

CHESAPEAKE *currents*



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Helping People Find the Home of Their Dreams in Stormy Economic Times

If the real estate industry were described in meteorological terms, you might say it's just been through a hurricane. No area of the country was spared when prices began plummeting in 2008. And no one knows that better than Sandra Hargett, owner/broker of Coldwell Banker/Chesapeake Bay Properties.

A North Carolina native who moved to Richmond with her parents in 1965, Hargett has been working in the industry since she and husband Ray relocated here from Connecticut in 1985. Unable to find work in the area as a paralegal, Hargett went back to school to become a real estate appraiser. Three years later she decided her real interest lay in sales and marketing.

Hargett worked as an agent, broker and owner with local firms until 2008, when she signed an affiliation with Coldwell Banker. Being associated with a national agency has several advantages. "The firm provides state-of-the-art technology, great coaching and networking opportunities for my agents, most of whom are looking forward to long careers in real estate."

Hargett operates offices in Kilmarnock and Burgess, giving her 12 agents great flexibility in showing properties all over the Northern Neck. But she's quick to acknowledge that the economic tsunami which swept the country three years ago has left its mark locally.

"The current market is the most challenging I've seen in three decades," she says. Prices have fallen back to what they were in 2004. The days of speculating in land seem to be over.

The reasons are easy to spot. For some time growth in the area has been directly tied to the influx of come-heres wanting to take advantage of the rural lifestyle while remaining close to urban amenities. "We've proven especially attractive to people from Washington, D.C., Northern Virginia and Southern Maryland," she says. The region has also attracted newcomers from Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York.

The greatest impact of the downturn in the market has been on retirees looking to move to the region. Many have



Coldwell Banker/Chesapeake Bay Properties owner/broker Sandra Hargett feels local agents are best able to help sellers and buyers because they know the area. Pictured from left, front row: P. D. O'Keefe, Sandra Hargett, Stan Whitehead. Second row: Holly Rittenhouse, Pat Meeker, Beth Altaffer. Third row: Joe Hunt, Amy Southard, Becky Haynie.

put their plans on hold until they can be more confident the economy is truly recovering.

"Retirees are important to the Northern Neck's economy," Hargett says. "They buy or build homes. They hire our contractors and plumbers and electricians. They shop in our stores. They open local bank accounts."

While she acknowledges that 87% of people start their search for property on the Internet, Hargett still believes in advertising locally. "Many baby boomers like to pick up a newspaper or magazine, and local ads have sparked several inquiries." She's also convinced that local agents are best able to help sellers and buyers because they know the area.

A Diamond Award Winner ten years running for her sales performance, during her career Hargett has served on the Board of the Northern Neck Association of Realtors (twice

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Virginia Quality Life: Teamwork Helps A Community Realize Its Dreams

Every community dreams of having top-notch facilities for health, wellness and recreation. But what happens when a community's dreams run the risk of exceeding its capabilities?

That situation existed in Lancaster County in 1996. The YMCA was beginning operations in Kilmarnock and needed a new building. At the same time the Northern Neck Free Health Clinic was starting up its operations. A group was already raising money for a new outdoor sports complex.

Community leaders realized that separate efforts to raise funds for all these new facilities might end in failure. "We didn't want that to happen," says Doug Monroe, Chairman Emeritus of Chesapeake Financial Shares, who participated in early discussions about ways to get all these projects accomplished. "We knew we had to pool resources if we were going to help all these organizations."

A small planning group came up with a bold idea: Why not raise funds jointly and build facilities on a single site to take advantage of water lines, sewer systems, and parking? The possibility of doing just that seemed feasible, since Rappahannock General Hospital had rights to a tract of land beside the hospital where their new rehabilitation center was located.

The Y, RGH, the Northern Neck Free Health Clinic, and the local chapter of the American Red Cross all agreed to participate in the joint venture. The board of a foundation sponsored by Campbell Memorial Presbyterian Church agreed to turn over their operations to organizers of this new initiative so their foundation could become the nonprofit entity that would raise and disburse funds for construction. The Foundation also agreed to a name change to VQL, or "Virginia Quality Life," to suggest that its purpose is to improve the quality of life for everyone living in the region. A seasoned New York consulting firm agreed to help with fundraising activities.

In 1998 VQL kicked off its campaign with an appearance by General Colin Powell. The former Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff told his audience that

the open space near RGH was a "field of possibilities." Inspired by his optimism, volunteers began soliciting their neighbors and traveling to places like New York to seek support from foundations. "We thought these foundations would provide significant funding," Monroe says. But while these groups were helpful, most contributions came from local individuals and businesses.

The new VQL Board initially planned to raise \$5+ million. But the

by VQL a decade ago for use by the Y until its permanent facility was ready, has been converted into the Wiley Child Development Center.

Jean Nelson, the Executive Director of the Northern Neck Free Health Clinic, said that "VQL's campus-like setting has helped to raise the public awareness of the Clinic. We had outgrown our former facility – the NNFHC Phyllis F. Smith building at the end of DMV Drive – and found that our new location enabled us to



Every community dreams of having top-notch facilities for health, wellness and recreation. Virginia Quality Life made it happen in Lancaster County. VQL leadership pictured above from left: Dwight Clark, vice president; Douglas Monroe, chairman emeritus; Thomas Richardson, president; and Joseph Curry, director. Not shown is James (Alfie) Butts, IV, secretary/treasurer. VQL is a partnership of the Northern Neck Family YMCA, the American Red Cross-Lancaster County, the Northern Neck Free Health Clinic, and Rappahannock General Hospital.

organizations they were supporting were doing so well that they needed more space, so VQL had to find creative ways to fund additional construction. As it's turned out, contributions have totaled more than \$12 million.

The results have been nothing short of amazing. Between 2000 and 2010, the VQL Campus took shape on Harris Road, near RGH. The hospital's rehabilitation center, the Northern Neck Family Y, the Northern Neck Free Health Clinic, and the River Counties Chapter of the American Red Cross are all open for business there. The former Oakwood Fitness Center, located across Harris Road, purchased

increase our profile and enhance our exposure to the community."

"The facility on the VQL campus has been a great boon for us," says Mark Favazza, executive director of the Northern Neck Family Y. "We are serving more than 3,700 people in our programs, and are providing financial assistance to more than one in four people who want to join the Y. We serve more than 50 children in our Wiley Child Development Center and several dozen in after-school care. None of this could happen if we didn't have the space to accommodate these programs."

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Robert G. Castleman, MBA, CFA
 Bob is a trust administrator with Chesapeake Investment Group, a subsidiary of Chesapeake Financial Shares. He holds the Chartered Financial Analyst designation and is a member of the CFA Institute and CFA Virginia.

Why set up a revocable trust? Consider the advantages:

- avoids probate
- protects assets if you are incapacitated
- affords privacy
- is simple to operate
- allows for professional investment management if you wish
- permits you to change terms at any time while you are alive
- can be completely revoked if you desire

Basics of a Revocable Living Trust

Most investors know that any good investment strategy requires allocating your assets and diversifying your holdings. But it's also important to provide for the long-term security of loved ones. The revocable living trust is a tool that allows you to feel confident those you love will be taken care of when you can no longer do so yourself.

The revocable living trust is a "living document." As the "grantor" of the trust, you can change its terms as circumstances in your life and the lives of loved ones change, or even revoke the trust at any time. The revocable trust will serve as your primary estate planning directive, so it's important to work with an attorney to establish a "pour over" will to "capture" and add any assets not assigned to the trust during your lifetime. These assets will be subject to probate, however, so it's best to have everything you want to pass on included in the trust while you're alive.

At your death, assets covered by the trust will be disposed of according to terms you've established, thus avoiding the costs, delays and publicity of probate, where many details of estates become matters of public record. Additionally, the trustee can continue to trade and sell securities held in investment accounts after your death. If you had only a will, your estate executor would have to wait to qualify before being allowed to perform the same tasks. That wait could prove costly.

Generally, any individual or corporation—or a combination of both—can serve as trustee. The trust usually provides for successor trustees in case of the death, disability or resignation of a serving trustee, guaranteeing a succession of persons to manage the trust's assets.

As the grantor you can serve as the initial trustee of your own revocable trust. You can also hire a professional investment manager and administrator to act as your agent. By observing that person's performance, you'll have the peace of mind of knowing you will be leaving your assets in the hands of a capable individual. This may be especially prudent if your remaining family members are elderly, too busy, or not capable of handling investment and administrative decisions.

It's all about community: join Chesapeake Bank in helping to fund the work of local nonprofits.

Chesapeake Bank recently launched a print and broadcast awareness campaign to raise the profiles of local nonprofits like the Northern Neck Family Y and the Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Neck. "It's all about community," highlights compelling statistics and information.

"Historically, community banks have played an important role in economic and community development," said Jeff Szyperski, Chesapeake Bank President and CEO. "They have been responsible and active partners. Community banks often facilitate social entrepreneurs among civic groups as well as with small businesses."

Look for other featured nonprofits in the Middle Peninsula including the Gloucester-Mathews Humane Society and The Arc's Lewis B. Puller Center for people with disabilities and their families, in Gloucester.

Look for "It's all about community." print ads in the *Rappahannock Record*.

Northern Neck Family YMCA
 Discouraging people from acting their age since 1993.

Y programs and services are available to all, regardless of the ability to pay fees.
1 out of 4 members receive scholarships through the Y Guardian Program.

The expression "age is just a number" is proven true daily at the Northern Neck Family YMCA. The Senior Specialty Class is just one program designed to improve the wellbeing of those with physical limitations such as Arthritis or other joint disease. Many of our seniors live on fixed incomes and depend on the Y's Guardian Program for scholarships to participate. Chesapeake Bank would like to encourage you to join them in helping to fund the efforts of the NNFY. From maintenance programs for seniors to special social and recreational programs for area kids, the Y makes a difference every day. (Please, won't you make a donation?) For the complete story, log on to chesapeake.com/nyfy.

To make a donation or learn about volunteer opportunities, visit www.penninsula.org or call 804-435-0233.

Y + Chesapeake Bank + You
 IT'S ALL ABOUT COMMUNITY.

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Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Neck
 Instilling confidence, respect and a love of learning since 2008.

This year 33 BGCNN members made the academic honor role at their schools. That's a 15% increase over 2010.

At a time when more than 30 percent of U.S. students don't graduate from high school, the Boys & Girls Club is stepping up to the plate. In the Northern Neck, the Club has initiated a mandatory Power Four where the first hour of Club activities is devoted strictly to homework with tutors available. The result? Well, the 33 club members who made the honor role were treated to a special bonding party. To make sure this type of success is available to all kids, the BGCNN offers scholarships and other financial assistance to youth who need them. Chesapeake Bank would like to encourage you to join them in helping to fund success stories at the BGCNN. For the complete story, log on to chesapeake.com/bgcn.

To make a donation or learn about volunteer opportunities, visit www.bgcn.org or call 804-435-8696.

BGCNN + Chesapeake Bank + You
 IT'S ALL ABOUT COMMUNITY.

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VQL Teamwork Helps a Community

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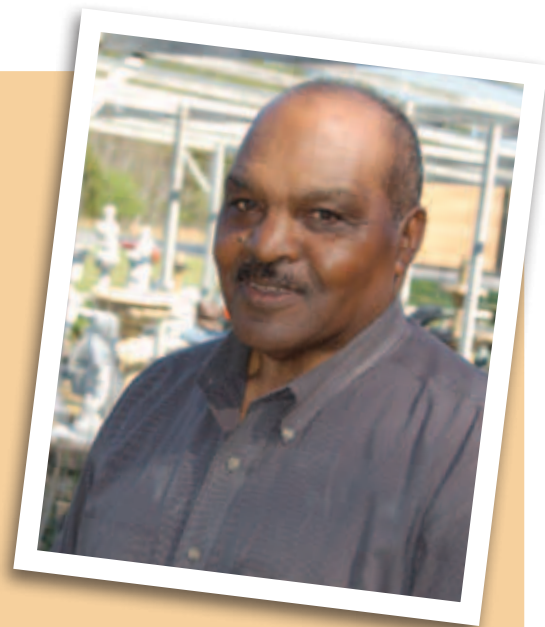
Red Cross director Julie Dudley believes VQL has done more than provide office space for her organization. "We've found that being co-located with the Y has made a real difference in programming. The whole idea of partnering for mutual benefit has worked exceptionally well."

VQL's work isn't finished, says Tom Richardson, current Chair of the VQL Board. "VQL owns the land and the building in which the Wiley Child Development Center is located. We own the buildings on the VQL campus and manage the leases for the organizations using these facilities. And we continue to raise money to pay off the construction loan and maintain the facilities."

"It's been great to see how VQL has assisted the community in helping people help themselves," Doug Monroe says. "VQL didn't give these organizations a handout, but instead made it possible for them to support themselves while providing important services to our neighbors."

Joe Curry: Raising Funds for Virginia Quality Life

Years ago Joe Curry, who currently serves as a Director on VQL's Board, was part of a team that went out to solicit major gifts for the fledgling nonprofit. Volunteers were encouraged to be passionate and personal about their enthusiasm for the project. For Curry, that was easy. He recalls visiting a prominent local citizen who had the wherewithal to make a major contribution, but seemed skeptical. "I looked him in the eye and told him that I grew up in this community, and this is the most exciting thing that has happened in my lifetime." His personal testimony helped carry the day, and VQL received a six-figure gift.



Joe Curry, pictured above, and wife Rosalee have owned and operated Curry & Curry Pottery for more than 30 years. Located on Route 3, between Kilmarnock and White Stone, Curry & Curry Pottery sells hardscape materials, decorative pottery, water fountains and more.

Helping People Find Their Dream Home

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as president) and is a member of several state and national real estate groups. Closer to home, she's been on the board of the Chamber of Commerce and currently serves on Chesapeake Bank's advisory board and the Northern Neck Orchestra board.



Hargett operates offices in Kilmarnock and Burgess, giving her 12 agents great flexibility in showing properties all over the Northern Neck.

When she's not working, Hargett enjoys relaxing on the beach or spending time with family. The Hargetts, married for 39 years, have 5 children, 10 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild. But these days, keeping up with the volatile real estate market demands her full attention. Husband Ray, now retired, oversees the financial side of the firm.

Despite the current climate in the real estate market, Hargett is optimistic about the future. "In the last several months we've seen increased activity," she says. "Not only are more people looking, but we've seen more contracts written this year than we did last spring." She believes people who have lived in their homes for years will still find their property has appreciated nicely. "This remains the most affordable area on the East Coast for waterfront property, and we offer great amenities in rural surroundings."

Of course, Hargett says, "I wish I had a crystal ball so I could determine exactly when the market will come back." It's unlikely she'll find one any time soon, but until she does it's a good bet Hargett will be watching the real estate barometer for signs of another hurricane—or indications of a long stretch of fair weather.

Chesapeake Currents, a biannual publication from Chesapeake Bank and Chesapeake Investment Group, is a special advertising section. To submit feedback or a story idea, email editor@chesbank.com or write to: Chesapeake Financial Shares Inc., Attn: Chesapeake Currents Editor, P.O. Box 1419, Kilmarnock, VA 22482.

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