

After five years of building its endowment, the Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation awarded its first grants in 2009. Eastern Shore nonprofits receiving grant funding were:

<b>Eastern Shore Rural Health</b>	<b>\$ 30,000</b>
To help buy a generator for the new Community Health Center in Onley	
<b>Bloxom Volunteer Fire Department</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>
To help build a new firehouse in the Bloxom community	
<b>Friends of the Northampton Free Library</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
To improve the parking lot at the library in Nassawadox	
<b>Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>
To help buy a truck to bring food to low-income families on the Eastern Shore	
<b>SPCA Eastern Shore Inc.</b>	<b>\$3,630</b>
To fence a canine exercise area at the Onley animal shelter	



*Librarian Carol Vincent and novelist Dave Poyer are among the users of the Northampton Free Library.*

more info → [www.esvcf.org](http://www.esvcf.org)

During 2009 the Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation added one new fund to the 25 funds started in previous years. Those funds are all managed by the Hampton Roads Community Foundation. The new fund is the **Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore Fund**, an organizational fund, which will provide annual grants to help support the Eastern Shore nonprofit.

**The Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation is committed to:**

- Improving life in Accomack and Northampton counties
- Inspiring more philanthropy on Virginia's Eastern Shore

The foundation started in 2004 with help from a grant from the Hampton Roads Community Foundation. The Eastern Shore foundation raised \$4 million primarily from Eastern Shore residents over the next four years to secure a \$2 million challenge grant. All Eastern Shore funds are part of a permanent endowment now managed by the Hampton Roads Community Foundation.



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**Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation**

**Box 205**

**Onley, Va. 23418**

**(757) 789-0910**

**[esvcf@verizon.net](mailto:esvcf@verizon.net)**

At the Eastern Shore of Virginia Barrier Islands Center in Machipongo, the board and staff are busy learning how to fish but not for the puppy drum or flounder you might expect. Instead, they are angling for stable funding that will allow this unique museum on the Eastern Shore of Virginia to flourish in the future.

The center on Route 13 tells many stories through its exhibits. It is the only place on the Eastern Shore where you can learn how people used to live on the windswept, often over-washed barrier islands that protect the shoreline.

Displays document the brief interlude when fancy lodges hosted presidential hunting parties. They recount how, during the Civil War, one group of Union soldiers guarding a lighthouse was relentlessly attacked, not by Confederate raiders but by the biting flies and salt marsh mosquitoes that still drive Shore newcomers to distraction.

The center's historic buildings once were part of the poor house farm in Virginia's poorest county. Inside the free museum you can see how the least fortunate lived in those days -- whites in sparse rooms above the caretaker's quarters, blacks crammed into a shack out back.

Founded in 1996, the Barrier Islands Center is a cultural anchor, a meeting place and point of pride that connects residents from all along the Eastern Shore. Still, the facility has always remained one natural calamity removed from fiscal disaster.

That's quickly changing thanks to a Building Excellence grant awarded by the



## Barrier Islands Center

### Fishing for a Secure Future

Hampton Roads Community Foundation in 2009. The Barrier Islands Center is among 12 nonprofits that have received Building Excellence grants to enhance their fundraising efforts. The grant gives recipients 18 months of consulting from The Curtis Group, a Virginia Beach firm that specializes in helping nonprofits improve their fundraising skills.

At the Barrier Islands Center the goal is to help it generate more donations to provide long-term financial stability. It is already on its way with a permanent endowment fund started in 2006 at the Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation. Those funds are managed by the Hampton Roads Community Foundation.

"Our mission, simply put, is to transform the quality of life in our community," executive director Laura Vaughan said. The Curtis Group, she said, has helped the center target specific goals. Consultant Keith

Curtis has led Vaughan and her board to understand that when "you have a good story, you have to get that story out, tell your case and build good relationships with people." In addition to its exhibits the center teams up with other organizations and children on the Shore. Its efforts include hosting art programs for children of migrant farm workers and providing a hands-on history curriculum for area students.

Bob Hutchinson, a Barrier Islands Center board member, appreciates the Curtis Group's common-sense approach to developing financial assets. "You don't just walk up to somebody and say, 'Give me \$1,000 or remember me in your will,'" Hutchinson says. The consultants "stress you have to talk to potential donors and try to educate them as much as possible as to what the place is all about."

The Barrier Islands Center's Building Excellence grant is already paying dividends, Vaughan says. The organization is working on more planned giving and outreach efforts that will lead to financial stability. The fish the Barrier Islands team is learning to catch "is amazingly valuable," she says, "because it will swim forever."

*The Barrier Islands Center preserves a historic site and serves as a gathering place for residents of the Eastern Shore of Virginia.*

