

## Safety/Security – July 2023:

**Residents/Owners: Please share with renters and contractors** – we all live in this community.

Bottom Line Up Front:

- Swim Advisories/Beach Closure
- Fishing from Croatan Beach
- Speed Tables
- Fireworks
- Balloons
- Parking - Do Not Block List
- Frequent Reminders
- CAC – Street lighting; bike path vs. boardwalk

**Swimming Advisories:** On the evening of Thursday, June 29, I learned from news media that Virginia Beach Health Department had lifted a prohibition on in-water activities at oceanfront beaches from 8<sup>th</sup> Street **to Aqua Lane**. I had not heard that a portion of Croatan Beach had been closed! I do not recall seeing signs or red flags alerting beachgoers to the closure (reportedly emplaced the previous day). My research revealed that in order to receive swimming advisory alerts one must text “BEACH” to 67283. This is separate from **VBA** alert that I have written about previously. (Yes, I will try to find out why and also see if there are any more outlying alert systems that we would benefit from having on our phones).

Beaches are closed to water activities periodically due to contamination – often from fecal coliform, etc. that washes out of storm drains and Rudee Inlet after heavy rains. Some of this is natural (e.g., geese and other water fowl nesting areas), some of it is chemical (e.g., lawn treatments, fertilizers), and some of it is from cavalier dog walkers not scooping the poop. It rarely impacts Croatan Beach because currents carry the water north – but, alas, it can happen. Please do your part by limiting lawn applications and picking up after pets.

**Fishing from Croatan Beach:** A question was received through croatanbeach.org recently on whether beach fishing is permitted while swimmers are nearby. Short Answer is “No.” VB Parks and Recreation website reads, **“Fishing is not permitted near individuals in the water.”**

In an effort to achieve a peaceful coexistence between two rich VB traditions, I would suggest to respect the right of whichever individual(s) may be there first – if the fisherman, set up your “beach camp” a safe distance away and, if possible, upstream; if the beachgoers – consider casting your line from the “sand trap” (north end of Croatan Beach between the weir and jetty).

**Speed Tables:** After more than ten years of unsuccessful traffic calming efforts, speed tables were installed on Croatan Road last month. Physical impediments to speeding, such as speed tables, represent the fourth (of four) step in traffic calming efforts employable by Public Works (Highways) only after the first three efforts have failed to reduce vehicle speed. Anecdotal evidence suggests that speeds are down. That was the objective of the exercise. Please do not

drive onto the bike path or lawns to avoid them or honk your horn in protest – either action can earn you a summons, which is much more inconvenient.

**Fireworks:** Although they are illegal in Virginia, fireworks are plentiful in our neighborhood, even after July Fourth. More plentiful are dogs, many of whom truly “freak out” with the explosions. Please be mindful of the impact that celebratory efforts on others.

Also, while we’ve had considerable rainfall of late, summer heat can dry the environment pretty quickly. If it goes up into the air, it has to come down somewhere. We cannot afford to have the remnants of pyrotechnics starting a fire by coming down on someone’s roof or garden mulch.

**Balloons:** My wife and I observed a bunch of balloons soaring into the sky the other day. Whether from a wedding, graduation, or birthday celebration doesn’t matter - they also have to come down somewhere and it is often in the ocean, where marine life can ingest them and die. Be aware that Virginia State Law imposes a fine of \$25 per balloon on non-biodegradable balloons released by individuals (16-years-old or older).

**Do Not Block:** When parking, please be a good neighbor and refrain from blocking sidewalks (Americans with Disabilities Act mandates that wheelchairs must be able to pass), mail boxes, driveways, or trash receptacles left curbside for pick-up. Also, please be alert to residents backing out of driveways who may not be able to see oncoming traffic due to parked vehicles.

**All the Usual Suspects:** No need to repeat what is written every summer season re: watching out for children, back-filling holes on the beach, wearing sunscreen, staying off dunes, not diving into water, learning rip current survival skills, not grilling next to a house or on a wooden deck, and self-policing litter and animal waste. If you need detailed information on any of these issues, please refer to the June 2023 newsletter available on [croatanbeach.org](http://croatanbeach.org).

**Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC):** The monthly CAC meeting was held on June 14. Deputy Mayor (and our 5<sup>th</sup> District Councilwoman) Rosemary Wilson and 6<sup>th</sup> District Councilman Worth Remick were among those attending.

Concerns were expressed about lengthy streetlight outages on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and proper use of the bicycle path and boardwalk. The City Council members present took on the lighting issue and will discuss it with Dominion Energy and city Public Works officials. As for the latter: keying off the names of the two thoroughfares offers clear guidance - **walk** on the **boardwalk** and **bike** on the **bike** path.

The July CAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 12 in the conference room of the Virginia Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad, Station #14 – 740 VB Blvd (17<sup>th</sup> Street) - at 7:00 PM. If attending, please park on the east side of the building. This meeting is open to all.

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CCL Representative to CAC