the Chrome Web Store. Watch out for emails that prompt you to click links instead of visiting the extension publisher's home page.
- Before you click a sponsored link, hover your mouse over it. Make sure that the link leads to a legitimate, safe website that corresponds with the content in the related search result.

Streetlight Out? Some other infrastructure issue not up to snuff (e.g., pothole, missing or knocked-down street sign)? Citizens are empowered – and actually requested – to report these issues directly to VB 3-1-1 or enter the location and details (e.g., numbers on street light pole) online at <https://virginiabeach.gov> --> Services --> Report a Problem. Calling 3-1-1 only works from a phone registered in “the 757.” If you have a “legacy” phone number from a previous life (e.g., mine is 703 area code), must dial the complete non-emergency number at 757-385-5000. This is a common number across all services – police, animal control, and public works.

Security Fund: As you renew your CCL membership, please consider a contribution to the Security Fund. Hiring off-duty police officers run us between \$16,000 and \$17,000 per year. This is a relatively inexpensive “insurance” policy for our high-end community. Having said that, our patrols cannot be present 24/7/365. Police non-emergency number is 757-385-5000. Call 9-1-1 for bona fide emergencies.

Security Patrol Performance: In response to the “we never see them” comment, here are some results of our Security patrol from the past two months: six summonses issued for illegal parking on Vanderbilt and Surfside; warning issued for rolling stop at Vanderbilt and Aqua; speed enforcement on Croatan – one citation issued; neighborhood patrol – no reported pilferage incidents, thefts from vehicles, or break-ins; investigated report of homeless (unhoused) individual in cove of woods within Croatan; assisted citizen with questions regarding vehicle search.

CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

The next CAC meeting will be held on January 14, 2026, at 6:00 PM in the muster room of VBPD Second Precinct Police Headquarters, 820 VB Blvd (17th Street). CAC meetings are open to all.

M. C. “Connie” Agresti,
CCL Safety and Security Director



PETS, CARS & CHILDREN

Recently, we had a dog “escape” from a home on Croatan Road and get hit by a car. Fortunately, the dog was not severely injured, and the owner was able to take care of the dog.

A few people have observed (and complained) that owners are letting their pets run free and others are walking them off lead.

The concern is that our pets aren't always aware of the dangers around them and are often spontaneous in their actions. Drivers have responsibilities, and we have all had animals jump out in front of us. Follow the rules. Maintain situational awareness. What if that dog had been a child?

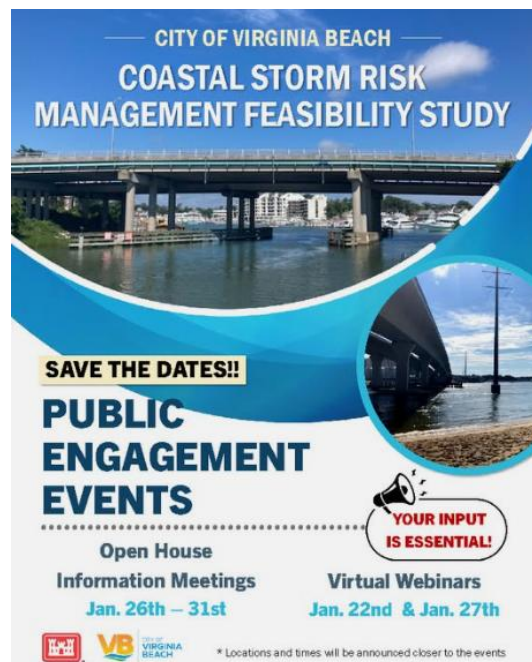


VIRGINIA BEACH COASTAL STORM RISK MANAGEMENT FEASIBILITY STUDY

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Norfolk District alongside the City of Virginia Beach plan to host multiple public engagement opportunities during the month of January in support of the Virginia Beach Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study. The purpose of the study is to investigate solutions to manage coastal storm risk. Virtual webinars will be held on Thursday, January 22nd and Tuesday, January 27th. Open house information meetings will be held the week of January 26th- 31st.

Times and locations will be announced later in January. Please check the study website for up-to-date information on this study:

<https://www.nao.usace.army.mil/About/Projects/VBCSRM/>



CROATAN WOMEN'S CLUB



Ladies of Croatan, we will not be having a social this month. Please note that for 2026, our meetings will be on Wednesdays. Our next get together is Wednesday, February 11th at 6:30. It will be held at 641 Fort Raleigh.

Happy new year and we will see you next month!
Please rsvp on website <https://www.croatanwomen.com>.

BOOK CLUB

New Members Welcome!

This month our book is the first novel in a popular series, Throne of Glass by Sarah J. Maas. Meeting will be held at the home of Laura Saltzer on January 15th at 6:30pm (new time).

Future reads:

February 19th – The Correspondent - Virginia Evans

March 19th - Hail Mary by Andy Weir

Later March - optional group outing to see new movie coming out

April 16th – The Wedding People

May 21st - The Secret Life of Sunflowers by Marta Molnar

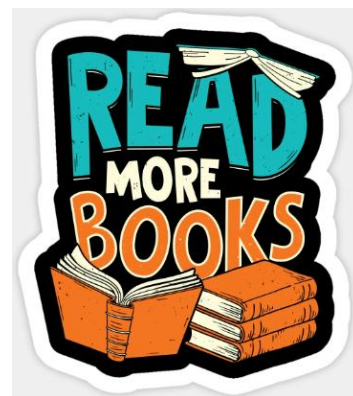
June 18th - Lion Women of Tehran by Marjan Kamali

July 16th - the Stolen Queen by Fiona Davis

August 20th - Wild Dark Shore by Charlotte McConaghy

September 17th – Beneath A Scarlet Sky Mark Sullivan

Book reads are chosen by age, availability at library in print and audiobook form, plus suitability for the group and a mix of genres. Movie versions are also acceptable forms for discussion



Any questions? Email cynthiakilmer@verizon.net or call Cindy Kilmer 703-470-1996. Looking forward to spending time with some new and old members!



CROATAN “BE BONE STRONG” WALKING CLUB

New year, new habit—let’s walk.

Our Saturday morning walks are a simple (and surprisingly powerful) way to build consistency, strength, and friendships, and it'll help kickstart the weekend with fresh air, friendly faces, and a little momentum.



Saturday mornings at 8:00 a.m.

We have different pace groups, so you can choose what works for you. Come out Saturday, January 10th @8am, and just maybe it'll turn into a weekly routine.

Meet-up spot: Corner of Croatan Rd. & Kerry Lane.

Please feel free to share this with friends, neighbors, or family members who might want to join us.

See you Saturday!

Barbara + Bettina

Croatan Be Bone Strong Walking Club



IN MEMORIAM



It has been suggested we start an *In Memoriam* announcement in the CCL Newsletter. When the time arises, please send an email to newsletter@croatanbeach.org with the information you would like distributed to the community regarding the passing of current/former Croatan residents.



CROATAN’S LITTLE LIBRARY

There are some new and interesting books in Croatan’s Little Library. When you are out-and-about in the neighborhood, please don’t forget to stop by and find a book of interest to you. There are books for all ages!

Suggestions or Questions? Reach out to: littlelibrary@croatanbeach.org.



533 Vanderbilt Avenue



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